

**Ontario Catholic Secondary
Curriculum Policy Document**

REVISED



Religious Education



2006

ONTARIO CATHOLIC SECONDARY

CURRICULUM POLICY DOCUMENT

FOR

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Ontario Catholic Secondary Curriculum Policy Document for Religious Education

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General Directory for Catechesis (1997)

In 1971, the **General Catechetical Directory (GDC)** was published as a direct response to a recommendation of the Second Vatican Council's document **Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church**. So significant was this statement's outline of fundamental principles of catechetical instruction that, in light of the post-conciliar catechetical activity of the Church and the subsequent publication of the **Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992)**, revisions were required.

The present document, then, firmly places all catechesis in the context of evangelization. Moreover, the **GDC** makes clear that the central reference point of such work is the **Gospel of Jesus Christ**, as reflected in the **Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)**. If the **CCC** conveys the content of the faith, the what, then the **GDC** can be understood to provide catechists with the rationale and methodological principles, the why and the how.

As such, the authority and influence of the **GDC** can be seen throughout this policy document which hopes, in turn, to guide and inspire the efforts of Catholic educators to provide their students with authentic, meaningful and relevant courses of instruction in religious education.

1. Introduction

1.1. The Student as Subject of Catechesis in Today's World

Students attend Catholic secondary schools for a variety of reasons. Religious education, though foremost in the intentions of some of them, does not constitute a primary motivation for many of them. The reality in Ontario is that most of our students come from families whose attachment and commitment to the Church is relatively fragile. They do not attend Sunday Mass on a regular basis. Their knowledge of Scripture, in spite of the best of efforts at the elementary level, remains partial. Their understanding of the moral teaching of the Church is often fragmentary and does not penetrate deeply into major areas of their lives and relationships.

They belong to a world that is secularized, in which faith and religion tend to be relegated to the private sphere. Though Canadian culture continues to manifest some aspects of its Christian heritage through an interest in the common good and a respect of individual freedom and dignity, it is becoming more and more shaped by the forces of the mass media, of public opinion and of the free market. Not only do our children and our young people face a world without ethical absolutes or clear beliefs, they are led to believe that such absolutes and beliefs are dangerous to human society and obstacles to critical thought.

The challenge faced by the religious educator in the typical Catholic secondary school is enormous. Catholic schools exist to foster in their students not only an understanding of the connection between faith and life, but a commitment to establishing, nourishing and strengthening that connection. Yet students have difficulty expressing the basic contents and structures of the Christian, Catholic faith. They have difficulty stepping back from their busy lives to reflect on the importance of that faith for their lives. Their interest in devoting precious time and energy to courses dealing with these issues is often minimal.

And yet they are loved by God. Most of them, being baptized, have been incorporated into the very Body of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. They might be unaware of the great dignity bestowed upon them in becoming children of God, yet that dignity remains undiminished. The power of the Spirit abides in them and seeks to free them from the tyranny of fashions and trends to help them become all they are called to be.

The religious education program exists for the sake of these students and their ultimate happiness which can only be found in Christ.

1.2. Religious Education in the 21st Century

Let us go forward in Hope! A new millennium is opening before the Church like a vast ocean upon which we shall venture, relying on the help of Christ. The Son of God, who became incarnate two thousand years ago out of love for humanity, is at work even today: we need discerning eyes to see this and, above all, a generous heart to become the instruments of his work.

Novo Millennio Ineunte (58)

These words from Pope John Paul II in *Novo Millennio Ineunte* frame the critical, evangelical mission of Ontario's Catholic schools at the beginning of the third millennium.

Catholic schools are no less zealous than other schools in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. It is however, the special function of the Catholic school to:

- *develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity;*
- *enable young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in that new life which has been given them in baptism;*
- *orientate the whole of human culture to the message of salvation.*

(GDC 259)

Religious Education, as an evolving discipline, enables young people to discover the truth, nurture the attitudes and develop the skills necessary to grow as young Catholics in these changing times. For these reasons, Religious Education is designed to promote a Catholic identity that will assist them in the task of becoming life-long learners in relation to their faith within a multi-religious and sometimes anti-religious society. It is also designed to assist in the process of ethical and moral formation within a culture that all too often fails to recognize the call of God upon men and women, the fundamental dignity of the human person and the existence of absolute ethical norms.

In Catholic secondary schools, Religious Education functions as the academic component within the nexus of activities that seek to evangelize and catechize students. As such, it plays an integral role in the learning experiences of students and complements the various faith-related activities (e.g., chaplaincy services, community outreach, peer ministry) that take place within the instructional setting of these schools.

It is necessary, therefore, that religious instruction in schools appear as a scholastic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge. It should not be an accessory alongside of these disciplines, but rather it should engage in a necessary inter-disciplinary dialogue. This dialogue should take place above all at that level at which every discipline forms the personality of students. In this way the presentation of the Christian message influences the way in which the origins of the world, the sense of history, the basis of ethical values, the function of religion in culture, the destiny of [humankind] and [their] relationship with nature, are understood. Through inter-disciplinary dialogue religious instruction in schools underpins, activates, develops and completes the educational activity of the school.

General Directory for Catechesis (73)

It is possible, therefore, to distinguish between Religious Education as a classroom educational activity and Religious Education as a classroom religious activity. As an educational activity, Religious Education courses provide learning opportunities for the development of students' knowledge of religious language, concepts, and ideas. In doing so, students are able to gain access to religious literacy as expressed within the Catholic faith as well as to the religious attitudes and life skills related to a religious worldview. Learning takes place within an environment where subject matter and teaching strategies are planned in age-appropriate ways and with sensitivity to the affective and personal dimensions of students' lived experiences.

As a religious activity, Religious Education courses invite students to build their relationship with the person of Jesus Christ as witnessed to by the Catholic faith, which recognizes the centrality of God, the dignity of the human person, and the importance of ethical norms. This witness takes many forms, but essential to its self-understanding is the place of Sacred Scripture, Church teachings, the sacramental and liturgical life of the faith community, and its moral foundations for Christian living and Family Life Education. Course content and learning requirements are shaped by this self-understanding and opportunities are provided to integrate the foundations of faith and life in a manner conducive to both human and religious identity.

As a program area, Religious Education must be pursued with sensitivity to the freedom and responsibility of students, to the practical and social conditions in which students live, and to the historical times that influence these conditions. It is with such sensitivity that the GDC recognizes the various effects Religious Education as a religious activity can have on students according to their own stance regarding the Christian faith.

In the case of students who are believers, religious instruction assists them to understand better the Christian message, by relating it to the great existential concerns common to all religions and to every human being, to the various visions of life particularly evident in culture and to those major moral questions which confront humanity today.

Those students who are searching, or who have religious doubts, can also find in religious instruction the possibility of discovering what exactly faith in Jesus Christ is, what response the Church makes to their questions, and gives them the opportunity to examine their own choice more deeply.

In the case of students who are non-believers, religious instruction assumes the character of a missionary proclamation of the Gospel and is ordered to a decision of faith, which catechesis [in a context of community] will, in its turn, nurture and mature. (GDC 75)

1.3. The Catechetical Nature of Religious Education

A. The Teacher as Educator, Mentor and Witness

Catholic educators embrace for themselves the ministry of catechist within their teaching profession. They are called to be transmitters of the faith as they help prepare young people to be “clothed in Christ” and become “salt for the earth and light for the world”. This mandate is even more specific to those who teach a credit course in Religious Education, for its purpose is two-fold. The first is to impart knowledge about the Catholic Faith Tradition; that is to bring revelation to bear on their lives. The second is to encourage young people to follow in the footsteps of Christ; that is to act on God’s behalf for the good of all creation.

The teacher as catechist is called

- to educate to the faith, to teach not only the content of faith but its meaning;
- to mentor young people in their journey, to accompany them as they struggle with this knowledge and seek to integrate it in their daily lives;
- to witness to the Gospel and speak on behalf of the faith community.

Religious Education is therefore more than teaching life skills or sharing information. It is participation in the essential mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News, and to empower young people to live out their baptismal commitment in a mature way. Religious Education seeks to form, inform and transform. The aim of all catechesis is the transmission of the faith. It seeks to foster our students' faith, so that it may be living, conscious and active as they examine how, as Catholics they may follow Christ more closely and so embrace the truth, contribute to the good, and build a more just society with and for others.

B. A Catechetical Methodology

The *General Directory for Catechesis* acknowledges that, “method is at the service of Revelation and conversion” (149); therefore it is important to adopt a methodology that serves to accomplish this two-fold purpose of religious education while giving pride of place to the power of the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit who functions through Revelation to affect conversion. Catechesis requires a process of transmission, which is adequate to the nature of the message, to its sources and language, to the concrete circumstances of ecclesial communities as well as to the particular circumstances of the faithful to whom catechesis is addressed. It must regard not only the Catholic faith tradition but the very life-giving and genuine soil of the believer.

One catechetical method that supports this understanding of catechesis is the hermeneutical method. As it seeks to integrate understanding and interpretation of human experience, the hermeneutical method proposes three elements in its approach: Participation and Experience, Exploration and Explanation, and Appropriation and Application.

i. Participation and Experience

Students come to us from various cultural frameworks, backgrounds, family structures, value systems, intellectual stories and limitations. This prior experience or participation in life is the starting point for new learning; it is what the *General Directory for Catechesis* refers to as “the soil of the believer.” The naming and exploration of this prior experience can occur explicitly or can be assumed but it must be addressed as part of the process of transformation and growth. The *General Directory for Catechesis* tells us that:

Experience is a necessary medium for exploring and assimilating the truths which constitutes the objective content of Revelation. . . .The catechist must teach the person to read his [or her] own lived experience in this regard, so as to accept the invitation of the Holy Spirit to conversion, to commitment, to hope, and to discover more and more in his [or her] life God's plan for [their life].

General Directory for Catechesis (152)

Story, film, brainstorming, review of knowledge and inquiring questions are just some of the strategies used to bring the lived experience of the student into the conversation of new learning.

ii. Exploration and Explanation

The second stage of catechesis challenges students to explore their lived experiences in light of revelation, encouraging students to deepen their understanding of themselves and their relationship with God, with others and with the world. New information for the student is drawn from a number of resources: Sacred Scripture, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the sciences, cultural studies, philosophy, and the news. This second stage offers a new way of understanding that confronts and challenges us. We cannot grow in self-understanding unless we are willing to consider a higher viewpoint, a better explanation, and a more comprehensive view.

Learning occurs through the skilful use of many learning strategies such as research, comparative essay writing, reading, presentation, and newspaper search, to name but a few. The skilled teacher relies on a variety of learning strategies to present new information so as to capture the interest of all students. Again, we turn to the *General Directory for Catechesis* and hear echoed once more a need for both a respect for the soil of the believer and a variety of teaching/learning strategies to address the diversity of lived realities.

Among these techniques, special mention needs to be made of memorization. Once the sole pedagogical method of religious education, it has been completely abandoned in the past decades. Yet memorization is used in most subjects and often to good ends when properly understood and applied. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* has identified short summaries of important teachings that can be used for memory work.

In particular, as objects of memorization, due consideration must be given to the principal formulae of the faith. These assure a more precise exposition of the faith and guarantee a valuable common doctrinal, cultural and linguistic patrimony... Such formulae, however, should be proposed as syntheses after a process of explanation... To be numbered amongst them are some of the major formulae and texts of the Bible, of dogma, of the liturgy, as well as the commonly known prayers of the Christian tradition. (GDC 154)

The Church, in transmitting the faith, discerns contemporary methods in the light of the pedagogy of God and uses with liberty “everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we live and honour and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise” (Philippians 4:8). In short she uses those methods which are not contrary to the Gospel and places them at its service. The “variety of methods is a sign of life and richness” as well as a demonstration of respect for those to whom catechesis is addressed. Such a variety is required by “age and the intellectual development of Christians, their degree of ecclesial and spiritual maturity and many other personal circumstances.” [*General Directory for Catechesis* (148)]

This component of the catechetical process demands the greatest portion of the time allotted to any unit of study and will acquire the largest share of assessment and evaluation.

Inculturation of the faith, under certain aspects, is a linguistic task. This implies that catechesis respect and value the language proper to the message, especially biblical language, as well as the historical-traditional language of the Church (creed, liturgy) and doctrinal language (dogmatic formulations). It is also necessary for catechesis to enter into dialogue with forms and terms proper to the culture of those to whom it is addressed. Finally, catechesis must stimulate new expressions of the Gospel in the culture in which it has been planted. In the process of enculturating the Gospel, catechesis should not be afraid to use traditional formulae and the technical language of the faith, but it must express its meaning and demonstrate its existential importance.

General Directory for Catechesis (208)

iii. Appropriation and Application

It is through the application of new learning to real life situations that students move forward in the acquisition of knowledge and proficiency in the skills necessary for living life to its fullest as light and salt for the world. This is the function of the third element of the catechetical process. Understanding is not fully realized until the students have been able to appropriate what they have heard, read, researched or discovered in the previous stage. This is probably the most difficult element of the catechetical process to deliver and complete. It is most definitely the most difficult to assess and should probably never be evaluated, for here we are talking about the divine action of God in the life of the person. Through journals, essays, projects and portfolios which ask them to apply learning to contemporary events or past history, we can measure what the student is willing to share with us about their growth in faith; perhaps in some few cases through their actions; but to fully discern and understand what is at the heart of another is beyond human ability. Here a teacher-catechist must rely on the movement of the Holy Spirit and trust in the catechetical process to transform the students over time and in culture. The *General Directory for Catechesis* states:

[God] assumes the character of the person ... according to the conditions in which they are found. He liberates the person from the bonds of evil and attracts [them] to himself by bonds of love. He causes the person to grow progressively and patiently towards the maturity of a free son [or daughter] faithful and obedient to his word. To this end, as a creative and insightful teacher, God transforms events in the life of his people into lessons of wisdom, adapting himself to the diverse ages and life situations. Thus he entrusts words of instruction and catechesis which are transmitted from generation to generation.

General Directory for Catechesis (139)

It is important therefore that students come to know that God has called them into this relationship and it is God who will affect the transformation. Their role is to co-operate out of a humble heart and loving will to be one with God, allowing God to bring them to the fullness of life. To that end, the cultivation of an authentic prayer life is an essential component of catechesis.

Together, these activities ensure that the religious dimension of learning, which is a distinctive feature of curriculum in Catholic secondary schools, is well-served and that students are well-prepared to live their faith in the pluralistic world of the 21st century.

C. Key Catechetical Features of Religious Education

The **key features** of Catholic secondary school Religious Education courses that will provide for such learning are as follows:

- ***Religious Education courses are designed to reflect the educational philosophy of Catholic schooling.***

Religious Education within Catholic secondary schools is distinctive in that it presumes a commitment to the religious dimension of education. Whereas religious studies in the broad sense of the term seeks to inform students about religious and moral matters, Religious Education in Catholic schools is designed to develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills that contribute to both religious learning and faith formation.

- ***Opportunities for discussion, research, inquiry, and exploration of religious experience, expression, and diversity are offered.***

Learning opportunities in Religious Education include areas of study such as Sacred Scripture, Christology and other areas of Catholic theology, the Church and its sacraments, world religions, family life education, current issues that explore religious values and attitudes, education for peace and justice, and the social relevance of religious convictions and institutions within contemporary culture.

- ***The integrity of the deposit of faith is respected and presented.***

The outcomes identified for the Religious Education courses in Ontario Catholic secondary schools seek to cover the essential aspects of the Catholic faith in all of its dimensions, as presented in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This respect of the integrity of the deposit of faith is essential to the Religious Education program of our schools, for it ensures that all aspects of that faith are presented to the students in such a way that they understand the hierarchy of truths and the interconnectedness of the doctrine of the Church. “No true catechist can lawfully, on his own initiative, make a selection of what he considers important in the deposit of faith as opposed to what he considers unimportant, so as to teach the one and reject the other.” (*Catechesi Tradendae*, 30)

- ***Curriculum requirements need to identify the intrinsic connection between the content of Religious Education courses and the life experiences of students.***

Students should be given the opportunity to recognize the various ways religious knowledge and attitudes can affect human growth and understanding. Within the Catholic faith, such integration of religious learning with its appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and skills are placed within a response to life centred on the person of Jesus Christ.

