

God's Sower

Scattering Seeds of Faith



St. Laurence Catholic Church Preschool and Elementary CCE Catechist Handbook

(Revised 8/1/17)

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Ministry of the Catechist: A Sharer of the Gift of Faith



The Role of a Catechist

The role of a catechist is one who is called to nurture a living, conscious and active faith in the youth he/she teaches. A Catechist is one who witnesses to the faith by sharing his/her faith commitment through word, experience, prayer and liturgy.

The Catechist is responsible for planning and leading catechetical sessions. The time commitment is for one school year. The sessions are one hour and fifteen minutes each week.

The commitment involves ongoing personal faith formation. It is vital that as a sharer of the faith that the catechist continues to grow in his/her own faith. That is why catechist formation is highly encouraged because it provides a teaching context in which the catechist can develop a deep understanding and love for the Catholic faith which he/she shares.

Qualifications

1. To have a desire to share your faith with children and young people
2. To be able to relate comfortably with children and young people
3. To be committed to quality Catholic education
4. To take part in the sacramental life of the Church
5. To be a Confirmed Catholic
6. To begin/continue working towards catechist formation

Specific Responsibilities

- I. To be committed to sharing your faith, by using the lessons provided for class periods beginning in mid to late September and continuing through the first week in May. The sessions are one hour and fifteen minutes.
 - a. If you are unable to teach your class, it is your responsibility to find a substitute. A good place to begin is with the parents of your students. In the beginning of the academic year, make contact with parents and keep a list of those who are willing to teach the class if necessary and are confirmed Catholics who have also attended the Safe Environment (or VIRTUS) training, including any updates and/or refreshers. Please notify the Coordinator of any substitutes in class, including their name and date of your absence. If you are unable to secure a substitute on your own, notify the Coordinator as *soon as possible* so that a substitute catechist may be found.

- b. Attend required meetings and in-services as needed to stay informed of policies and to stay connected with the program.
2. To share your Catholic faith with a group of 12 to 15 (Elementary) or 10 to 12 (Preschool) students in a particular grade level using the information provided to you by the St. Laurence Religious Education staff.
 - a. Share your faith by presenting the weekly lessons using the resources provided and *covering the chapter content* noted on the Lesson Schedule provided and referenced by the weekly Essential Question (Elementary only). If you wish to deviate from the material scheduled or supplement the lesson with other content or activities, please check with the Coordinator for approval of the material you wish to use *prior* to its introduction in class. Please also have any videos brought in from home preapproved before presenting it to your class.
 - b. Review your upcoming lessons at least one (1) week in advance so that you can adequately prepare for class. If there are any arts and crafts supplies or any other materials that are needed for your lesson, you can contact the Religious Education staff in advance for ordering. Additionally, you can request from the Religious Education staff copies of any relevant activity worksheets and handouts at this time. **Please do so at least one week in advance for Elementary CCE classes.**
 - c. ALL Catechists should arrive weekly by **no later than 20 minutes** before class begins. Always pick up your class bin from the shelves in the RE Workroom. Please note that the copier in the RE Workroom is to be used by RE Staff ONLY. Thanks for your cooperation and understanding in this.

Elementary CCE Catechists: Please note that there will NOT be any photo copying available right before class. We ask that you request copies *at least one (1) week in advance.* Email copy requests will be honored, so long as they are submitted and will be made with 24-hour notice.

- d. **Elementary CCE Catechists:** Once your classroom is set up, please come to the *Guardian Angels Hall* to greet your students. After we are all gathered, all catechists and students will be dismissed to class with you leading them through the AMC building. First grade catechists and students will exit out the *Guardian Angels Hall* rear hallway directly into the WCP classroom wing on the first floor. Catechists and students in Grades 2 & 3 will take Stairwell B (on the *Guardian Angels Hall* side of the lobby), while catechists and students in Grades 4 & 5 will take Stairwell A (across the reception lobby behind the coffee bar area), to get to their classrooms upstairs. Elevator use should be reserved only for those catechists and/or students with physical limitations in climbing the stairs. Students should never be sent up the stairwells without adult supervision and should be instructed to walk quietly and safely through the hallways. Any parents arriving with children after

dismissal from the Guardian Angels Hall will be directed to escort their students directly to their classrooms for check-in with the Catechist.