- ***Student assessment is an integral part of the teaching-learning cycle.***

If the learning process within the Religious Education classroom is to be effective, a variety of assessment and evaluation strategies must be planned alongside learning

activities. The criteria by which performance is to be measured must be clearly stated and known by students. Clear outcomes and criteria allow students to be part of the evaluation process. In this way, students develop a sense of standards and criteria for their own work.

1.4. Curriculum Strands

The major areas of study in Religious Education courses in Catholic secondary schools are organized into five strands, which will usually be integrated in a variety of teaching strategies:

- **Sacred Scripture**

Sacred Scripture has a privileged place in Religious Education courses. As a primary source of God's revelation, the Bible records the covenantal relationship between God, the Jewish people, and the Christian Church.

As a document of faith developed within the believing community, the Bible is read and interpreted within the Church in continuity with centuries of tradition and in communion with the living reality of the contemporary people of God. In reading, listening, and praying with the Bible, students learn of the loving presence of God in all creation. The Scriptures are the inspired word of God and a living witness to the faith experience of other human beings.

Since the Bible is a literary work, many of the learning outcomes in this strand involve the skills of literacy. These include an understanding of literary forms and genres, identification of the author and audience as essential to the writing process, the use of critical approaches to the reading of Sacred Scripture, and the recognition of various literary themes within the various books of the Bible.

For Catholics, "the Gospels are the heart of the Scriptures because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of the Incarnate Word, our Saviour" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, §125). These testimonies of faith are a privileged resource for meeting the person of Jesus and learning about the good news of salvation.

Evangelization... transmits Revelation to the world, [and] is also brought about in words and deeds. It is at once testimony and proclamation, word and sacrament, teaching and task. Catechesis, for its part, transmits the words and deeds of Revelation; it is obliged to proclaim and narrate them and, at the same time, to make clear the profound mysteries they contain. Moreover, since Revelation is a source of light for the human person, catechesis not only recalls the marvels worked by God in the past, but also, in the light of the same Revelation, it interprets the signs of the times and the present life of [humankind], since it is in these that the plan of God for the salvation of the world is realized.

General Directory for Catechesis (39)

- **Profession of Faith**

Young people need help to put their faith into words. They should be able to express what they believe in language that is common to believers around the world and across the

centuries. Essential to the Catholic tradition are the Church's creeds, doctrinal statements, and the authoritative teachings of the Magisterium.

Students should achieve a genuine understanding of these teachings so that their learning is not simply a memorizing of formulas but is an intelligent articulation of their faith in a language that is appropriate to both the Catholic tradition and to their age and ability.

While it is very much a personal matter, our Catholic faith is not a private relationship between the individual and God. It is a faith lived out in community – from family to parish and school, to neighbourhood, and to the world community of believers. The Church's creeds and doctrinal statements bind us together in a community of faith seeking understanding. The communal relationship within the Holy Trinity serves as a foundation and model for all community relationships: God with us, humankind with God, humans with each other and the rest of creation.

This communitarian relationship is at the heart of the Church's commitment to development and peace and service to the world. In Catholic secondary schools therefore, Religious Education courses contribute to the preparation for and understanding of the meaning of moral commitment to beatitude living, communal worship and the social teachings of the Church, especially in relation to the common good of society and the coming of God's reign.

- **Christian Moral Development**

Students should be encouraged to pray with the same sentiments with which he turned to the Father: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, filial confidence, supplication and awe for his glory. When catechesis is permeated by a climate of prayer, the assimilation of the entire Christian life reaches its summit.
General Directory for Catechesis (38)

The modern world is characterized by a multiplicity of values, philosophies, and ideologies. In the democratic, pluralistic society that is Canada these perspectives may creatively interact and reinforce one another, or they may compete with and contradict one another. What is potentially lost amidst this plurality is the singular revelation of God through Jesus Christ and his Church. Moreover, for the adolescent learner, this diversity of values may relativize Christian morality and lead to ethical confusion or to secularism.

In the face of this situation, it is imperative that students be given the means with which to make sound moral choices and judgements in both personal and social spheres of life. Critical thinking and analytical skills assist in the efforts to integrate a Catholic worldview into decisions concerning such moral issues as respect for life, poverty, violence, racism, stewardship, and care for nature/environment.

Conversion to Jesus Christ implies walking in his footsteps. Catechesis must, therefore, transmit to the disciples the attitudes of the Master himself. The disciples thus undertake a journey of interior transformation, in which, by participating in the paschal mystery of the Lord, "they pass from the old man to the new man who has been made perfect in Christ". The Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus takes up the Decalogue, and impresses upon it the spirit of the beatitudes, is an indispensable point of reference for the moral formation which is most necessary today. Evangelization which "involves the proclamation and presentation of morality", displays all the force of its appeal where it offers not only the proclaimed word but the lived word too. This moral testimony, which is prepared for by catechesis, must always demonstrate the social consequences of the demands of the Gospel.
General Directory for Catechesis (85)

- **Prayer/Sacramental Life**

This strand includes all of the various ways that the Church expresses its faith in worship, whether it be in personal prayer, liturgy or celebration. In many ways, it refers primarily to the actions that demonstrate thankful awareness of God's presence in the world.

At times, these actions will include the use of the rich prayer forms of the Catholic tradition. At other times, they will include the use of the student's own words in prayerful response to God's presence. And, at still others, they will include music, drama, meditation, and various art forms as the vehicle through which reverence can be expressed.

Christian education in the family, catechesis and religious instruction in schools are, each in its own way, closely interrelated with the service of Christian education of children, adolescents, and young people.
General Directory for Catechesis (76)

As well, the unfolding of the liturgical year provides many learning opportunities concerning the use of religious symbols and ritual within the school setting.

A fully Christian life is inconceivable without participation in the liturgical services in which the faithful, gathered into a single assembly, celebrate the paschal mystery... It is always necessary to keep in mind that these Eucharistic Celebrations must lead children towards the celebration of Mass with adults, especially in the Masses at which the Christian community must come together on Sundays.

Directory for Masses with Children (8, 21)

Likewise, the liturgical year affords the opportunity for participation and study of the Church's sacramental life. Through the celebration of Eucharist and the experiences of religious education, students have opportunities to embrace more fully the commitment of their Confirmation in the faith.

Sacraments are visible signs of the presence and action of God. On the basis of this generic definition, Jesus is understood as the pre-eminent sacrament, whose life made visible the action of God in an unparalleled manner. In turn, the Church is the sacrament of Christ, making his teachings and his saving grace visible across all cultures and through successive generations. The seven sacraments signify and accomplish God's loving initiative to lead people to wholeness by interceding at significant moments of their lives from birth through maturity to death.

"Catechesis is intrinsically bound to every liturgical and sacramental action" ... For this reason, catechesis, along with promoting a knowledge of the meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments, must also educate the disciples of Jesus Christ "for prayer, for thanksgiving, for repentance, for praying with confidence, for community spirit, for understanding correctly the creeds..." , as all of this is necessary for a true liturgical life.

General Directory for Catechesis (30)

- **Family Life Education**

Catholic Family Life Education is a multi-disciplinary curriculum area, designed to promote the Christian formation of children and adolescents in authentic human values related to personhood. The role of the school should be that of assisting and completing

the work of parents, furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God.

The bishops of Ontario have identified Family Life Education as a required curriculum strand comprising approximately twenty percent of the Religious Education curriculum at the secondary level, since both areas of study are concerned with the integration of Gospel values into the whole pattern of human life. Classroom instruction in Family Life Education provides opportunities for the holistic formation of students according to a Christian vision of personhood, relationship, and sexuality. This strand draws upon the disciplines of theology, life sciences, and the social sciences. Within these, moral theology, biology, and developmental psychology are especially significant.

Family catechesis precedes . . . accompanies and enriches all forms of catechesis.
General Directory for Catechesis. (226)

Students will study three areas in Family Life Education (Personhood, Relationships, and Sexuality), to support the direction given in the OCCB's 1996 message to the Catholic education community, entitled "Family Life Education for Secondary Students".

Family Life Education therefore is a distinctive feature of Religious Education in Catholic secondary schools in its biological, medical, psychological, and moral aspects. It is the intention of Family Life Education to assist students in the development of understanding and personal attitudes toward the Christian vision of human relationships and sexuality as integral to the person, created in the image of a life-giving and loving God.¹

For this reason, Family Life Education recognizes and affirms the primary and central role of the family in the formation of character, moral development, and attitudes toward sexuality. Likewise, Family Life Education recognizes the need for students to share life-related experiences within clearly established boundaries related to the public nature of the classroom setting.

"In Catholic education, it is most important that information regarding HIV/AIDS be communicated within a religious and moral context." (AIDS: A Catholic Educational Approach to HIV). To this end, Catholic educators have been provided with approved HIV/AIDS educational material.

1.5. Our Hopes for Our Students in Religious Education

Religious Education seeks to develop not only knowledge and disciplinary skills but also to foster in students the attitudes and values that are part of faith and constitute the Catholic stance within the world. Because they depend on the interaction between God's Spirit and the freedom of the individual student, they cannot be listed as expectations, nor can they be evaluated or used for assessment purposes. Yet, they represent some of the ultimate hopes of religious educators. They are the seeds we seek to sow or nourish, the holy longings that live in the sacred secrecy of each individual's heart. We present them at the head of each grouping of expectations as a reminder of the ultimate goal of the religious education program as a specifically religious enterprise, and of the faith we hope to see blossom in our students.

¹ Adapted from *Family Life Education for Secondary Students: A Message to the Catholic Education Community*, a publication of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1996, p. 4-6.

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:***SCRIPTURE*****Grade 9**

- Accept and study Scripture as God's living word.
- Attend to Scripture as a guide for seeking truth and making moral decisions in a spirit of discipleship.
- Use Scripture as a spiritual source of strength and prayer.
- Listen to Scripture in order to view contemporary realities and events in terms of their deeper significance.

Grade 10

- Respond to the Gospel invitation to live justly with God and neighbour and to challenge all forms of injustice.
- Use Scripture in their prayer and worship.
- Read the Gospels as a way of coming to know Jesus more deeply.
- Appreciate the Gospels as testimonies of faith in the risen Lord Jesus.

Grade 11

- Understand Scripture as a basis for the Catholic Church's stance regarding inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue.
- Understand the important role of sacred writings in the formation of religious identity and moral life in other religions.
- Recognize the Bible as revelation of God's word.

Grade 12

- Refer to Scripture in valuing the basic dignity of every person, created in the image and likeness of God.
- See in Scripture the challenge of God's preferential option for the poor.
- Appreciate the role of prophets in Biblical culture, and of the prophetic stance in contemporary culture.
- Build Christian community within the class around the study of Scripture.
- Acknowledge that the love of God for all people as manifested in Scripture demands a commitment to justice and moral living.
- Take up the Christian responsibility to work for justice and peace.

PROFESSION OF FAITH**Grade 9**

- Recognize that the love of God for all people demands justice.
- Understand true happiness as being faithful to God in learning to be true to oneself.
- Believe in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord.
- Appreciate and imitate Jesus' generous attitude toward others.
- Follow the first commandment in placing all hope in God and avoiding contemporary forms of idolatry and slavery.
- Explain how God desires to enter into friendship with all through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, and so bring them to know the truth.

Grade 10

- Ground their personal identity in the Gospel of Jesus.
- Acknowledge that the love of God for all people demands justice.
- See the spiritual and sacramental dimensions implicit in their own experience and in the created world.
- Engage in community service and appreciate that experience in light of the Christian call to discipleship.
- Appreciate their own personal development and discern their personal values, commitments and goals in light of the teaching of Jesus as expressed in the Gospels.

Grade 11

- Value the importance of the historical development of Catholicism for personal and communal religious identity within the Church.
- Critically study the world's religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood.
- Respond in wonder and awe to the mysteries of creation.
- Respect the various expressions of the sacred as found in the world's major religious traditions.
- Appreciate the contributions which the major world religious traditions have made to Canadian society.
- Understand the role of family in the various religious traditions, and appreciate the Catholic stance in this regard.

Grade 12

- Integrate the religious quest in their search for meaning in the contemporary world.
- Appreciate work as a participation in the activity of God.
- Commit themselves to community service as an expression of their response to the call to discipleship.
- Appreciate persons as rational, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual in nature.

CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT**Grade 9**

- Understand the human body as sacred, regardless of appearance.
- Value the basic dignity of every person within relationships.
- Respect physical, bodily change as integral to God's creation of us.
- Take on the attitudes of Christ.
- Develop hope in the light of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Grade 10

- Respond to the challenge of God's preferential option for the poor.
- Acknowledge that the love of God for all people demands justice.
- Recognize that there is absolute truth, and that God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is its source.
- Recognize that justice is an essential ingredient in the liberation of human beings and a key expression of Christian love.
- Let the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen them in applying Christian moral principles in making moral decisions and living a life of virtue.
- Participate, and encourage participation, in community service as a primary way for developing the common good.

Grade 11

- Recognize the importance of moral living in the human search for meaning and purpose.
- Appreciate the role moral codes play in religious worldviews.
- Critically name the way secularism influences moral behaviour within contemporary culture.
- Critically name the impact of religious fundamentalism and cults on the moral behaviour of their members.
- Understand how the moral teachings of the world's major religious traditions are used as guidelines by their members for daily living.
- Recognize historical and contemporary examples of moral living as found in the various religions of the world.
- Appreciate the role world religions can play in transforming human institutions, and the impact this can have on changing the human heart.

Grade 12

- Appreciate how persons are created with free will and with the ability to discern right from wrong.
- Accept the teachings of Jesus and the Church in their moral choices.
- Recognize the right of persons to form labour unions.
- Commit themselves to community service in relation to the common good.
- Confess their sin as a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour.
- Appreciate work as a participation in co-creation.

PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE**Grade 9**

- Share their faith with others in the context of religious celebration.
- Participate regularly at Sunday Mass.
- Believe in the power of prayer to nourish hope.
- Take up the challenge of living a life of prayer in contemporary culture.

Grade 10

- Recognize how the whole person (mind, body and spirit) is involved in prayer.
- Appreciate the contribution of prayer to the life journey of Catholics.
- Reverence and use the traditional prayer forms of Catholicism.
- Understand and appreciate the importance of religious symbol and ritual in the sacramental life of the Church, particularly the Eucharist.
- Appreciate charitable giving and tithing as an offering to God and a form of prayer.

Grade 11

- Recognize the importance of prayer and worship for a religious worldview.
- Know and respect the diverse forms of prayer and worship found in the religions of the world.
- Know and respect the religious symbols in the world's major religious traditions.
- Recognize and appreciate the impact of Judaism on Catholic prayer and liturgical forms.

Grade 12

- Seek the transforming wisdom of the Holy Spirit in their search for authenticity and peace of heart.

- Commit themselves to preparation for marriage, proximate and long-range.
- Value the commitment necessary for a faithful marriage.
- Name and celebrate the connection between the sacrament of marriage and the scriptural image of marriage as a mirror of God's love for his people in Christ.
- Respond to the challenge to priestly and religious vocations as presented by contemporary culture and reflect seriously on the possibility that they are called to such a vocation.

FAMILY LIFE

Grade 9

- Be open to forgiveness and reconciliation in healing relationships.
- Respect the sacred gift of human fertility.
- Commit themselves to chastity in view of the relational meaning of God's gift of sexuality.
- Develop decision-making and assertiveness skills which protect and promote chastity.
- Choose their personal values in light of the love revealed by Jesus.
- Respond with awareness and Christian compassion to the HIV/AIDS crisis.

Grade 10

- Choose and promote chastity as the personal integration of sexuality in the service of love.
- Respect the dignity of all forms of life – and in particular, of human life – at every stage of its existence.
- Demonstrate sensitivity and compassion for persons with HIV/AIDS.