Dismissal at the end of CCE will be from the classrooms. Parents will proceed to their children's classes and are the only authorized persons to pick up and sign out the child, unless you have a written note from the parents giving you permission to release the student to another adult.

Sunday Preschool/Kindergarten and Wednesday Kindergarten Catechists: Be sure to be in your classroom to *greet the students/parents as they arrive*. Note that the children may be dropped off up to 15 minutes before class starts on Sunday mornings. Parents will be bringing the child directly to the class and picking them up from the classroom. Parents are the only authorized person to pick up and sign out the child, unless you have a written note from the parents giving you permission to release the student to another adult. Supplies and bins are in the workroom for you to access before class. Copies that you may need for the day's lesson should be requested in advance.

- e. Strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and dignity. Communicate this expectation to your students on the first day of class in an age appropriate way. If you have a student whose behavior is disruptive to the class, first remind him/her of the expectations of classroom behavior. If behavior continues, contact Joan or Molly (CCE) or Cindy (Preschool) so that they can take the child out of the class and speak with them. **PLEASE DO NOT KEEP A DISRUPTIVE STUDENT IN THE CLASSROOM.**
- f. Before the end of class, have students help pick up trash, return supplies and return any moved furniture to its original position if necessary. When you arrive each week, be sure to make note of the room set-up, so that it can be returned to the same condition it was in when you arrived.
- g. Dismiss students to parents or authorized adults **ONLY**. Parents (or another designated adult) **MUST SIGN OUT** each child before they can be dismissed from the classroom. Children are **NOT** allowed to leave the classroom or go outside to meet their parents without an accompanying catechist or assistant. If a child is not picked up from the classroom within a reasonable period of time (approx. 15 minutes) after class dismissal, please bring that student to Joan or Molly (CCE) or Cindy (Preschool) and we will remain with that child until he/she has been picked up by an authorized adult.

ST. LAURENCE CATHOLIC CHURCH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

The religious education program at St. Laurence Parish community exists to serve and support all members in their spiritual growth and profession of Gospel values. Our program strives to prepare each individual and family to be better Christian witnesses to the larger community, by strengthening their foundations in the sacraments, liturgy, and Catholic teachings based on a Vatican II philosophy.

We acknowledge a call to every parishioner to share our God-given gifts with each other, through education, prayer, service, and celebration of Christ in our lives.

Important features of our program include:

- *The sacredness of Creation
- *Supporting parents in their role as the primary Christian witnesses and teachers of their children
- *An emphasis on family, faith sharing, and community service
- *Serving people diverse in age, stages of life and special needs
- *A strong commitment by a large number of enthusiastic catechists
- *Providing varied ministry formation programs
- *Adaptability, responding to the rapidly changing needs of a growing parish
- *Recognition that our faith development is an ongoing process

Our life-long challenge and goal, as a Catholic community, is to create a welcoming spirit, to grow in our faith, and to go forth as sons and daughters of the Creator to share the message of God's unconditional love through Christ Jesus.

POLICIES/PROCEDURES FOR CATECHISTS

SUBSTITUTE POLICY: Catechists should arrange for their own substitutes. Please notify the RE staff as soon as possible regarding your substitute, but especially if you cannot arrange for one yourself. Remember that last minute substitutes are difficult to secure. Team teachers should be notified by the catechist to confirm that they will be in attendance during the other's absence. Remember that one of your students' parents may also be willing to teach the class. *Keep a class phone list and a sub list at work, as well as home.* **All substitutes must be confirmed Catholics and have completed the appropriate Safe Environment (i.e. VIRTUS, Keeping the Promise Alive) training as well as any required refreshers/updates in order to teach CCE.** Please verify with the RE staff if you plan on asking a parent to substitute to ensure whether or not they are Catholic. Once you have secured a substitute, please be sure to inform the Elementary or Preschool Coordinator.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE: Attendance should be taken while you are in the classroom for both Elementary and Preschool CCE classes, to allow for late arrivals. Please keep your attendance sheet available for quick access by staff and catechists, especially during emergencies. Please return your attendance sheet to your bin after each class. **DO NOT** take it home with you. If a child has 2 consecutive absences, or if a child has several recurring absences, we ask the catechist to contact the parent directly. Please also send the Coordinator an email for each situation so that they can reach out to the families. After parents have been contacted, sometimes students may be dropped from the class by Joan or Cindy. You will be informed of the drop. **NEVER drop or add a student from/to your attendance roster or class without prior notification from Joan or Cindy!**