Grade 11

- Critically assess how the conflicting messages of contemporary culture distort the intrinsic dignity of the human person and of authentic relationships.
- Recognize the ways in which sexuality is called to be loving and life-giving.
- Commit to the virtue of chastity in guiding their self-expression as sexual beings.
- Critically assess world religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood.

Grade 12

- Realize the meaning of the intrinsic dignity of each human person, and its impact on our inherent sense of responsibility towards self and others.
- Appreciate the importance of institutions for the common good of society (e.g., family, church, political institutions).

1.6. Connections with Other Disciplines

The organization of Religious Education courses into the above strands allows for meaningful connections with other discipline areas, especially in relation to knowledge concepts, values formation, and life skills.

It should also be remembered that the most successful catechesis is that which is given in the context of the wider pastoral care of young people, especially when it addresses the problems affecting their lives. Hence, catechesis should be integrated with certain procedures, such as analysis of situations, attention

to human sciences and education, the co-operation of the laity and of young people themselves. General Directory for Catechesis (184)

Religious activity is an integral part of contemporary culture. It is a complex affair; one that involves a worldview that addresses such interrelated questions as the nature of the human person, the origins of space and time, patterns for social living, the importance of history as the remembered past, and the distinction between wisdom and knowing.

These ultimate life questions serve as a basis for inquiry and exploration concerning related fields such as history and science, literature and art, philosophy and the study of business. Each discipline provides a point of view that favours certain values and attitudes towards the world, values that can be scrutinized and discussed from a religious perspective.

The application of religious knowledge and attitudes to the mutual benefit of self, society, and environment is also supported by the connection between Religious Education courses and other disciplines. Skills such as the ability to ask moral questions, to apply Sacred Scripture to life, to find meaning in suffering, and to take responsible action toward living things and the environment apply not only to Religious Education, but to the physical and social sciences as well.

1.7. Connections with the Elementary Curriculum

The organization of courses into strands also allows for a closer connection between Religious Education in the elementary curriculum and that of secondary schools.

In both cases, learning expectations address the knowledge, attitudes and skills related to Sacred Scripture, profession of faith, Christian moral living, prayer and sacramental life, and Family Life Education. Likewise, connections with other program or discipline areas are identified and integrated into various learning activities.

Review of content retained from the elementary curriculum is important, particularly at the beginning of various pedagogical activities in grade 9, to ensure a smooth transition from the elementary curriculum to the secondary. Such review allows the teacher to identify areas of strength or of weakness in the students' learning and integration which is essential to any pedagogical method.

The established curriculum in Religious Education thus facilitates cumulative religious learning from grades 1 through to 12. In like fashion, the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* articulate the broader vision of the learner that binds together all curricula from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 in our Catholic Schools.

2. Cross Disciplinary Expectations

Religious Education shares responsibility for applying, extending, and refining students' learning in a variety of fields.

Religious Education contributes to students' **Literacy** by requiring them to read and understand the Scriptures and related ecclesiastical texts with due recognition of their distinctive vocabulary, context and purpose. Students must also communicate questions, observations, and understandings both orally and in writing, with due adherence to the accepted norms of language.

The Arts have a long and honourable association with religion. Literature, visual art, drama and music have been components of religious expression in all cultures since the dawn of reflective consciousness. The Church, inspired by Scripture, has been a significant patron of the arts through the Christian ages. Religious Education courses continue this honourable tradition by using artistic means to enhance students' knowledge, skills, sensitivities and self-expression.

The student who is able to discover the harmony between faith and science will...be better able to put science and technology to the service of men and women, and to the service of God. It is a way of giving back to God what he has first given to us.
The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School (1988) 54

The simplest way to uncover the religious dimension of the artistic and literary world is to start with its concrete expressions: in every human culture, art and literature have been closely linked to religious beliefs.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School (60)

Technological competence will be enhanced in Religious Education courses, as students are required to gather and select information in an ethical way from a variety of electronic information sources, and to articulate their findings by using technologies and applications of various media.

Religious Education is directly oriented to responsible individual behaviour and constructive life in society, the defining purposes of the study of **Citizenship**. Religious Education courses require students to develop personal value systems based on established Catholic values and on an understanding of Canadian and global society including ethics, political systems, principles of community building and conflict resolution, gender equity, Native perspectives, diverse cultures, social justice, and the environment. Religious Education courses also include a component of community service as an integral application of learning.

Critical thinking is an essential expectation in Religious Education. Particularly with regard to decision-making as members of a believing community, but also with regard to the search for meaning and understandings of life in a context of faith, students must understand concepts, identity issues, make connections, analyse, evaluate, apply information, make reasonable judgements and decide.

Within the overall process of education, special mention must be made of the intellectual work done by students. Although Christian life consists in loving God and doing his will, intellectual work is intimately involved. The light of Christian faith stimulates a desire to know the universe as God's creation. It enkindles a love for the truth that will not be satisfied with superficiality in knowledge or judgment. It awakens a critical sense which examines

statements rather than accepting them blindly. It impels the mind to learn with careful order and precise methods, and to work with a sense of responsibility.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School (49)

Religious [education] teachers ... can also be invited ... to assist in clarifying religious questions that come up in other classes.
The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School (1988) 65

In a world characterized by constant change and global interdependence, Religious Education contributes to students' **Global Perspective** by cultivating in them a consciousness of global issues and trends, and a systems-thinking approach to the study of economics, culture, technology, politics, ecology, history, and personal ethics. Religious Education programs seek to engage students in global associations and project work whereby they apply their learning and effect change as responsible citizens at the local, national, and global level.

A specific application of global perspective is found in the relationship of Religious Education to **The Sciences**. Issues of meaning and valuing are considered on the basis of belief in a Creator God who has given humanity responsibility for the world which we seek to understand and manipulate through chemistry, biology, physics, and the various highly-specialized fields of study categorized as Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Earth Sciences.

Religious Education is explicitly directed towards the expectations of **Locally Developed Courses** by which students use their knowledge and skills to manage their own lives and to contribute to society. Theological understandings of the importance of meaningful work in the establishing of self-identity form a theoretical foundation for self-assessment, time management, teamwork, identifying needed skills and knowledge, adapting to new environments, career planning, and responsible choices.

Religious Education programs that require students to follow instructions, locate and analyse information, draw conclusions, and present findings both orally and in writing, by the appropriate use of information technology and other research processes, support **Research Methodologies**.

Since Religious Education considers itself relevant to almost every aspect of human understanding and behaviour, it also contributes to students' **Ability to Make Connections**, to recognize interrelatedness, and to transfer knowledge, values and skills from one context to another. In Religious Education courses, students explore the psychology of human behaviour, consider the importance of culture and of the structure of society, recognize patterns in events and information, use language to communicate effectively, network and negotiate with others.

3. Program Considerations

The Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (Institute for Catholic Education, 1998)

At the heart of Religious Education is a vision of the person, formed through catechesis for a life of service in and for God. This vision is expressed in the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*, which precede the development of curriculum in Catholic schools.

The *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* are intended not only for those responsible for Religious Education but are intended to guide the integration of the Catholic teaching into all school curriculum and into the nature of the total school experience. Since all education is about the formation of persons, all teachers should know and be guided by this vision as they educate students in their care. These are the expectations that identify the distinct role and purpose of Catholic Schools in Ontario and as such are of importance to all Catholic educators, as well as the parents and students we serve.

The *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*:

- A discerning believer formed in the Catholic faith community
- An effective communicator
- A reflective, creative and holistic thinker
- A self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner
- A collaborative contributor
- A caring family member
- A responsible citizen

3.1. Teaching and Learning Strategies

Critical to any process of meaningful learning in Religious Education are the following:

- content relevant to the student's life experience;
- learning activities that engage the interest and imagination of the learner;
- learning opportunities that link new concepts, ideas, and skills to previous knowledge;
- time to reflect on new ideas and concepts, both individually and as a group;
- relevant connections to assist the assimilation of new knowledge, attitudes and skills into the student's learning;
- activities that challenge students to construct new knowledge;
- ways to assess and evaluate the student's growth and development.

3.1.1. Roles and Responsibilities in the Religious Education Program

Hence, the teaching of Religious Education requires a **teacher** whose qualities and skills include:

- knowledge and respect for the Catholic faith tradition;
- educational training in the discipline of Religious Education;
- communication skills relevant to working with youth;
- sensitivity to the religious needs and questions of individual students;
- ability to use various instructional strategies;
- skills in assessment and evaluation;

- participation in a Catholic faith community.

Such teachers realize that young people, on the verge of adulthood, are quite capable of posing valid and challenging questions. This kind of dialogue is to be welcomed since it promotes the authentic involvement of students. The willingness of teachers to engage students in such dialogue is a measure of the teachers' credibility. Although Religious Education teachers are entitled to the required instructional materials (e.g., student texts, teacher manuals, CD-ROMs, audio-visual and library), the most meaningful educational experiences often take place in open dialogue with students, responding to issues that emerge from life experiences. Teachers of Religious Education therefore are always attentive to these teachable moments.

The classroom, however, is not the suitable context for promoting personal views or raising adult questions that are not easily resolved. There is a responsibility on the part of the teacher of Religious Education to communicate the tradition of the Church in a manner that is challenging and convincing. This must always be done with an approach that is sensitive and compassionate to the lives of students. Assigning inadequately-qualified teachers to Religious Education classrooms, therefore, is simply unfair to the teacher, to the students and to the academic credibility of the discipline.

Together with chaplaincy services, teachers of Religious Education play a vital role in the development of religious literacy and character formation based on the Gospel values of Jesus Christ.

Students are to be active participants in this development. Every effort should be made to relate Religious Education courses to the experience, issues, and questions of youth. Meaningful learning begins with a consideration of life experiences. At the same time however, Religious Education has a substantial content that can be learned, assessed and evaluated. Students need to know that there are academic requirements similar to those of other courses that they are expected to meet.

Students also contribute to the building of Christian community within the school and within the classroom. Community is characterized by a sincere respect for the dignity and value of all persons. This is demonstrated through respectfully listening to the thoughts, views and experiences of others. It involves a willingness to share aspects of one's learning. Above all, it begins with a profound respect for the dignity of self and for the rights of others to an environment conducive to learning.

In addition, **students** welcome the opportunity to put their learning into action. The Religious Education program affords many opportunities to this end. Of particular relevance to youth is the struggle for justice in our society and active service on behalf of those who are most in need. The participation of youth "in this good news which brings justice and peace is a powerful affirmation that our Catholic secondary schools are more necessary now than ever before." (*Celebrating an Education for Justice and Peace*, OCCB, 1996).

Likewise, **students** have clearly expressed their need for Family Life Education. Adolescence is a time of struggle and difficulty concerning issues related to personal growth, relationships, and sexuality. For this reason, Catholic curriculum in Religious Education includes materials and resources for Family Life Education for each grade level of secondary school.

As the primary educators of their children, **parents** entrust their children to Catholic secondary schools to extend and complement their growth, especially in the religious and spiritual domain. When parents show interest in Religious Education courses by raising questions and engaging in discussion, educational growth becomes more meaningful.

This cooperative relationship is of particular value in the Family Life strand of secondary school Religious Education courses. School-based learning should assist and complete the work of parents, furnishing adolescents with an evaluation of sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God. A mutually supportive role between teachers and parents in this area of human formation will positively influence the maturation of young people.

As the *principal* teacher of the Catholic school community, the **principal** must seek to embody all that is true of the teacher. The principal works in partnership with teachers, parents, and pastors to ensure that each student has access to the best possible educational experience. “Your reach extends both into the classroom and into the community,” the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (OCCB) has written. “The life, the values, and the feeling of each school derive in large part from [their] commitment to [their] staff, to [their] students, and to the gospel.” (*This Moment of Promise*, OCCB, p. 27) To support student learning, principals ensure that the prescribed curriculum is being properly implemented in all classrooms using a variety of instructional approaches. They also ensure that appropriate resources are made available for teachers and students. To enhance teaching and learning in all religious education courses, principals promote learning teams and work with teachers to facilitate participation in professional and faith development. Principals are also responsible for ensuring that every student who has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is receiving the modifications and/or accommodations described in his or her plan – in other words, for ensuring that the IEP is properly developed, implemented, and monitored. While all of the partners in education have a particular role to play in the Catholic school, nonetheless the leadership ministry of principals charge them with unique and critical opportunities to cultivate a distinctively Catholic school character while supporting the ministries of all of the other partners.

3.2. Role of Technology

It is a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching that technology must be placed at the service of humanity. To that end, the Catholic tradition places itself in the midst of human progress, including technological progress, and seeks to understand and to utilize technology in the on-going formation of a just and caring society.

To do so, Religious Education courses must support the use of “holistic” technology, an approach towards technology that focuses on people and is mindful of the values of justice and equality. These courses must search out ways in which the new systems of technology can be used to assist in promoting greater universal justice, respect for human life, and a healthy development of all individuals and peoples, as well as the freedoms essential for a fully human life. Put simply, Religious Education courses must bring a moral vision to technological use and development.

Within the classroom therefore Religious Education courses should integrate appropriate technologies to assist students in learning to manage knowledge efficiently, communicate effectively, and think creatively and critically. Where computers, CD-ROMs, film, the Internet, and distance education can significantly aid in the delivery of learning, they

should be used. Further, course content should give students the opportunity to reflect and make judgements concerning the various ethical issues related to technology.

3.3. Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources ...that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a course.

Evaluation refers to the process of judging the quality of student work on the basis of established criteria, and assigning a value to represent that quality.

Program Planning and Assessment, 1990

The process of assessment and evaluation in secondary school Religious Education courses is a complicated one. It is a fundamental responsibility of all professional educators to collect, record, analyse, interpret and share information about student progress and achievement. At the same time Religious Education teachers recognize this reality: no individual may presume to judge in a definitive way an individual's relationship with God.

Hence, a question that is often asked in Religious Education is "what is to be assessed?" The simple answer is the expectations are to be assessed. Those expectations which are to be evaluated fall under the following categories:

- Knowledge and Understanding
- Thinking
- Communication
- Application

General guidelines to be followed in Religious Education assessment and evaluation include the following:

- The ultimate purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.
- Assessment strategies must align themselves with student curriculum expectations. Therefore, assessment strategies must be planned alongside learning activities.
- Strategies in assessment and evaluation must be free of bias.
- Strategies must respect the worth and dignity of all students.
- Assessment strategies must take into account program modifications which address students' specific learning needs and styles of learning.
- A variety of strategies should be employed, because many of the learning expectations cannot be translated into an item on a test or a mark/grade on a report card.
- The criteria for assessment and evaluation must be communicated from the outset to students.

3.3.1. Achievement Charts

The Achievement Levels in Religious Education outlined in the chart on the following pages must be used as a basis for assessment, evaluation, and reporting in Catholic secondary schools. While they are broad in scope and general in nature, they provide a starting point for all assessment approaches and serve to align assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices with the expectations which have been identified in each of the five strands of Religious Education.

Within Religious Education, instruction and assessment should be designed to allow students to learn and demonstrate the curriculum expectations using the Achievement Levels. Teachers may wish to develop specific task rubrics using the Achievement Levels as the starting point.

The achievement charts that follow identify four categories of knowledge and skills. The achievement chart is a standard province-wide guide to be used by teachers. It enables teachers to make judgements about student work that are based on clear performance standards and on a body of evidence collected over time.

The achievement chart for each subject area and discipline is designed to:

- provide a common framework that encompasses all curriculum expectations for all grades and all subjects/disciplines;
- guide the development of assessment tasks and tools (including rubrics);
- help teachers to plan instruction for learning;
- assist teachers in providing meaningful feedback to students;
- provide a variety of aspects (e.g., use of thinking skills, ability to apply knowledge) on which to assess and evaluate student learning.

Categories of knowledge and skills. The categories, defined by clear criteria, represent four broad areas of knowledge and skills within which achievement of the curriculum expectations for any given grade is assessed and evaluated. The four categories should be considered as interrelated, reflecting the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning.

The categories of knowledge and skills are described as follows:

Knowledge and Understanding. Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding).