CLASSROOM CARE: We need to remember that each classroom in the AMC will be shared by multiple ministries besides CCE. It is important that every class take a few minutes at the end of each

session to make sure that all materials are returned *neatly* to their proper place and that all trash and/or papers are thrown away or sent home with students. Each classroom has dedicated CCE materials storage for catechist and student items. These are cabinets under the countertop in the 2nd floor classrooms and in the designated CCE ‘closet’ in the classrooms shared with the Weekday Children’s Program (WCP) on the 1st floor. The key for the CCE closet in each downstairs classrooms is located on a hook hanging next to the door. At the end of each class, all CCE items should be stored in the appropriately designated CCE storage. Also, all prayer table items should be returned to the table storage provided.

Materials or personal items brought by catechists (art & environment supplies, music tapes, statues, pictures, etc.) may be stored in the cabinets if you plan to use them weekly. **HOWEVER**, please be aware that there are no locks on these and **SPACE IN THESE CABINETS IS VERY LIMITED**. Additionally, even the CCE cabinets must be shared by multiple classes. You may wish to place your items in a labeled bag or box or keep them in your class bin. *Please make sure to periodically clean out cabinets of any items that are not being used anymore* as cabinets are used by all classes. They can become quite crowded and messy if we don’t clear them out periodically. Each room may have several grade levels assigned to it, so expect to see a variety of age-level materials in the CCE storage. Please **DO NOT** affix anything directly to the walls, white boards, etc., but rather to the tack strips provided in the classrooms. Note that these are available in the upstairs classrooms only. Any student works displayed in the upstairs classrooms should be rotated/refreshed/removed every other week, if possible.

TVs and DVD Players: Each of the upstairs classrooms in the AMC is equipped with a TV and DVD player which may be used for projecting pre-approved DVDs for presentation to your students. Downstairs classrooms have access to TVs and DVD players on rolling carts and may be moved to your classroom for its use with at least 24 hours advance notice so that your room can be set up for you upon arrival.

NEW THIS YEAR! Each of our CCE classrooms upstairs (i.e. Rooms 200-214), as well as the TVs on the rolling carts available (3 of them) for the downstairs classrooms (i.e. Preschool, Kindergarten and 1st Grade), have now been equipped with a device allowing access to the internet using **CHROME** as a search browser. Making use of a wireless keyboard programmed specifically to each room along with the TVs mounted in the classroom (or, with the TV on the rolling cart) you will be able to access the AIC website to view videos (from YouTube) and play games on the AIC website.

IMPORTANT NOTE: It is the Catechist’s responsibility to **preview all videos for content before utilizing them in the classroom**. Resources on the AIC website are considered pre-approved by the RE Office as part of our curriculum. **Any other videos or resources (other than those provided on the AIC website) MUST be pre-approved by the RE Staff prior to utilization in class**. Obviously, the **CHROME** features provided in the classrooms allows access to many, many resources on the Internet – some intended and others not. While the Chrome devices in the classrooms are protected by St. Laurence campus internet safety parameters, **students should NEVER be left unattended in the classroom with the CHROME features activated on the TV**. Please exercise good judgment in making sure that only appropriate content is accessed.

PRAYER TABLES: Each AMC classroom has been equipped with materials to create a prayer space, including a battery operated candle, a crucifix and liturgically colored cloth. Be sure to use these for your class gathering and closing prayer time. In the upstairs classrooms, these items may be found in the storage space of the small table in each room or in the CCE cabinet drawers, while in the first floor classrooms these items are located in the metal cabinet in the CCE closet.

You are free to bring additional or seasonal materials to supplement the prayer space in your rooms, but please only store the basic supplies in the table itself so that other ministry groups may also utilize it. Personal items brought should be stored in the designated CCE cabinets or closets.

PURCHASING MATERIALS: We will reimburse catechists for any necessary purchases (special supplies, rewards, stickers, resources, etc.) with receipt of purchase minus the sales tax which we cannot reimburse you for. *Please check with the Joan or Cindy before making large purchases for which you desire reimbursement.*

REWARDS: There are many ways to reward your students for accomplishments, good behavior, or for just a special treat. Due to the fact that many children will be eating dinner when they return home, we ask that you don't bring snacks or food to the children as rewards. The best types of rewards are those that the children can keep and bring home to show to their families: i.e., stickers, prayer cards, or bookmarks. These items can also be saved as remembrances of their year in your class.

STEPS FOR DISCIPLINE: all participants are expected to share in the learning experience of our faith. If a child's behavior disturbs that learning process, the steps listed below should be followed in order to ensure that class participation may continue.

1. Stop the problem behavior in the classroom at the time it occurs.
2. The catechist describes the expected behavior in specific terms.
3. A consequence is given (i.e., state choice of action, change of seat, cool off period, etc.)
4. If the problem is not corrected in the classroom, then please use the intercom system in your classroom to communicate with the AMC receptionist who will notify the program coordinator to come and assist you. If behavior recurs, the parents will be notified and asked to remain with their child in class.
5. If no improvement is made, the parent will be asked by the Coordinator to do home study with the child.

Please do not allow a disruptive or disrespectful situation to continue. It is neither fair nor helpful, not to you, not to the other students, not even to the child who is disruptive. Please let your coordinator know if a problem is recurring. *It's okay to ask for help! The staff is here to support you and make your class an effective and fun learning center.*

HEALTH & SAFETY: Parents should notify the Coordinator of special circumstances and/or conditions that involve or affect students. Catechists will be told of these situations upon assignment of students to their respective class. Please read the Health & Safety Policy in your Catechist Materials. *Each year, or any time a location or policy change occurs, all catechists will be required to fill out a new Health & Safety Policy test so as to review this important material and important policies.*

RESPONSIBILITY: Classrooms should NEVER be left unattended during class time, as the catechists are responsible for the safety of their students during class time. In the event that an emergency occurs in the classroom, the catechist must communicate the situation in one of the following methods:

- 1). Use the intercom in your classroom to communicate the event to the AMC receptionist who will notify the program coordinator to come and assist you.
- 2). Use a personal cell phone or phone located in the classroom to call the main RE number at 281-265-5774 and the receptionist will notify the program coordinator.
- 3). Send the co-catechist/assistant to the floor desk monitor (if applicable for the program) who will notify the program coordinator to come and assist you. If there is no desk monitor present during your CCE session, then proceed to the AMC main reception area on the first floor where a staff member will be called to your room as soon as possible. **REMEMBER: DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CLASSROOM UNATTENDED!** If necessary, locate a classroom nearby with two adults, one of which can stay with your students while you go for help.

Under NO circumstances should the catechist leave the room without notifying another adult. (If an accident occurs while no adult is present, the catechist may be held liable!)

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE:

Each week, Elementary and Preschool CCE Catechists should:

1. Pick up their class bin from the RE Workroom when they arrive, (including attendance sheet, student handouts, large items, etc.) and **PLEASE TAKE THE BIN WITH YOU TO CLASS!!**
2. Come to the Guardian Angel Hall to greet your class (Elementary), listen to instructions, and escort your class to the classroom.

If you ever have any questions, suggestions, problems, etc., please feel free to tell your program coordinator or call the Religious Education staff at 281-265-5774.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

It is our goal to maintain a safe and fun learning environment for the children.

Please carefully review these SAFETY guidelines:

There are to be no candles or open flames of any sort used in the classrooms for the safety of all involved. Battery operated candles are a great alternative.

In each classroom, a map is posted which details the preferred exit route in the event that an evacuation from the Ave Maria Center is necessary.

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, all adults and students must depart from the facility in an orderly manner and **proceed to the designated gathering point which is displayed on the classroom exit route map.** Once reaching the designated gathering point, the classes should be formed in a single-file, orderly line and calmly wait until the safety of the building has been determined.

Should the preferred exit route outlined on the classroom map be blocked by smoke or fire, the catechist should select an alternative route keeping all the students together and avoiding panic. All rooms and bathrooms will be searched by staff to verify that they are vacated.

It is IMPERATIVE that you have a flashlight (charging in the electrical socket in the classroom) and your class attendance sheet/roster with you to account for all of your students during any emergency situation. Be sure to re-take class attendance when you arrive at your designated gathering point.