Thinking. The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes, as follows:

- theological reflection
- planning skills (e.g., focusing research, gathering information, organizing an inquiry)
- processing skills (e.g., analysing, evaluating, synthesizing)
- critical/creative thinking processes (e.g., inquiry, decision-making, research)

Communication. The conveying of meaning through various forms, as follows:

- oral (e.g., liturgies, presentation, role play, debate)
- written (e.g., prayers, report, journal, opinion piece)
- visual (e.g., chart, model, movement, video, computer graphics)

Application. The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various context; making connections between Religious Education and the world (e.g., moral issues; ethically based problems; social justice issues).

Teachers will ensure that student work is assessed and/or evaluated in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories, and that achievement of particular expectations is considered within the appropriate categories.

Qualifiers. A specific “qualifier” is used to define each of the four levels of achievement – that is, limited for level 1, some for level 2, considerable for level 3, and a high degree or thorough for level 4. A qualifier is used along with a descriptor to produce a description of performance at a particular level. For example, the description of a student’s performance at level 3 with respect to the first criterion in the Thinking category would be: “the student uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness”.

3.3.2. Final Evaluation for Course Credit

Thirty percent of the grade will be based on a final evaluation in the form of an examination, performance, essay, and/or other method of evaluation suitable to the course content and administered towards the end of the course. The design of any summative evaluation should, where possible, provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning across the four categories in the Achievement Levels. Summative evidence should represent the most recent performance of the student and therefore be conducted towards the end of a unit or course.

Every category in the Achievement Levels must be reflected in the determination of the student's term work. The emphasis given to each category will reflect the orientation and context of each individual course. It must be clear to both teacher and students which tasks will be assessed for feedback and improvement, and which will be used for summative purposes.

Assessment and Evaluation of Program

The results of student achievement provide teachers with an opportunity to think critically about their instruction for individual students and the overall effectiveness of their program. Course content, instructional strategies, and assessment procedures should be reviewed and evaluated periodically by teachers and adjusted where necessary. In addition, schools can gather additional information to evaluate their programs through a variety of measures that go beyond student achievement information, e.g., classroom observation, scrutiny of students, completed work, questionnaires and interviews with students and parents.

3.3.3. Achievement Chart – Religious Education, Grades 9–12				
Categories	50-59% (Level 1)	60-69% (Level 2)	70-79% (Level 3)	80-100% (Level 4)
Knowledge and Understanding - Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)				
	The student:			
Knowledge of content (e.g., Scripture, creedal statements, facts, terms, definitions)	– demonstrates limited knowledge of content	– demonstrates some knowledge of content	– demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	– demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content (e.g., dogma, doctrine, theories, concepts, ideas, methodologies, procedures, processes, technologies)	– demonstrates limited understanding of content	– demonstrates some understanding of content	– demonstrates considerable understanding of content	– demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Thinking - The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
	The student:			
Use of processing skills (e.g., discerning, selecting, analysing, synthesizing, evaluating, detecting point of view and bias, forming conclusions)	– uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	– uses processing skills with some effectiveness	– uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	– uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of critical/creative thinking processes (e.g., theological reflection, inquiry, problem-solving, and research processes)	– uses critical/creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness	– uses critical/creative thinking processes with some effectiveness	– uses critical/creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness	– uses critical/creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness

Communication - The conveying of meaning through various forms				
	The student:			
Expression and organization of ideas and information (e.g., clarity of expression, logical organization) in oral, visual, and written forms (e.g., prayers, reflections, presentations, reports)	– expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	– expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	– expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	– expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication for different audiences (e.g., peers, adults) and purposes (e.g., liturgies, to inform, persuade) in oral, visual, and written forms	– communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	– communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	– communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	– communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of conventions (e.g., religious language, religious symbols, media usage), vocabulary, and terminology in oral, visual, and written forms	– uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with limited effectiveness	– uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with some effectiveness	– uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with considerable effectiveness	– uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with a high degree of effectiveness
Application - The use of knowledge and skills to make connections between Religious Education and the world outside the school				
	The student:			
Transfer of knowledge and skills (e.g., concepts, procedures, processes) to new contexts	– transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness	– transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness	– transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness	– transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Making connections between Religious Education and the world (e.g., moral issues; ethically based problems; social justice issues)	– makes connections between various contexts with limited effectiveness	– makes connections between various contexts with some effectiveness	– makes connections between various contexts with considerable effectiveness	– makes connections between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness

3.4. Guidance and Career Education

A primary function of Religious Education in Catholic secondary schools is to prepare students to embrace the challenge of living in the world as Christ's presence. Courses in Religious Education, by guiding the students in developing transferable life skills, prepare students for a broad spectrum of life experiences that include, yet go beyond, the world of work.

Courses in Religious Education clearly support student learning in the areas of personal and interpersonal development and career choices. When taught that the Christian commitment to justice, peace, and the dignity of all can only help to promote the well-being of individuals and society as a whole, the student can evaluate his or her career aspirations in relation to the concepts of Christian vocation and discipleship. As well, Family Life strands, by focusing on personhood, relationships, and sexuality complete the students' self-understanding and in this way complement the Career and Guidance Education presented within secondary school programs.

Furthermore, academic studies in Religious Education at the secondary school level are a critical preparation for students who may wish to continue their exploration of religious issues by including post secondary courses in Religion and Theology while studying for their careers at those institutions. This will allow them to further refine their vocation to be a minister of the Gospel within their chosen careers. Likewise, students called to pursuing various forms of ministerial work (e.g., chaplaincy, youth ministry, Religious Life, ordained ministry) also will find opportunities to discuss and consider such lifestyles within Religious Education courses at the secondary school level and gain the support to listen to their call in their adult life.

3.5. Meeting the Needs of All Students

3.5.1. Exceptional Students

Every effort should be made in Religious Education courses to accommodate learning expectations for exceptional students. Such accommodations assist students to strengthen their sense of self-worth to develop personal skills, social understanding, and self-confidence and to foster a deeper sense of belonging within the greater community.

For students who learn with difficulty, emphasis should be placed on communications and relating skills and on the development of attitudes that foster respect for themselves, others, and their environment – all of which are manifestations of God's creative love. Hence, theoretical concepts should be kept to the necessary minimum, with knowledge directly related to practical activities wherever possible. The emphasis of Religious Education courses should be on a personal relationship with Jesus and the experience of the presence of God here and now through people, prayer, sign and symbol. Programs for gifted students should be modified to challenge such students to meet expectations to the full extent of their potential.

In the case of students who have been formally identified as exceptional, it is particularly important that school staff work with parents to support the students' learning. Assessment and evaluation adaptations for such students need to be discussed as well.

3.5.2. ESL/ESD

Religious Education courses emphasize the use of communication skills in both written and oral forms, using various media. Appropriate choice of instructional methods and settings for ESL/ESD students will help to ensure that course expectations are met. In some cases, some or all of the expectations will need to be modified.

3.5.3. Catechesis in the Context of Religious Pluralism

Particular Churches

Courses in Religious Education need to affirm that the Catholic Church is a family or communion of particular churches or rites of equal rank and dignity that are in full communion with the Roman Pontiff, the successor of St. Peter, the supreme arbiter of inter-church relations. The Eastern Catholic Churches in communion with Rome accept the Pope as the bishop established by Christ himself to continue to be the principle of unity as concerns faith, morals and pastoral guidance (i.e., supreme arbiter) for the universal communion of the particular Catholic Churches. The official yearly Vatican directory, “Anuario Pontificio” (*Libreria Editrice Vaticana*), gives the following list of rites (in the sense of particular Churches) within the Catholic Church:

- A. Eastern rites of Alexandrian tradition: Coptic Catholic Church (Coptic), Ethiopic
- B. Eastern rites of Antiochian tradition: Syro-Malankara Catholic Church (Malankara), Maronite, Syrian Catholic Church (Syrian)
- C. Eastern rite of Armenian tradition: Armenian Catholic Church (Armenian Church)
- D. Eastern rites of Chaldaean or East-Syrian tradition: Chaldean, Syro-Malabar Catholic Church (Malabar)
- E. Eastern rites of Constantinopolitan or Byzantine tradition: Albanian Catholic Church (Albanian), Belarussian, Bulgarian, Greek, Greek-Melkite, Hungarian, Italo-Albanian, Romanian Catholic Church (Romanian), Russian, Ruthenian Catholic Church (Ruthenian), Slovak, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Ukrainian)
- F. Latin rite

The richness of these various traditions, especially in Liturgy, need to be explored along with the Latin rite to stress the diversity, yet unity, of the Catholic Church, as expressed in the Vatican II document: “Decree On The Catholic Churches Of The Eastern Rite” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*):

These individual Churches, whether of the East or the West, although they differ somewhat among themselves in rite (to use the current phrase), that is, in liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline, and spiritual heritage, are, nevertheless, each as much as the others, entrusted to the pastoral government of the Roman Pontiff, the divinely appointed successor of St. Peter in primacy over the universal Church. They are consequently of equal dignity, so that none of them is superior to the others as regards rite and they enjoy the same rights and are under the same obligations, also in respect of preaching the Gospel to

the whole world (cf. Mark 16, 15) under the guidance of the Roman Pontiff.
Orientalium Ecclesiarum (3)

Ecumenism

Religious Education courses need to contribute to the goal of Christian unity and as such the pedagogy of religious education should encourage authentic ecumenical dialogue:

Catechesis...is always called to assume an “ecumenical dimension” everywhere. ... [such] catechesis brings to the fore that unity of faith which exists between Christians and explains the divisions existing between them and the steps being taken to overcome them. Catechesis also arouses and nourishes a true desire for unity, particularly with the love of Sacred Scripture.
General Directory for Catechesis (197)

ecumenism is the movement for restoration of unity among all Christians

inter-faith dialogue is the movement among religious communities to promote greater mutual understanding and respect for one another

Inter-faith Dialogue

With regard to inter-faith dialogue, the *General Directory for Catechesis* states that:

Religious instruction, catechesis and preaching should not form only towards objectivity, justice and tolerance but also in understanding and dialogue.
General Directory for Catechesis (199)

The Declaration On The Relation Of The Church To Non-Christian Religions states:

The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons [and daughters], that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these men [and women].

Nostra Aetate (2)

In that spirit, Religious Education courses need to be sensitive to the spiritual identity of students of the non-Christian World Religions and of the Aboriginal Traditions.

Aboriginal Spirituality

Religious Education courses contribute to the affirmation of Aboriginal identity by being able to make numerous references to common forms of Aboriginal spirituality as one example of the connections between religious knowledge, values, and practice. Key features of Aboriginal spirituality that are addressed in Religious Education courses include: seeing the world as the home of sacred activity; working to achieve harmony among the spiritual, cultural, social and cosmic realms; and activities or symbols that work holistically to reveal the spiritual dimensions of life.

3.6. Health and Safety Needs

Being ‘safe’ is a basic right of all individuals within the educational environment and includes all aspects of safety – physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual.

Educators must provide a safe environment for all students, including those with special physical and other needs. Emotional well-being is a health concern along with physical safety, and teachers must be alert to signs of psychological harassment directed against students or to improper remarks that might target a particular group.

The relevant policies of the Ministry of Education and local School Boards must be reaffirmed whenever discussion occurs in the area of the welfare of all students.

3.6.1. Anti-discrimination Education

The natural law is a participation in God's wisdom and goodness by man formed in the image of his Creator. It expresses the dignity of the human person and forms the basis of his fundamental rights and duties.
Catechism of the Catholic Church (§1978)

Every individual has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or learning ability. It is essential that anti-discrimination education should permeate school practices, Board policies, and all aspects of Religious Education – its content, teaching methods and materials, assessment procedures and expectations of the interactions between students, parents, and the community.

Any evidence of prejudice is in direct contradiction to the ideals of Christ. The love of God and the promise of God's reign are for all people.

3.6.2. Violence Prevention

The Family Life Education strand of Religious Education courses directly addresses issues related to violence prevention and safety. For example, students will identify the positive factors in healthy attitudes and relationships as well as those behaviours which may lead to unhealthy attitudes and relationships (e.g., harassment, homophobia, bullying, physical and verbal abuse). In addition to identifying the destructive nature of any form of abusive relationship, students will be taught the personal and sociological causes of violent behaviour.

Since some conflict is a normal part of all human relationships, it is essential for students to learn positive ways to resolve conflicts that honour and support healthy relationships (e.g., listening skills, willingness to compromise, being assertive and willing to search for common ground in a dispute). Conflict resolution skills based on the Gospel values of peace, truth and love will serve as a foundation to such skills development. Educators should also make students aware of community support agencies which are available to them, both Catholic and non-denominational.

3.7. Modes of Delivery

3.7.1. Community Service

Community service is an integral component of Religious Education courses, especially in senior grades. This Ministry required community service can be harmonized with the Religious Education Program requirements to provide a fuller experience. The students can be guided to reflect on their community service in a way that will allow them to translate Gospel values from words to action. Many students find active service the most meaningful and joyful part of learning. Typical placements include: parishes, schools, hospitals, senior citizen homes, social service agencies, food banks, shelters for children and women, Development and Peace, inter-church coalitions and religious communities.

3.7.2. Co-operative Education

Religious Education Departments should work with those responsible for Co-operative Education to explore its potential. With meaningful placements, students would not only be able to take full advantage of the resources of the community to explore career choices, but will be able to explore ethical issues related to the world of work. In the encyclical *Laborem Exercens* Pope John Paul II affirms the dignity of labour and places work at the centre of the social question. Co-operative Education is an ideal vehicle for students in

Work remains a good thing, not only because it is useful and enjoyable, but also because it expresses and increases the worker's dignity. Through work we not only transform the world, we are transformed ourselves, becoming "more a human being."
Laborem Exercens
 (9)

Religious Education courses to reflect on work from the perspective of Catholic social teaching. A Catholic theology of work maintains that every person is created in the image of God and has particular gifts and talents that can be of service to the community. Through work, a person participates in the activity of God and helps to co-create the world, society and the self.

The issues that could be explored include the dignity of the human person, the promotion of the common good, the preferential option for the poor, the dangers of materialism, the principle of subsidiarity, stewardship, the right to form unions and to earn a just wage, and the appropriate use of technologies whose benefits can be shared by many rather than monopolized by the few.

In short, a co-operative education experience offered within the parameters of Religious Education courses gives students the opportunity to share their own stories of work, to analyse these experiences from a social, political, and economic perspective, to reflect theologically on their experiences and to decide whether there are moral issues which necessitate individual or collective action.

4. Overview of Religious Education Courses

4.1. Types of Courses

Courses offered in Catholic secondary schools in the discipline of Religious Education are as follows:

Name	Type	Grade (Level)	Credit Value	Pre-Requisite
Religious Education “Be With Me”	Open	9	1.0	None
Religious Education “Christ and Culture”	Open	10	1.0	None
Religious Education “Faith and Culture: World Religions”	University	11	1.0	Grade 10 Open Religion; or Grade 10 Academic English
Religious Education “Faith and Culture: World Religions”	College	11	1.0	Grade 10 Open Religion; or Grade 10 Academic or Applied English
Religious Education “Faith and Culture: World Religions”	Workplace	11	1.0	None
Religious Education “Church and Culture”	University	12	1.0	Grade 11 University Religion; or Grade 11 University English
Religious Education “Church and Culture”	College	12	1.0	Grade 11 College or University Religion; or Grade 11 College or University English
Religious Education “Church and Culture”	Workplace	12	1.0	None

Generally, courses at the Grade 9-10 level will be designated as “open”, but Boards are free to develop and offer academic or applied courses as considered appropriate. Courses at the Grade 11-12 level are destination pathway driven, but Boards are free to develop and offer open or college/university (“M”) courses as considered necessary.

Practical considerations often determine whether or not courses are offered in distinct settings. Where classes are combined, teachers and administrators should embrace this as an opportunity for students to form a learning faith community that appreciates diversity.

4.2. Course Descriptions

Religious Education: “Be With Me”: Grade 9 Open

This course invites students to a deeper understanding of both the joy and the demands of following in the way of Christ and living out the call to discipleship as it is described in the Scriptures. Using the Beatitudes as a touchstone, students examine the attitudes and actions that characterize the Christian life. Students will explore a variety of topics related to the themes of personhood, interpersonal relationships and sexuality. They are encouraged to understand and nurture within themselves the virtues which will enable them to deepen their relationship with God in and through Christ in the context of a Spirit-filled community.

Pre-requisite: none

Religious Education: “Christ and Culture”: Grade 10 Open

This course both invites and challenges the adolescent to personalize the principles that guide Catholics in understanding their role in shaping culture through our discipleship. The exploration of these principles starts with the Scriptural foundations to the questions of what it means to be human and how God has and continues to shape our humanity through culture. The principles are then developed through the Gospel themes that reveal how Jesus’ Kingdom of God is expressed in all of our relationships: to ourselves, to others, to our civil society, to our Church, and to our Global community.

Pre-requisite: none

Religious Education: “Faith and Culture: World Religions”: Grade 11 University

This course will fulfil the expectations of the Church in its desire that students in Catholic schools develop an objective and respectful understanding of other religious traditions from the perspective of the Catholic Church. To that end, student learning will include an understanding of the Church’s teachings on world religious traditions and those principles which inform ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, together with an historical overview of the Church’s relationship with various religions, particularly Judaism and Islam. For all students, this course will help break down prejudice about other religions, and for some they may lead to a deeper understanding and more authentic adherence to the teachings of the Church concerning spiritual and moral truth. Other religious traditions are encountered through the unique perspective of the Catholic Church.

Pre-requisite: Grade 10 Open Religion or Grade 10 Academic English

Religious Education: “Faith and Culture: World Religions”: Grade 11 College

This course will fulfil the expectations of the Church in its desire that students in Catholic schools develop an objective and respectful understanding of other religious traditions from the perspective of the Catholic Church. To that end, student learning will include an understanding of the Church’s teachings on world religious traditions and how they are expressed through ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. Within a historic and cultural context, students will explore the encounter between Christianity and other religious traditions. For all students, this course will help break down prejudice about other religions, and for some they may lead to a deeper understanding and more authentic adherence to the teachings of the Church concerning spiritual and moral truth. Other religious traditions are encountered through the unique perspective of the Catholic Church.

Pre-requisite: Grade 10 Open Religion or Grade 10 Academic or Applied English

Religious Education: “Faith and Culture: World Religions”: Grade 11 Workplace

This course will fulfil the expectations of the Church in its desire that students in Catholic schools develop an objective and respectful understanding of other religious traditions from the perspective of the Catholic Church. Students will explore the universal themes within the world’s major religious traditions. Within a contemporary cultural context, students will explore the encounter between Christianity and other religious traditions. For all students, this course will help break down prejudice about other religions, and for some they may lead to a deeper understanding and more authentic adherence to the teachings of the Church concerning spiritual and moral truth. Other religious traditions are encountered through the unique perspective of the Catholic Church.

Pre-requisite: none

Religious Education: “Church and Culture”: Grade 12 University

This course has the aim of assisting students in understanding themselves as moral persons living the way of Christ through an examination of ethical theories, the revelation of sacred Scripture, and the experience and teaching of the Catholic Church. While grounded in Revelation, the course also examines the contributions of Philosophy and the sciences to a Catholic understanding of ethics and moral living. Students will explore their own ethical and moral stance through an examination of various arenas of life such as issue of justice and peace, freedom, reconciliation, family, marriage and political life. This course is intended to prepare the senior student for the lifelong task of discerning what is good and of God while growing in their ability to live accordingly as moral persons and active, life-giving members of a global society.

Pre-requisite: Grade 11 University Religion or Grade 11 University English

Religious Education: “Church and Culture”: Grade 12 College

This course has the aim of assisting students in understanding themselves as moral persons living the way of Christ through an examination of ethical theories, the revelation of sacred Scripture, and the experience and teaching of the Catholic Church. It engages students in critical reflection on significant contemporary moral and ethical issues in light of Scripture, Church teaching, and important thinkers. Social and ecological justice issues are explored along with a study of topics that focus on Christian mercy and forgiveness. The graces and challenges of relationships, marriage, and family life are explored from a Catholic perspective. Students are challenged to articulate and adopt the Christian stance in the political world.

Pre-requisite: Grade 11 College or University Religion; or Grade 11 College or University English

Religious Education: “Church and Culture”: Grade 12 Workplace

This course has the aim of assisting students in understanding themselves as moral persons living the way of Christ through an examination of the revelation of sacred Scripture, and the experience and teaching of the Catholic Church. It engages students in critical reflection on significant contemporary moral and ethical issues in light of Scripture, Church teaching, and their own experiences. Social and ecological justice issues are explored along with a study of topics that focus on Christian mercy and forgiveness. The

graces and challenges of relationships, marriage, and family life are explored from a Catholic perspective. Students are challenged to adopt the Christian stance in the political world.

Pre-requisite: none

4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 9

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- accept and study Scripture as God’s living word;
- attend to Scripture as a guide for seeking truth and making moral decisions in a spirit of discipleship;
- use Scripture as a spiritual source of strength and prayer;
- listen to Scripture in order to view contemporary realities and events in terms of their deeper significance.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain the relationship between Scripture and Divine Revelation (CCC §51-141);
- explain how the message of Scripture informs and challenges society (CCC §1878-1939);
- describe the development of oral and written traditions in Scripture using historical, literary and critical approaches;
- demonstrate a familiarity with and an ability to retell key biblical narratives (the Sermon on the Mount, the Sinai covenant) that illustrate God’s faithful covenant relationship with a chosen people and the community’s response to this relationship;
- express connections between the relationships described in biblical events and their own life experiences.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of Sacred Scripture as divinely inspired literature, the word of God expressed in human terms; • identify the canon of Sacred Scripture as defined by the Catholic Church as 27 books in the New Testament and 46 books in the Old Testament; • identify the various types of literature found in Scripture (e.g., poetry, drama, song lyrics, recorded preaching, myth, saga, parables, fables, stories of calling, stories of heroism and villainy, historical narratives, collections of laws, wisdom literature, epistles, and Gospels); • demonstrate knowledge of Scripture as the saving history of God’s activity in the life of the people of Israel and of the early Christian community; • demonstrate knowledge of major stories and events in Scripture (the Sermon on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Mount, the Sinai covenant), and discuss the Christian faith with reference to these passages; • understand that Scripture deals with the ultimate questions of life and offers a religious understanding of these questions based on the formative events in the history of God’s people; • locate key Scriptural passages (e.g., the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes); • critique contemporary values with the teachings found in the Gospels; • communicate a genuine understanding of the Beatitudes and the Ten Commandments, and their relevance to Christian life. |
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PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize that the love of God for all people demands justice;
- understand true happiness as being faithful to God in learning to be true to oneself;
- believe in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord;
- appreciate and imitate Jesus' generous attitude toward others;
- follow the first commandment in placing all hope in God and avoiding contemporary forms of idolatry and slavery;
- explain how God desires to enter into friendship with all through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, and so bring them to know the truth.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe what it means to believe and live in Christ, and name some of the joys and demands involved (CCC §144-165);
- explain the identity of Jesus as the Incarnate Word of God, and the importance of this teaching for the Christian faith (CCC §461-478), and how it makes sacred all that is human;
- realize God's desire to be known and loved through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit (CCC §456-460);
- consider how religious faith is shaped by human experience (i.e., one's family, one's culture, one's temperament);
- describe Mary as a model of discipleship (CCC §494, 148-149).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of how Jesus affirms the dignity of every person; • recognize discipleship as the call to follow Jesus in word and deed; • identify how faith means developing a relationship with God; • articulate what it means to be loved and to love unconditionally; • express what it means to love God through Jesus and his Church (CCC §751-801); • describe how faith in Jesus Christ challenges his disciples to love and respect others; • define hope as a virtue which keeps us searching for true happiness and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> which sustains us in times of abandonment and struggle; • explore the Christian dimensions of love of God and neighbour as revealed in the discipleship of Mary within the context of popular notions of love (CCC §1604, 1822-1829, 2448); • articulate ways that faith is reasonable (CCC §154-159); • evaluate how to live in and challenge society based on the model of Jesus; • summarize how followers of Jesus are called to love self and others; • examine the Christian affirmation of hope for their own lives in the light of the death and resurrection of Jesus. |
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CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- understand the human body as sacred, regardless of appearance;
- value the basic dignity of every person within relationships;
- respect physical, bodily change as integral to God's creation of us;
- take on the attitudes of Christ;
- develop hope in the light of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate a knowledge of how Church teaching informs moral decision-making (CCC §2030-2040);
- understand the role and nature of conscience in moral decision-making (CCC §1776-1794);
- demonstrate the use of Christian moral principles in personal decision-making;
- review and apply the decision-making model of see, judge, act, evaluate;
- understand the nature of sin, both personal and social (CCC §1846-1869).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- know that each person has been created with the freedom to shape his or her own relationships;
- identify ways that the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes help us understand the Christian attitude toward being with others (CCC §1716-1724);
- explain how the Christian concept of society is radically inclusive (CCC §1928-1942);
- understand that there are morally acceptable and morally unacceptable ways to express any emotion;
- explore the Christian concept of love, *agape*, as distinct from popular notions of love;
- demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Magisterium in moral decision-making;
- explain what makes authority legitimate and recognize legitimate authority within various sectors of society: school, civic community, Church (CCC §1897-1904);
- define forgiveness and identify areas in their life where they are called to forgive;
- define hope and its role in Christian living, identifying people who model Christian hope;
- explain the challenge of God's preferential option for the poor;
- describe how the love of God for all people demands justice;
- interpret table fellowship, as used by Jesus Christ, for their own lives;
- explain and interpret the fourth commandment as it applies to families.

PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- share their faith with others in the context of religious celebration;
- participate regularly at Sunday Mass;
- believe in the power of prayer to nourish hope;
- take up the challenge of living a life of prayer in contemporary culture.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- use a variety of prayer forms to enrich and express personal and communal spirituality (CCC §2559-2565, 2623-2643);
- demonstrate a knowledge of the connections between a life of prayer and the challenge of the Christian call to be loving in contemporary culture;
- define the Church's teaching on sacramentality and explain its connection with all of creation (CCC §1113-1130);
- understand the role of sign and symbol in sacramental expression (CCC §1145-1152);
- define and appreciate the individual and communal significance of sacramental reconciliation and forgiveness (CCC §1440-1470, 1480-1484).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a knowledge of the connections between a life of prayer and the challenges of Christian life in contemporary culture; • recognize the meaning and implications of the Lord's Prayer for daily living and describe the Our Father as a summary of the Gospel (CCC §2759-2772); • explain the importance of Sunday Mass for Christian Life; • define the Church's teaching on sacramentality and explain its connection with all creation; • understand the role of bodily posture and gesture in prayer; • understand the role of sign and symbol in sacramental expression, particularly in the Eucharist; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define reconciliation and understand the conditions for reconciliation; • demonstrate an understanding of Christian hope and its role in Christian living; • use a variety of prayer forms (including traditional forms such as the Rosary, litanies, Eucharistic Adoration, etc.) to enrich and express both personal and communal spirituality; • give examples of how reconciliation restores people to the community and heals relationships; • name and appreciate the fruits of forgiveness; • distinguish between reconciliation and forgiveness; • explain how the Church enables and facilitates reconciliation. |
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FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- be open to forgiveness and reconciliation in healing relationships;
- respect the sacred gift of human fertility;
- commit themselves to chastity in view of the relational meaning of God’s gift of sexuality;
- develop decision-making and assertiveness skills which protect and promote chastity;
- choose their personal values in light of the love revealed by Jesus;
- respond with awareness and Christian compassion to the HIV/AIDS crisis.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explore the importance of fostering a positive, healthy self-esteem physically, intellectually, spiritually and socially;
- discern personal values in light of Gospel values and Church teaching;
- analyse the role of family in society and in the Church (CCC §2201-2233);
- demonstrate an understanding of the importance of personal freedom in shaping interpersonal relationships.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine intellectual growth and ways of learning; • explain how a wide range of emotions can influence personal decisions, actions, and relationships; • evaluate emotions in the light of good or evil actions; • recognize the importance of a healthy positive acceptance of self, with strengths and weakness; • recognize and compare the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships (e.g., bullying); • explain the difference between forgiveness and reconciliation in relationships; • examine the meaning of the word ‘love’ in light of the Gospel meaning and its use in society; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define chastity and understand why it is a Christian virtue; • analyse sexual decision-making in relation to the meaning of chastity (CCC §2337-2359); • demonstrate a respect for the human body, in light of the sacredness of human life created by God; • recognize authentic authority as worthy of honour and respect; • describe the Christian family as the basis of society and as domestic Church; • describe symptoms, treatments and prevention of major sexually-transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS, and their effect on human fertility and life. |
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4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 10