In the event a weather emergency (hurricane, tornado, massive flooding, etc.) occurs during hours when students are in class, catechists will be warned (if possible) of the approaching danger. For weather watch/warning, students and catechists will be asked to move to the center of the building away from windows in the class designated rooms/building areas as outlined in the Health, Safety and Environment Policies and Procedures dated December 7, 2015. All catechists and students will assume and maintain the “Duck and Cover” position until notified of the “All Clear” by authorized staff or personnel.

Thank you for your part in maintaining safety on the campus.

**ST. LAURENCE CATHOLIC CHURCH
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
AVE MARIA CENTER (‘AMC’)**

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL POLICIES

THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN IS OUR FIRST CONCERN. THESE RULES WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED!

Elementary CCE Arrival

ALL traffic is encouraged to enter the Ave Maria Center parking lot via Austin Parkway. Traffic may enter through Sweetwater Blvd. (when available) *except* during the carpool times for Wednesday night EDGE. **Colony Park Drive is an EXIT only and not an entrance to the AMC.**

IMPORTANT NOTE:

There will be NO carpool drop-off for Elementary CCE.

When arriving for CCE, ALL parents are expected to **park their vehicles in the lot and walk their child(ren) safely into the *Guardian Angels Hall* of the AMC.**

Parents must remain with their child(ren) until their catechist(s) arrives.

The **building can only be entered through the main front door under the covered entrance.** Once in the *Guardian Angels Hall*, your child will need to assemble in their designated line until the session begins. After opening prayer, your child’s catechist will then take the children to their classroom for their lessons.

Elementary CCE Dismissal

ALL traffic is encouraged to enter the Ave Maria Center parking lot via Austin Parkway. Traffic may enter through Sweetwater Blvd. (when available) *except* during the carpool times for Wednesday night EDGE. **Colony Park Drive is an EXIT only and not an entrance to the AMC.**

At the end of each CCE session, you will need to **proceed to your child's classroom in the AMC for pick up. YOU WILL HAVE TO SIGN OUT your child from his/her classroom.** Therefore, after class **NO child(ren) will be allowed to meet their parent outside in the parking lot.** The catechists will not release a child except in the classroom to a parent, guardian, or another designated adult. Then, you can exit the AMC through the main **doors under the covered entrance. Note that all other doors are emergency exits with alarms which will sound. Any special circumstances regarding pick-up (such as carpool arrangements with other designated adults) need to be provided beforehand IN WRITING to either the Elementary staff or to your child's catechist.**

Preschool & Kindergarten (Sun. & Weds.) CCE Arrival/Dismissal

ALL preschool parents will BOTH drop off and pick up their preschool child in their assigned classroom in the AMC on Sunday mornings and for Kindergarten students on Wednesdays. Children can only be released to their parents. Any exceptions must be communicated to the catechists in writing. You can exit the AMC through the main **doors under the covered entrance. Note that all other doors are emergency exits with alarms which will sound at the AMC Reception desk.**



STANDARD SUPPLIES LIST



IN CLASSROOM 'CCE' STORAGE CABINETS/DRAWERS:

- CRAYONS
- MARKERS
- SCISSORS
- STAPLER, STAPLES, REMOVER, TACKS
- BIBLES
- GLUE STICKS
- PAPER CLIPS
- TAPE
- PENS
- HIGHLIGHTER
- PENCIL SHARPENER
- 'SOOTHER STATION' BOX

DOWNSTAIRS CLASSROOMS ALSO HAVE:

- ROLLING EASEL CART
- PUZZLES

PLEASE RETURN THESE ITEMS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE CONTAINERS & BACK IN THE CCE STORAGE CABINET OR CCE CLASS CLOSET AFTER USE. Thank You!

CATECHIST BIN:

- PENCILS
- WEEKLY COMMUNICATION
- ANY COPIES REQUESTED

SUPPLIES:

The items listed above are all found in each room. Paper goods are not supplied in each room, but may be found in the RE WORKROOM downstairs or the Supply Cabinets upstairs (along the Holy Family Courtyard window outside Room 214). Please feel free to gather any of these materials for your use BEFORE class begins.

IF SUPPLIES ARE LOW IN YOUR CLASSROOM OR THE SUPPLY CLOSET, PLEASE LET THE OFFICE KNOW SO THAT WE CAN RESTOCK.