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- respond to the Gospel invitation to live justly with God and neighbour and to challenge all forms of injustice;
- use Scripture in their prayer and worship;
- read the Gospels as a way of coming to know Jesus more deeply;
- appreciate the Gospels as testimonies of faith in the risen Lord Jesus.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- identify the four Gospels as the heart of the Christian Scriptures and the primary source of knowledge about Jesus (CCC §125);
- recognize the Gospels as testimonies of faith in Jesus and an invitation to grow toward wholeness by living as his faithful disciples;
- develop appropriate skills for interpreting Scripture through a harmony of the methods of exegesis and the guidance of the Teaching Authority of the Church;
- explain the “good news” of the Gospel story as a way to know God’s saving love for humanity.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate how the Gospels are the primary source of information and understanding about the person of Jesus; • demonstrate an understanding of the Christian community’s growing appreciation of the divinity of Jesus (expressed in such titles as Christ, Son of Man, Lord, Son of God, Saviour), as a foundation for the process which would lead to the great Christian creeds (CCC §430-662); • demonstrate the similarities and differences between the various Gospel portraits of Jesus; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate the stages of Gospel formation (e.g., the life and teachings of Jesus, the oral tradition, the written tradition); • demonstrate a knowledge of the Gospel call to right relationships with God and neighbour as a way to live as disciples of Jesus; • use the tools of exegesis to interpret the Gospels (e.g., author’s community and purpose, literary genres employed, effects of oral tradition); • retell the parables of Jesus in relation to contemporary times; • use various artistic forms to describe the Gospel portraits of Jesus. |
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PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- ground their personal identity in the Gospel of Jesus;
- acknowledge that the love of God for all people demands justice;
- see the spiritual and sacramental dimensions implicit in their own experience and in the created world;
- engage in community service and appreciate that experience in light of the Christian call to discipleship;
- appreciate their own personal development and discern their personal values, commitments and goals in light of the teaching of Jesus as expressed in the Gospels.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- recognize that there is an absolute truth and God is its source (CCC §2465-2470);
- demonstrate a profound respect for the dignity and mystery of the human person, as both blessed and broken (CCC §356-412), created, loved and redeemed by God (CCC §599-618, 651-655);
- demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Church in God’s plan for salvation (CCC §770-776);
- identify various ways in which the Church expresses itself as the “people of God” (CCC §781-786);
- demonstrate an understanding of the main creedal forms of the Catholic Church (Apostles’ Creed, Nicene Creed, baptismal liturgy).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate what it means to consider Jesus as revelation of the Father’s love; • demonstrate the Christian meaning of personhood as being created in the image and likeness of God; • demonstrate the Christian meaning of the terms “Incarnation” and “Christology”; • demonstrate that the work begun by Jesus continues in the world through the Church and its members; • demonstrate a knowledge of the Church’s teachings on the dignity and worth of the material world; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate ways in which openness to the Holy Spirit in prayer, and attention to sacramental life strengthens Christians to meet the challenges of discipleship; • demonstrate an understanding of Mary as Mother of God and Mother of the Church (CCC §963-975); • demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the communion of saints within Church history (CCC §946-962); • realize the Father’s desire to be known and loved through Jesus Christ. |
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CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- respond to the challenge of God’s preferential option for the poor;
- acknowledge that the love of God for all people demands justice;
- recognize that there is absolute truth, and that God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is its source;
- recognize that justice is an essential ingredient in the liberation of human beings and a key expression of Christian love;
- let the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen them in applying Christian moral principles in making moral decisions and living a life of virtue;
- participate, and encourage participation, in community service as a primary way for developing the common good.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate an understanding of the importance of social justice by applying the teachings of Jesus to their own culture and own life situations (CCC §1928-1942);
- demonstrate how justice is a demand of natural law (CCC §1954-1960);
- recognize that justice is an essential ingredient in the liberation of human beings and a key expression of Christian love;
- demonstrate a knowledge of the social teachings of the Church (CCC §2419-2425);
- use the preferential option for the poor as the criterion for analysing social injustice issues (CCC §2443-2449).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus and the social teachings of the Church and identify their importance for moral decision-making; • demonstrate that salvation history teaches that all of God’s creation is good, that human beings are responsible stewards of creation, and that sin (both personal and social) is present in the world; • define justice in terms of respect for the integrity and balance of creation; • identify justice as an essential ingredient in the liberation of human persons and a key expression of Christian love; • employ Christian moral principles to issues concerning the media; • define responsible stewardship; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define envy and understand why envy may be sinful; • acknowledge that the love of God for all people demands justice; • suggest ways that they could use the preferential option for the poor as the criterion for analysing social injustice issues and be able to respond with compassion to situations of injustice and prejudice; • explain what makes authority legitimate (i.e., the common good); • explain how justice is a demand of natural law; • identify the balance between the right to own and the requirements to share in specific situations (CCC §2402-2406); • explain how the Church’s social teachings provide criteria for moral judgement and action. |
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PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize how the whole person (mind, body and spirit) is involved in prayer;
- appreciate the contribution of prayer to the life journey of Catholics;
- reverence and use the traditional prayer forms of Catholicism;
- understand and appreciate the importance of religious symbol and ritual in the sacramental life of the Church, particularly the Eucharist;
- appreciate charitable giving and tithing as an offering to God and a form of prayer.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- recognize the spiritual and sacramental dimension implicit in human experience and the created world;
- explain the meaning and role of Eucharist and Anointing of the Sick in the life of a Christian;
- demonstrate a knowledge of the various purposes of prayer (CCC §2623-2643);
- identify and assess the value of both personal and communal prayer within Christianity;
- identify and describe the role and history of the sacraments in the life of Catholics with special emphasis on the sacraments of Eucharist (CCC §1322-1405) and Anointing of the Sick (CCC §1499-1525).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of the role of religious symbol, celebration and ritual in revealing the significance of important passages in the life journey of human beings; • identify the seven sacraments of the Church as visible signs of God's invisible presence and action; • understand the importance of the main traditional prayers of the Church (Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory to the Father); • recognize the spiritual and sacramental dimensions implicit in human experience and the created world; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the role of the sacraments in the life journey of Catholics with special emphasis on the sacraments of initiation and healing (CCC §1212-1314), (CCC §1145-1162); • identify and explain the meaning and structure of the Eucharist (CCC §1322-1405); • understand the reasons for Sunday Eucharist obligation in Catholic Church tradition (CCC §2174-2188); • identify and assess the value of both personal and communal prayer for a life of faith; • demonstrate a knowledge of the various purposes of prayer. |
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FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- choose and promote chastity as the personal integration of sexuality in the service of love;
- respect the dignity of all forms of life – and in particular, of human life – at every stage of its existence;
- demonstrate sensitivity and compassion for persons with HIV/AIDS.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate an understanding of the sacredness of the human person, body and spirit (CCC §2258-2262), from conception until natural death (CCC §2268-2283);
- recognize and explore the meaning of integrity and belonging in human life;
- describe the stages of cognitive and affective development throughout the life span;
- understand the family life cycle;
- examine healthy patterns of relating with a focus on friendship, intimacy, sexuality and communication.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe stages of cognitive and affective (emotional) development throughout the human life span, with a focus on adolescence;
- demonstrate awareness of the experience of anger, its expression, management strategies and sources of help;
- describe the ways in which human growth is distorted by relationships that involve exploitative, harassing or abusive behaviours;
- explore the issues of sexual attraction and sexual decision-making in the light of chastity and the consequences of pre-marital sexual activity (CCC §2337-2359);
- explore aspects of the family life cycle (including marriage, birth, raising children, children leaving home, old age, death), as well as the impact on families of premature death, separation or divorce, and the situation of blended families;
- demonstrate an understanding of the skills needed to resolve conflict in a Gospel-centred manner;
- articulate the qualities which are essential to the building of healthy relationships, with a particular focus on the positive impact of intimacy and mutuality;
- evaluate healthy and unhealthy attitudes to the human body and physical appearance;
- define and discuss the importance of sexuality and sexual attraction as gifts from God;
- explore the meaning of respect for life from conception until natural death;
- explore the effects of HIV and its potential stages of infection;
- describe how sexual decision-making is guided by the virtue of chastity, with a particular focus on identifying the physical, emotional, social and spiritual consequences of pre-marital sexual activity;
- explain the moral implications and the unadvertised risk involved in the use of condoms to fight HIV infection.

4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 11 University

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- understand Scripture as a basis for the Catholic Church's stance regarding inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue;
- understand the important role of sacred writings in the formation of religious identity and moral life in other religions;
- recognize the Bible as revelation of God's word.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- connect the sacred writings of the world's major religious traditions and their importance for life decisions of adherents;
- demonstrate an understanding of revelation in the world's major religious traditions;
- show respect for the sacred writings of the world's major religions;
- explain the Catholic Church's position on inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue;
- summarize the worldview of the major world religious traditions and the notion of the transcendent.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • articulate the relevance of the Hebrew Scriptures in the life decisions of observant Jewish people; • demonstrate the importance of covenants (originating with Abraham, Moses, and David) in the self-understanding of the Jewish people; • explain the development of rabbinical Judaism on the basis of Torah and Talmud; • evaluate the role of the Christian Scriptures in expressing the importance of the life and teaching of Jesus; • describe the foundational role of the life of the prophet Muhammad in the story of Islam and the importance of the Qur'an in the faith and life decisions of Muslims; • demonstrate the foundational importance of the life and teachings of Siddhartha Gautama in the Buddhist way of life; • describe the role of fundamentalist movements in various religious traditions; • describe the relationship between the life questions of the various world religions and their Scriptures (e.g., the existence of | <p>God, family life, medical ethics, ecology, war and peace);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locate various scriptural and sacred writings that address life's significant questions; • analyse the connection between the life stories of religious founders and sacred writings; • evaluate the importance of Sacred Scripture/writings for moral decision-making (e.g., The Golden Rule); • research and present the Catholic Church's position on inter-faith and ecumenical dialogue using primary documents; • articulate a cogent, respectful and appropriate response to any efforts which seek to misrepresent the adherents and/or the beliefs of any of the world's major religious traditions. |
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PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- value the importance of the historical development of Catholicism for personal and communal religious identity within the Church;
- critically study the world's religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood;
- respond in wonder and awe to the mysteries of creation;
- respect the various expressions of the sacred as found in the world's major religious traditions;
- appreciate the contributions which the major world religious traditions have made to Canadian society;
- understand the role of family in the various religious traditions, and appreciate the Catholic stance in this regard.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain the universal recognition of the spiritual dimension implicit in human experience and the created world;
- explore some of the ultimate questions about life as found in the Christian tradition, in some of the major world religions, and in Aboriginal Spirituality;
- explain the importance of the historical development of the Church and its contemporary self-expression (e.g., Church councils, the divisions within Christendom, ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue);
- examine the human search for meaning in the context of religious traditions (e.g., Aboriginal Spirituality, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism) and within contemporary cultures.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of the ultimate questions about life; • articulate ways in which people encounter the sacred in life; • examine the human search for meaning and purpose within contemporary culture; • assess the relationship between faith and culture; • explain the key events in the story of the Catholic Church from apostolic times to the modern era, including an explanation of the importance of the historical development of the Catholic Church and its contemporary self-understanding (e.g., the Apostolic and Nicene | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creed, Church councils, authoritative teachings of the Magisterium, Catholic documents on ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue); • explore the importance of religious creeds for the various religions of the world; • summarize Vatican II's Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions (<i>Nostra Aetate</i>) and the first chapter of Pope John Paul II's encyclical <i>Redemptoris Missio</i>; • research traditional and contemporary examples of people of faith and integrity. |
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CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize the importance of moral living in the human search for meaning and purpose;
- appreciate the role moral codes play in religious worldviews;
- critically name the way secularism influences moral behaviour within contemporary culture;
- critically name the impact of religious fundamentalism and cults on the moral behaviour of their members;
- understand how the moral teachings of the world's major religious traditions are used as guidelines by their members for daily living;
- recognize historical and contemporary examples of moral living as found in the various religions of the world;
- appreciate the role world religions can play in transforming human institutions, and the impact this can have on changing the human heart.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe the moral codes and key moral precepts in various world religions;
- analyse how secularism, religious fundamentalism and cults influence cultures and moral behaviours;
- explain the relationship between covenant and commandment and the moral life within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;
- research the moral teachings of the various world religions with regard to critical contemporary issues (e.g., war and peace, poverty, sanctity of life, environmental degradation, human rights).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the role morality plays in the human search for meaning and purpose; • explain how secularism, religious fundamentalism and cults influence moral behaviour; • assess the role of the media in terms of how its coverage of moral issues impacts on public perception of religious traditions; • describe the moral precepts found in the major world religions; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine and evaluate the role moral codes play in shaping the worldview of people of faith; • compare and contrast the moral guidelines of the major world religions with those found in contemporary culture; • explain the relationship between the significant efforts of the world's major religious traditions to address situations of global injustice and their particular moral codes. |
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PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize the importance of prayer and worship for a religious worldview;
- know and respect the diverse forms of prayer and worship found in the religions of the world;
- know and respect the religious symbols in the world's major religious traditions;
- recognize and appreciate the impact of Judaism on Catholic prayer and liturgical forms.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate a knowledge of religious worship as a response to sacred reality;
- explain the importance of prayer in a religious worldview;
- understand the role of prayer, worship and religious symbolism within the world's major religious traditions;
- explain the impact of inter-religious dialogue on some of the spiritual practices of the world's major religious traditions;
- assess how secularism devalues religious prayer and worship.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a knowledge of religious prayer and worship as a human response to the presence of sacred reality; • understand the importance of religious symbol, celebration, and ritual in the formation of religious communities; • identify key features of religious worship within Native Spirituality; • explain the influence of monasticism within the history of Christian spirituality; • demonstrate an understanding of the role of religious prayer and worship within the Reform traditions of Christianity; • identify the various forms of religious worship as expressed in Islam's five pillars of faith; • understand the use of prayer and worship within the various Hindu paths of salvation; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the role of prayer within the Jewish tradition and its impact on Christian prayer forms (e.g., Passover and the Mass); • describe key religious symbols and rituals within Judaism; • identify the importance of meditation for Buddhist forms of prayer and worship; • explore the connection between religious worship and art; • plan and organize thematic readings using materials from various religious traditions; • contrast and compare the life of prayer as found in the various religions of the world; • analyse the challenges presented by contemporary culture to living a life that is attentive to spiritual growth; • understand the major contemporary statements of the Catholic Church with regard to inter-religious and ecumenical worship. |
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FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- critically assess how the conflicting messages of contemporary culture distort the intrinsic dignity of the human person and of authentic relationships;
- recognize the ways in which sexuality is called to be loving and life-giving;
- commit to the virtue of chastity in guiding their self-expression as sexual beings;
- critically assess world religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain how faith develops and deepens, recognizing that the person and life of Christ is the primary guide for the spiritual journey;
- examine the role of family within the world's major religious traditions;
- recognize that understanding and valuing the full meaning of sexuality is an ongoing life challenge guided by the virtue of chastity;
- critique the attitudes and behaviours that depersonalize human sexuality;
- consider gender roles within Canadian society and the world's major religious traditions.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the role of family within other world religions; • describe various models of family; • explore the differentiation between gender roles within Canadian society and the world's major religious traditions; • analyse the impact of the family on the individual; • demonstrate skills contributing to the development of inclusive community whose hallmark is hospitality; • identify the beliefs of the world's major religious traditions that inform their understanding of the dignity of the person and the sacredness of the sexual act; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critique the depersonalizing attitudes and behaviours associated with sexuality (e.g., masturbation, pornography, promiscuity, prostitution, homophobia); • explain the message of the Catholic bishops of the nation and/or the local bishops, concerning HIV/AIDS; • critically assess the distorting messages of contemporary culture on the development of a positive Christian anthropology; • use various forms of media to create positive images of the person and of human sexuality that reflect a sense of shared values between the major world religious traditions. |
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4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 11 College

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- understand Scripture as a basis for the Catholic Church's stance regarding inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue;
- understand the important role of sacred writings in the formation of religious identity and moral life in other religions;
- recognize the Bible as revelation of God's word.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate the key narratives and events in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and identify their importance for the adherents of the Jewish and Christian religious traditions;
- demonstrate an understanding of revelation in the world's major religious traditions;
- express an understanding of the relationship between the sacred writings of the world's major religious traditions and their importance for life decisions of adherents;
- explain the Catholic Church's position on inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue;
- understand the fundamental stance of the major world religious traditions and the notion of the transcendent/the holy Other/the divine.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain the role of the founders/foundational narratives of the world's major religious traditions, their teachings and its relationship to sacred writings;
- describe the relationship between the *creed, code and cult* of the world's major religious traditions and their sacred writings;
- describe the role of fundamentalist movements in various religious traditions with a particular focus on their influence on contemporary world events;
- explain the position of the Catholic Church when she says: *The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men.* (Nostra Aetate, 4);
- describe the religious fabric of their own local community and nation;
- locate various scriptural and sacred writings that address life's significant questions (e.g., war and peace, ecology, medical ethics);
- analyse the connection between the life stories of religious founders and sacred writings;
- evaluate the importance of oral tradition/Sacred Scripture/writings for moral decision-making;
- enter into a respectful dialogue with the adherents of the major world religious traditions;
- identify the contributions of the major world religious traditions (e.g., Aboriginal Spirituality, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism) within the life of

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their local community and throughout Canada; • describe appropriate responses to any efforts which seek to misrepresent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the adherents and/or the beliefs of any of the world's major religious traditions. |
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PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- value the importance of the historical development of Catholicism for personal and communal religious identity within the Church;
- critically study the world's religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood;
- respond in wonder and awe to the mysteries of creation;
- respect the various expressions of the sacred as found in the world's major religious traditions;
- appreciate the contributions which the major world religious traditions have made to Canadian society;
- understand the role of family in the various religious traditions, and appreciate the Catholic stance in this regard.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- examine the human search for meaning and purpose within contemporary culture and the world's major religious traditions;
- recognize the spiritual dimension implicit in human experience and the created world;
- demonstrate an understanding of the ultimate questions about life as found in the Christian tradition, in some of the major world religions, and in Aboriginal Spirituality;
- explain the importance of the historical development of the Church and its contemporary self-expression (e.g., Church councils, the divisions within Christendom, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect on the ultimate questions about life; • articulate ways in which people encounter the sacred in life; • examine the human search for meaning and purpose within the major world's religions and contemporary culture; • describe the relationship between faith and culture; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify traditional and contemporary examples of people of faith and integrity; • identify and compare the religious creeds of the major world's religions; • explain the key events in the story of the Catholic Church from apostolic times to the modern era; • investigate the initiatives of the local Catholic community with regard to fostering inter-faith and ecumenical dialogue. |
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CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize the importance of moral living in the human search for meaning and purpose;
- appreciate the role moral codes play in religious worldviews;
- critically name the way secularism influences moral behaviour within contemporary culture;
- critically name the impact of religious fundamentalism and cults on the moral behaviour of their members;
- understand how the moral teachings of the world's major religious traditions are used as guidelines by their members for daily living;
- recognize historical and contemporary examples of moral living as found in the various religions of the world;
- appreciate the role world religions can play in transforming human institutions, and the impact this can have on changing the human heart.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe the moral codes and key moral precepts in various world religions;
- explain how secularism, religious fundamentalism and cults influence cultures and moral behaviours;
- explain the relationship between covenant and commandment and the moral life within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;
- summarize the moral teachings of the various world religions with regard to critical contemporary issues (e.g., war and peace, poverty, sanctity of life, environmental degradation, human rights).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the role morality plays in the human search for meaning and purpose; • explain how secularism, religious fundamentalism and cults influence moral behaviour; • assess the role of the media in terms of how its coverage of moral issues impacts on public perception of religious traditions; • describe the moral precepts found in the major world religions; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine and evaluate the role moral codes play in shaping the worldview of people of faith; • compare and contrast the moral guidelines of the major world religions with those found in contemporary culture; • explain the relationship between the significant efforts of the world's major religious traditions to address situations of global injustice and their particular moral codes. |
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PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize the importance of prayer and worship for a religious worldview;
- know and respect the diverse forms of prayer and worship found in the religions of the world;
- know and respect the religious symbols in the world's major religious traditions;
- recognize and appreciate the impact of Judaism on Catholic prayer and liturgical forms.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate a knowledge of religious worship as a response to sacred reality;
- explain the importance of prayer in a religious worldview;
- understand the role of prayer, worship and religious symbolism within the world's major religious traditions;
- explain the impact of inter-religious dialogue on some of the spiritual practices of the world's major religious traditions;
- assess how secularism devalues religious prayer and worship.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a knowledge of religious prayer and worship as a human response to the presence of sacred reality; • understand the importance of religious symbol, celebration, and ritual in the formation of religious communities; • identify key features of religious worship within Native Spirituality; • demonstrate an understanding of the role of religious prayer and worship within the Reform traditions of Christianity; • identify the various forms of religious worship as expressed in Islam's five pillars of faith; • understand the use of prayer and worship within the various Hindu paths of salvation; • understand the role of prayer within the Jewish tradition and its impact on | <p>Christian prayer forms (e.g., Passover and the Mass);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe key religious symbols and rituals within Judaism; • identify the importance of meditation for Buddhist forms of prayer and worship; • explore the connection between religious worship and art; • plan and organize thematic readings using materials from various religious traditions; • contrast and compare the life of prayer as found in the various religions of the world; • analyse the challenges presented by contemporary culture to living a life that is attentive to spiritual growth; • understand the major contemporary statements of the Catholic Church with regard to inter-religious and ecumenical worship. |
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FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- critically assess how the conflicting messages of contemporary culture distort the intrinsic dignity of the human person and of authentic relationships;
- recognize the ways in which sexuality is called to be loving and life-giving;
- commit to the virtue of chastity in guiding their self-expression as sexual beings;
- critically assess world religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain the stages of faith development, recognizing that the person and life of Christ is the primary guide for the spiritual journey;
- examine the role of family within the world's major religious traditions;
- recognize that understanding and valuing the full meaning of sexuality is an ongoing life challenge guided by the virtue of chastity;
- critique the attitudes and behaviours that depersonalize human sexuality;
- consider gender roles within Canadian society and the world's major religious traditions.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the role of family within other world religions; • describe various models of family; • explore the differentiation between gender roles within Canadian society and the world's major religious traditions; • analyse the impact of the family on the individual; • demonstrate skills contributing to the development of inclusive community whose hallmark is hospitality; • identify the beliefs of the world's major religious traditions that inform their understanding of the dignity of the person and the sacredness of the sexual act; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critique the depersonalizing attitudes and behaviours associated with sexuality (e.g., masturbation, pornography, promiscuity, prostitution, homophobia); • explain the message of the Catholic bishops of the nation and/or the local bishops, concerning HIV/AIDS; • critically assess the distorting messages of contemporary culture on the development of a positive Christian anthropology; • use various forms of media to create positive images of the person and of human sexuality that reflect a sense of shared values between the major world religious traditions. |
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4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 11 Workplace

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- understand Scripture as a basis for the Catholic Church’s stance regarding inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue;
- understand the important role of sacred writings in the formation of religious identity and moral life in other religions;
- recognize the Bible as revelation of God’s word.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- identify the sacred writings of the world’s major religious traditions and their general importance to adherents;
- describe the source of revelation in the world’s major religious traditions;
- recognize the position of the Catholic Church of rejecting “*nothing that is true and holy in these religions.*” (Nostra Aetate, 4);
- explain the fundamental understanding of God held by the major world religious traditions.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organize their knowledge of the relationship between the <i>creed, code</i> and <i>cult</i> of the world’s major religious traditions and their sacred writings; • describe in their own words the significant historical events in the development of the world’s major religious traditions; • explain the importance of the authority of the sacred writings of the world’s major religious traditions in the lives of their adherents; • identify major figures from the history of various religions, and be able to explain the contributions these figures made to their religion; • identify some of the fundamentalist movements in various religious traditions with a particular focus on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their influence on contemporary world events; • describe the Catholic Church’s position on inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue; • investigate the religious fabric of their own local community; • identify various scriptural and sacred writings that address life’s significant questions (e.g., war and peace, the environment, medical ethics); • use their knowledge of the world’s major religious traditions to enter into a respectful dialogue with the adherents of these traditions; • describe appropriate responses to any efforts which seek to misrepresent the adherents and/or the beliefs of any of the world’s major religious traditions. |
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PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- value the importance of the historical development of Catholicism for personal and communal religious identity within the Church;
- critically study the world's religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood;
- respond in wonder and awe to the mysteries of creation;
- respect the various expressions of the sacred as found in the world's major religious traditions;
- appreciate the contributions which the major world religious traditions have made to Canadian society;
- understand the role of family in the various religious traditions, and appreciate the Catholic stance in this regard.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explore the human search for meaning and purpose in the context of the major religious traditions within contemporary culture;
- recognize the spiritual dimension implicit in human experience and the created world;
- explore some of the ultimate questions about life common to the major religious traditions, including Aboriginal Spirituality;
- outline key moments in Church history.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate a deeper understanding of the ultimate questions about life (e.g., birth, death, marriage, vocation);
- identify some ways in which people encounter the sacred in life;
- examine key aspects of the human search for meaning and purpose within contemporary culture (e.g., through contemporary art, music, film, mass media);
- organize information with regard to key events in the historical development of the Church;
- organize their knowledge of the central tenets expressed by the religious creeds of the major religious traditions of the world;
- describe some historical and contemporary examples of people of faith and integrity (e.g., “biographic minutes”, collages, interviews, bulletin board display);
- investigate how the local Catholic community has sought to foster inter-faith and ecumenical dialogue (e.g., guest speakers, field trips, special events, religion columns in the local secular and diocesan press).

CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize the importance of moral living in the human search for meaning and purpose;
- appreciate the role moral codes play in religious worldviews;
- critically name the way secularism influences moral behaviour within contemporary culture;
- critically name the impact of religious fundamentalism and cults on the moral behaviour of their members;
- understand how the moral teachings of the world's major religious traditions are used as guidelines by their members for daily living;
- recognize historical and contemporary examples of moral living as found in the various religions of the world;
- appreciate the role world religions can play in transforming human institutions, and the impact this can have on changing the human heart.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explore the importance of moral codes in daily living for people of faith;
- identify the key moral precepts of the world's major religious traditions;
- identify the impact of key aspects of secularism, religious fundamentalism and cults on cultures and moral behaviours;
- describe the role of covenant and commandment in the religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;
- investigate the moral teachings of the various world religions on key issues (e.g., war and peace, poverty, sanctity of life, environmental degradation, human rights).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize the role morality plays in the human search for meaning and purpose; • apply their knowledge of secularism, religious fundamentalism and cults to illustrate how these can influence moral attitudes and behaviour; • identify ways in which the media influences public understanding of religious traditions in terms of the media's representation of stances on some moral issues; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify historic and contemporary examples of moral living as found in the various world religions; • explore some of the significant efforts of the world's major religious traditions to address situations of global injustice; • produce an organizer that illustrates the similarities and differences between the basic moral guidelines of the various world religions (e.g., Golden Rule). |
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PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- recognize the importance of prayer and worship for a religious worldview;
- know and respect the diverse forms of prayer and worship found in the religions of the world;
- know and respect the religious symbols in the world's major religious traditions;
- recognize and appreciate the impact of Judaism on Catholic prayer and liturgical forms.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate a basic knowledge of religious worship as a response to our experience of sacred reality;
- recognize the importance of prayer in a religious worldview;
- describe the role of prayer, worship and religious symbolism within the world's major religious traditions;
- investigate the impact of inter-religious dialogue on some of the spiritual practices of the world's major religious traditions;
- describe how secularism devalues religious prayer and worship.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a general knowledge of religious prayer and worship as a human response to the presence of sacred reality; • understand the importance of religious symbol, celebration, and ritual in the formation of religious communities; • identify key features of religious worship within Native Spirituality; • describe the influence of the Jewish tradition on Christian prayer forms (e.g., Passover and the Mass); • identify the major contemporary statements of the Catholic Church with regard to inter-religious and ecumenical worship; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the connection between religious worship, music and art; • plan and organize thematic readings using materials from various religious traditions; • produce an organizer that illustrates key aspects of the place and importance of prayer in the various religions of the world; • assess some of the challenges presented by contemporary culture to living a life of prayer; • apply their understanding of ritual to marking key moments in life (e.g., birth, marriage, coming of age, death). |
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FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- critically assess how the conflicting messages of contemporary culture distort the intrinsic dignity of the human person and of authentic relationships;
- recognize the ways in which sexuality is called to be loving and life-giving;
- commit to the virtue of chastity in guiding their self-expression as sexual beings;
- critically assess world religious traditions in view of the centrality of human dignity and personhood.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain the stages of faith development, recognizing that the person and life of Christ is the primary guide for the spiritual journey;
- examine the role of family within the world's major religious traditions;
- recognize that understanding and valuing the full meaning of sexuality is an ongoing life challenge guided by the virtue of chastity;
- critique the attitudes and behaviours that depersonalize human sexuality;
- consider gender roles within Canadian society and the world's major religious traditions.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the role of family within other world religions; • describe various models of family; • explore the differentiation between gender roles within Canadian society and the world's major religious traditions; • analyse the impact of the family on the individual; • demonstrate skills contributing to the development of inclusive community whose hallmark is hospitality; • identify the beliefs of the world's major religious traditions that inform their understanding of the dignity of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the person and the sacredness of the sexual act; • critique the depersonalizing attitudes and behaviours associated with sexuality (e.g., masturbation, pornography, promiscuity, prostitution, homophobia); • explain the message of the Catholic bishops of the nation and/or the local bishops, concerning HIV/AIDS; • use various forms of media to create positive images of the person and of human sexuality that reflect a sense of shared values between the major world religious traditions. |
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4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 12 University

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- refer to Scripture in valuing the basic dignity of every person, created in the image and likeness of God;
- see in Scripture the challenge of God's preferential option for the poor;
- appreciate the role of prophets in Biblical culture, and of the prophetic stance in contemporary culture;
- build Christian community within the class around the study of Scripture;
- acknowledge that the love of God for all people as manifested in Scripture demands a commitment to justice and moral living;
- take up the Christian responsibility to work for justice and peace.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain the Catholic understanding of the Bible as God's self-revelation;
- use appropriate exegesis to analyse Scripture;
- identify the role of Scripture in ethical and moral decision-making;
- explain how Scriptures can be used in analysing and critiquing personal and social situations.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- recognize the self-revelation of God through an interpretation of Exodus and the prophetic call narratives;
- describe the various literary genres within the Scriptures and the manner in which they reveal God and the kingdom;
- compare the role and traits of the prophet with contemporary prophetic figures;
- explain how the Scriptures are God's offer to transform lives (CCC §101-133);
- identify Israel's moral code as found in the Mosaic Covenant and express its relevance for moral decision-making today;
- examine the Sermon on the Mount as images of the kingdom and the revelation of Gospel ethics;
- summarize the values and lifestyles of the early Church community, as described in the letters of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles;
- use the Beatitudes and Paul's discourse on freedom as a framework to discuss current notions of happiness and freedom;
- research and identify the social, political and ethical impact of the Gospel;
- discuss the impact of Gospel ethics on Church teaching and Catholic moral living.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- integrate the religious quest in their search for meaning in the contemporary world;
- appreciate work as a participation in the activity of God;
- commit themselves to community service as an expression of their response to the call to discipleship;
- appreciate persons as rational, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual in nature.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe the role of the Church as an institution empowered by the Holy Spirit and charged with the responsibility of the moral and ethical formation of her people;
- explore the origin and purpose of Catholic social teaching;
- explore ways Church teaching can help people understand contemporary ethical and moral issues as part of the discernment process.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define a Catholic understanding of happiness and analyse the challenges in contemporary society to both personal and societal happiness; • define key tenets in Catholic social teaching (e.g., human dignity, solidarity, the common good, social sin, and subsidiarity); • apply the key tenets of Catholic social teaching to a critical examination of contemporary culture issues such as the dignity of work (CCC §2427-2430), technology, poverty, role of the media, violence, racism, gender issues, ecology; • define and critique the relationship of the Catholic Church to the human rights and social justice tradition; • examine Church documents concerning the role, structure and nature of the Church and its members | <p>(e.g., <i>Gaudium et Spes</i>, <i>Evangelium Vitae</i>);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define and analyse the impact of the Church's preferential option for the poor; • explain the relationship between the common good and private good in Catholic teaching; • critique social, political, and economic structures in light of the Church's social teachings; • express a Catholic understanding of Grace and its implications for Christian living; • research and describe ways in which Catholics are called to participate in professional and political life; • engage in community service and assess it as an example of the call to discipleship and as a vehicle of promotion for the common good. |
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CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- appreciate how persons are created with free will and with the ability to discern right from wrong;
- accept the teachings of Jesus and the Church in their moral choices;

- recognize the right of persons to form labour unions;
- commit themselves to community service in relation to the common good;
- confess their sin as a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour;
- appreciate work as a participation in co-creation.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- identify the main features of a Christian anthropology (CCC §127-174, 1700-1729) and examine the human search for meaning and purpose;
- evaluate the contributions of philosophy and the sciences to a Catholic understanding of ethics and morality;
- apply a contemporary understanding of conscience to the process of conscience formation and moral decision-making;
- define the Catholic understanding of the nature of sin and reconciliation, both social and individual, and explore sin's impact on human happiness;
- apply Church teaching to contemporary ethical and moral issues.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the stages of the human life cycle with particular attention to cognitive, moral and faith development and compare stage theories with their own life experience; • distinguish between ethics and morality using real life situations as examples; • assess the impact of modernity on humanity's understanding of ethics and morality; • articulate the importance of the gift of freedom and human ability to discern right from wrong, to the pursuit of happiness (CCC §1730-1756); • define the relationship among the three elements of conscience (capacity, process, judgement) and the Church's teaching regarding virtues, conscience formation, judgement and decision-making (action); • describe how Scripture and the Catholic Tradition inform conscience and moral decision-making; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain why the Ten Commandments are imperatives for making moral decisions today; • describe how norms function in the search for the good out of necessity to maintain social and moral order; • apply the basic principles of Catholic moral teaching (e.g., natural law, principle of double effect, respect for human life and human dignity, the common good) to contemporary moral issues; • develop strategies to prepare for the challenges of Christian life in the marketplace or in post-secondary education; • compare and contrast the various philosophical and theological theories of how faith and human reason interact; • define sin as a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour; and reconciliation as conversion involving Grace, a process of forgiveness, and restitution; • explore contemporary issues of social sin, forgiveness and restorative justice. |
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PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- seek the transforming wisdom of the Holy Spirit in their search for authenticity and peace of heart;
- commit themselves to preparation for marriage, proximate and long-range;
- value the commitment necessary for a faithful marriage;
- name and celebrate the connection between the sacrament of marriage and the scriptural image of marriage as a mirror of God’s love for his people in Christ;
- respond to the challenge to priestly and religious vocations as presented by contemporary culture and reflect seriously on the possibility that they are called to such a vocation.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explain the Catholic understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage (CCC §1601-1658), and Holy Orders (CCC §1536-1589);
- define the broad meaning of the term “vocation” as an adoption of a stance before all forms of work as service to God and for others;
- use various forms of prayer to express the spiritual implications of striving to live a moral life.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research and present the Church’s teaching on valid marriages and annulments; • explain why faithfulness to the promise made and the commitment undertaken are necessary in marriage; • describe the characteristics of the conjugal nature of marriage; • research, report on and discuss the various challenges to married life; • conduct research to identify and describe the various forms the call to ministry can take within the Christian community; • explain the meaning of the term “religious vocation” as it applies within today’s Church and its various forms of community life; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the Church’s teaching concerning ordained ministry, the structure of the Church and the role of the Magisterium; • identify the challenge to religious vocations as presented by contemporary culture; • participate in various forms of theological reflection and prayer; • identify ways in which prayer sustains an ethical stance in life and promotes moral living; • identify the various forms of service the call to ministry can take within the Christian community (e.g., religious vocation, lecture, eucharistic minister, choir leader, cantor, St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Women’s League, soup kitchen helper). |
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FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- realize the meaning of the intrinsic dignity of each human person, and its impact on our inherent sense of responsibility towards self and others;
- appreciate the importance of institutions for the common good of society (e.g., family, church, political institutions).

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe the meaning of “the intrinsic dignity of each human person,” and its impact on our inherent sense of responsibility towards self and others;
- define the family as a foundational context for Christian ethical and moral life;
- apply related Church teaching to values and practices that promote or undermine relationships and the sacredness of life.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- identify the many facets of humans; rational, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual in nature, and discuss how this impacts on moral living;
- describe ways in which the limits of human freedom can be challenging but can also offer opportunities for personal growth and fulfillment (e.g., living with a disability, rejection);
- describe ways of forming healthy and appropriate intimate relationships as long-range preparation for marriage and parenthood;
- examine the role of chastity in the personal integration of sexuality and in the expression of sexuality in relationships and marriage;
- articulate a Christian understanding of the family as domestic church and the manner in which it participates in and contributes to a healthy and just society;
- identify the elements of a strong family;
- describe the impact of secularism on a contemporary understanding of family (e.g., decline in size, definition of what constitutes family, role of family members, bereavement, mental illness, economic issues);
- describe the role Church encyclicals and letters play in teaching about and guiding Family Life concerns;
- demonstrate an understanding and profound respect for the sacred gift of human procreation, the gift of children, the experience of parenting;
- describe the manner in which the sacred gift of human procreation and life itself can be protected (including a description and moral assessment of the impact of natural family planning, contraception, reproductive and genetic technologies and STIs on human life and fertility);
- research and apply the Church’s teaching on the sacredness of human life from conception to natural death to issues such as euthanasia, stem cell research, the impact of STIs, contraception including natural family planning, genetic and reproductive technology, and assisted suicide.

4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 12 College

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- refer to Scripture in valuing the basic dignity of every person, created in the image and likeness of God;
- see in Scripture the challenge of God's preferential option for the poor;
- appreciate the role of prophets in Biblical culture, and of the prophetic stance in contemporary culture;
- build Christian community within the class around the study of Scripture;
- acknowledge that the love of God for all people as manifested in Scripture demands a commitment to justice and moral living;
- take up the Christian responsibility to work for justice and peace.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate knowledge of selected narratives and events in Sacred Scripture, and identify their importance for life decisions;
- explain how Scriptures can be used in analysing and critiquing personal and social situations.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the self-revelation of God by interpreting Exodus and the prophetic call narratives; • analyse the Sermon on the Mount in order to discern Jesus' ethical stance; • assess the impact of Individualism and the media, on some aspects of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian society (e.g., environment, personal goal setting, values) in light of the Gospel message; • summarize the values and lifestyles of the early Church community, as described in the letters of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles. |
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PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- integrate the religious quest in their search for meaning in the contemporary world;
- appreciate work as a participation in the activity of God;
- commit themselves to community service as an expression of their response to the call to discipleship;
- appreciate persons as rational, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual in nature.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- understand the role of the Church as Mother and Teacher in moral and ethical formation;

- explore ways Church teaching can help people understand the influences of contemporary culture in moral and ethical formation.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- express how the Church has been a source of moral formation through history;
- explain what is meant by happiness from a Christian perspective;
- explain the relationship between the common good and the private good in Catholic teaching;
- define and explain the concepts of sin, social evil, forgiveness, social reconciliation, and restorative justice;
- express the Christian understanding of Grace and its implications for Christian living;
- create a display which invites people to consider why Catholics are called to participate in political life.

CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- appreciate how persons are created with free will and with the ability to discern right from wrong;
- accept the teachings of Jesus and the Church in their moral choices;
- recognize the right of persons to form labour unions;
- commit themselves to community service in relation to the common good;
- confess their sin as a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour;
- appreciate work as a participation in co-creation.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- distinguish between morality and ethics;
- understand and apply Catholic social teaching to various situations;
- explore the relationship between Church and politics.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- using real life situations provide concrete examples of the distinction between morality and ethics;
- describe the various aspects of the human person that are most important for ethics (i.e., communal in nature, form identity by the stance taken in life, shaped through one's language, shape their character through choices and actions, possess conscience);
- describe the various forms of justice, and Gospel ethics that pertain to Catholic social justice teachings;
- identify various examples of people who are models of justice;
- analyse, apply and present the concepts of Social Justice (e.g., common good, preference option for the poor, human dignity, solidarity) to a particular issue (e.g., poverty, oppression, war);
- distinguish between the various approaches to the moral standing of nature;

- describe the Christian responsibility to act in the social/political aspect of life;
- identify Catholic moral and ethical principles of ecological stewardship.

PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- seek the transforming wisdom of the Holy Spirit in their search for authenticity and peace of heart;
- commit themselves to preparation for marriage, proximate and long-range;
- value the commitment necessary for a faithful marriage;
- name and celebrate the connection between the sacrament of marriage and the scriptural image of marriage as a mirror of God’s love for his people in Christ;
- respond to the challenge to priestly and religious vocations as presented by contemporary culture and reflect seriously on the possibility that they are called to such a vocation.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explore the sacraments of marriage and holy orders;
- use various forms of prayer and ritual to express the spiritual implications of moral and ethical understandings.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explore and describe the various forms the call to ministry can take within the Christian community;
- explain the meaning of the term “religious vocation” as it applies within today’s Church and its various forms of community life;
- express in a prayer or ritual form gratitude for God’s grace in our lives and appreciation for creation;
- celebrate in prayer and/or ritual the goodness of the family;
- express how forgiveness and reconciliation restores one to wholeness in context of a real situation;
- describe Catholic Church teachings regarding the sacrament of marriage and annulment;
- explain the importance that the Catholic Church places on marriage vows and preparation for the sacrament of marriage (i.e., parental modeling, virtue of chastity, dating, marriage preparation courses).

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- realize the meaning of the intrinsic dignity of each human person, and its impact on our inherent sense of responsibility towards self and others;
- appreciate the importance of institutions for the common good of society (e.g., family, church, political institutions).

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- analyse Catholic teaching on marriage;
- explore ways in which the family is called to be nurturing.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe the characteristics of the conjugal nature of marriage;
- report and discuss the various challenges to families (e.g., bereavement, family structures, mental illness, economic issues, reproductive issues);
- describe the nature of healthy families;
- explain how the family serves in moral and ethical formation;
- describe the notion of the Domestic Church;
- express the Catholic teaching on healthy sexuality.

4.3. Course Expectations: Grade 12 Workplace

SCRIPTURE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- refer to Scripture in valuing the basic dignity of every person, created in the image and likeness of God;
- see in Scripture the challenge of God’s preferential option for the poor;
- appreciate the role of prophets in Biblical culture, and of the prophetic stance in contemporary culture;
- build Christian community within the class around the study of Scripture;
- acknowledge that the love of God for all people as manifested in Scripture demands a commitment to justice and moral living;
- take up the Christian responsibility to work for justice and peace.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- reflect on the message and importance of Scriptures in making moral and ethical decisions;
- explain how Scriptures can be used to analyse and critique personal and social situations;
- apply Scripture to an analysis and critique of contemporary society.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- recognize the self-revelation of God as liberator (Exodus) and advocate for the “widow and orphan” (the Prophets);
- reflect on the Scriptures as God’s offer to transform lives (CCC §101-133);
- understand that the Ten Commandments are imperatives in making moral decisions today;
- discuss the ethical impact of the Gospel (the Beatitudes, Sermon on the Mount) on their lived experiences.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- integrate the religious quest in their search for meaning in the contemporary world;
- appreciate work as a participation in the activity of God;
- commit themselves to community service as an expression of their response to the call to discipleship;
- appreciate persons as rational, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual in nature.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explore a Catholic understanding of happiness;

- understand the role of the Church in moral and ethical formation;
- examine the contributions of the Catholic Church to the dialogue around various social justice issues (e.g., environment, the sanctity of life and marriage, the nature and importance of family).

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- define a Catholic understanding of happiness and explore the challenges in contemporary society to both personal and the common good;
- apply the key tenets of Catholic social teachings (e.g., human dignity, solidarity, the common good, social sin, the preferential option for the poor and subsidiarity) to issues of ecological and social justice;
- reflect on the lives of contemporary figures who fulfilled the call to participate in professional and political life for the common good;
- reflect on the value of community service as an example of the call to discipleship and as a vehicle for the promotion of the common good;
- describe the Christian responsibility to act in the social/political aspects of life.

CHRISTIAN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- appreciate how persons are created with free will and with the ability to discern right from wrong;
- accept the teachings of Jesus and the Church in their moral choices;
- recognize the right of persons to form labour unions;
- commit themselves to community service in relation to the common good;
- confess their sin as a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour;
- appreciate work as a participation in co-creation.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- examine the human search for truth and happiness;
- define the Catholic understanding of sin and reconciliation, both social and individual, and explore the impact of sin on the human condition;
- evaluate contemporary ethical and moral issues in light of the Church's moral teaching.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- assess the impact of secularism on society's understanding of morality;
- apply a contemporary Catholic understanding of conscience to the process of conscience formation and moral decision-making;
- demonstrate how Scripture, Tradition and the teaching authority of the Church, inform conscience formation and moral decision-making;
- discuss the impact of God's gift of reason and freedom of choice for moral living (CCC §1730-1756);
- define sin as a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour and reconciliation as a process of

- conversion that involves forgiveness and restitution;
- develop strategies to prepare for the challenges of Christian life in the marketplace;
- explore contemporary issues of social sin, forgiveness and restitution, employing a Catholic model of moral decision-making;
- demonstrate an understanding of how norms (e.g., school code of conduct, civil law) function out of necessity to maintain social and moral order, in the search for the good;
- apply some of the basic principles of Catholic moral teaching (e.g., principle of double effect, the common good, the integrity of procreation, respect for human life and human dignity) to concrete examples of contemporary moral issues.

PRAYER AND SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- seek the transforming wisdom of the Holy Spirit in their search for authenticity and peace of heart;
- commit themselves to preparation for marriage, proximate and long-range;
- value the commitment necessary for a faithful marriage;
- name and celebrate the connection between the sacrament of marriage and the scriptural image of marriage as a mirror of God’s love for his people in Christ;
- respond to the challenge to priestly and religious vocations as presented by contemporary culture and reflect seriously on the possibility that they are called to such a vocation.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- explore the role of sacraments in the life journey of Catholics with special emphasis on the sacraments of vocation, the Sacrament of Marriage (CCC §1601-1658), and the sacrament of Holy Orders (CCC §1536-1589);
- understand the broad meaning of the term “vocation” as an adoption of a stance before all forms of work as service to God and for others;
- use various forms of prayer and ritual to express the spiritual implications of adopting a moral and ethical stance.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe Catholic Church teachings regarding the sacrament of marriage and annulment;
- explain the importance that the Catholic Church places on marriage vows and preparation for the sacrament of marriage (i.e., parental modeling, virtue of chastity, dating, marriage preparation courses);
- examine some of the challenges to married life and discuss possible strategies for meeting these challenges;
- express in context of a real situation how forgiveness and reconciliation restores one to wholeness;
- identify the various forms of service the call to ministry can take within the Christian and

broader communities (e.g., religious vocation, lector, extraordinary eucharistic minister, choir leader, cantor, St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Women's League, soup kitchen helper, peer tutoring, visitation to shut-ins);

- participate in various forms of theological reflection and prayer;
- identify ways in which prayer sustains an ethical stance in life and promotes moral living.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Our hope is that Religious Education will help students:

- realize the meaning of the intrinsic dignity of each human person, and its impact on our inherent sense of responsibility towards self and others;
- appreciate the importance of institutions for the common good of society (e.g., family, church, political institutions).

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- identify how “the intrinsic dignity of each human person,” impacts on our inherent sense of responsibility towards self and others;
- define the family as Domestic Church, that is, a foundational context for ethical and moral development;
- apply related Church teaching to values and practices that undermine the sacredness of life.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of this course, students will:

- describe ways in which the limits of human freedom can be challenging but can also offer opportunities for personal growth and fulfillment (e.g., living fully with a disability);
- examine the role of chastity in the personal integration of sexuality and in the expression of sexuality in relationships and marriage;
- describe essential components for building healthy intimate relationships (e.g., family, friendships, romantic relationships, etc.) in their lives, and examine the ways in which all relationships influence human growth;
- discuss a Christian understanding of the family as domestic church and the manner in which it participates in and contributes to a healthy and just society;
- describe the challenges that confront parents today as they seek to pass on Catholic values to their children (e.g., the influence of the media, peer pressure, contemporary value placed on church);
- identify the elements of a strong family;
- reflect on the themes presented in OCCB/CCCB publications on the family (e.g., COLF Messages to Families: *Messengers of the Compassionate Love of Christ, Come Let Us Pray, In the Name of Love, Intimacy and Sexuality*);
- demonstrate a Catholic understanding of and respect for the sacred gift of human procreation, the gift of children, and the experience of parenting;
- describe the manner in which the sacred gift of human procreation and

life itself can be protected and apply Church teachings to related issues (e.g., natural family planning,

contraception, reproductive and genetic technologies and the impact of STIs on human life and fertility).

LEARNING RESOURCES

Courses in Religious Education use a wide variety of instructional resources. These include bibles, textbooks, AV, Internet and CD-ROMs. In addition, field trips and guest speakers provide links between the school and wider community.

Schools may wish to have more than one text available for various courses. Schools should make use of learning resources that offer a variety of teaching methodologies and that honour various learning capabilities.

Learning resources designed for use in Religious Education courses and developed by partners in Catholic education include:

- **Be With Me**, a resource for use in Grade 9 produced by the National Office of Religious Education under the auspices of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (1997)
- **Christ and Culture**, a resource for use in Grade 10, produced by the National Office of Religious Education (2002)
- **In Search of the Good**, a resource for use in Grade 12, produced by the National Office of Religious Education (2004)
- **Turning Points**, a resource for use in Family Life Education, Grades 9-10, published by Prentice Hall Ginn under the auspices of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (1998)
- **Reaching Out**, a resource for use in Family Life Education, Grades 11-12, published by Prentice Hall Ginn under the auspices of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (1996)
- **AIDS: A Catholic Educational Approach to HIV**, a resource developed under the auspices of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Institute for Catholic Education (Ontario Catholic Schools second edition, 1999)
- **Pastoral Guidelines to Assist Students of Same-Sex Orientation**, a resource developed under the auspices of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Institute for Catholic Education (2004)
- **Curriculum Support for Catholic Schools**, Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative (second edition, 2005)
- **General Directory for Catechesis**, Congregation for the Clergy (1997)
- **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, (Publications Service, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1994)
- **The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School**, (Guidelines For Reflection And Renewal, Congregation For Catholic Education, 1988)
- **Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations**, Institute for Catholic Education (1998)

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