CLASSROOMS:

Downstairs classrooms in the AMC are equipped with appropriately “sized” chairs and adjustable tables to accommodate different grade levels. Catechists are free to adjust the tables in their downstairs classrooms to meet the needs of their students. **Since there is no white board space on the walls of the downstairs (WCP) classrooms, each shared CCE closet is equipped with two (2) rolling easel carts which store some writing supplies, and may also be used to present the lesson or to clip/ display supplemental teaching materials, such as felt board items, picture books, posters, etc.** Upstairs classrooms will have rectangular tables and chairs.

Remember, each classroom may be used by several different ministry groups from preschool children to adults! Keep this in mind when planning for activities, as well as leaving enough time for clean-up. Try to leave your space neater than you found it and place any desks, chairs, etc. back the way it originally was!



Classroom Tips



Suggested CCE class rules to be posted in classroom

1. Respect each other at all times.
 2. Be on time for class.
 3. Raise your hand before speaking.
 4. Participate in class.
 5. Remember why we are here.
- *We are here to learn more about our faith.

Here are tips for you from a few of our experienced catechists.

Preschool Classroom Tips

(Suggested by Allison Bauer and Jennifer Buzbee, veteran catechists)

1. Have toys, puzzles, crayons, color sheets and play dough available when children arrive.
2. Keep circle time limited to 10 minutes at a time. And be ready to listen during circle time, a lot of these kids love to share! (Sometimes you do have to rein them back towards the subject at hand). Don't be afraid to have multiple circle times, if needed, during the time you have these children. This age needs lots of different activities that each don't last long. Finger plays, dramatization, action games & songs all keep their interest.
3. Bring things from home that relate to the Bible story and/or topic to share.
4. Read books either related to the topic and/or Jesus related. The kids love the felt board stories from the book, it makes them feel a part of the story when it's their turn to put on their cut out. (If you have more kids than cut outs for the story, either use some additional cut outs and add lib them into the story and/or have 1 or 2 of the children hold the felt board).
5. Keep the crafts simple and fun. Cut and prepare items beforehand.
6. Either have the children use glue sticks or have the teacher or assistant dot the glue on their craft sheet so they can place the item.
7. Don't be afraid to use paint! Have one teacher use a paint brush to "paint" their hand and have the other teacher clean them up. The children really love to see the crafts made out of their handprints (as do the parents).
8. Have fun! Show that you are having fun and the children will too! Be upbeat and even a bit silly!

Elementary Craft Tips
(Suggested by Madeline Pyle, veteran 3rd grade catechist)

1. Have all materials ready.
2. Show an example of the finished product.
3. Try to estimate the amount of time needed in class to do the craft. Schedule it for the middle to the end of class time.
4. Have a puzzle, word search, a drawing activity within the chapter, a Bible reading, etc. for the students when they finish the craft. This helps maintain an orderly flow to the class.

Elementary Discipline/Class Management Tips
(Suggested by Madeline Pyle, veteran 3rd grade catechist)

1. Set expectations for your class at the beginning of the year.
2. Discuss class rules. In some cases these rules are beneficial reminders when there are discipline problems in class.
3. Remind students of these rules when a problem occurs.
4. During lessons place the problem student near you. Develop a nonverbal signal between the student and the teacher to help the student stay focused and cooperative.
5. Try to vary the format of lessons. Let students sit on chairs for part of the lesson then allow them to sit on the floor when you read to them.
6. Positive reinforcement is effective (stickers, a "happy note" to send home to parents, verbal praise-"You're doing a great job listening and following directions today")
7. Create name tags to place on the tables for students. Place students in a manner that will help the atmosphere of your class.
8. Have a short activity ready for students to do as they arrive for class.
 - ex. Write a question/statement on the board to respond to in writing. The teachers' editions have great examples of questions to use at the beginning of each chapter. Use spiral notebooks.
 - ex. Check the pages from the workbooks that are available to CCE teachers in the workroom each week and make use of them.
 - ex. Ask the students to write a short prayer (petition, thanksgiving).
 - ex. Use the publisher's internet site for grade level activities to download.

CATECHIST'S PRAYER

*It helps now and then to step back and take the long view.
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts; it is even beyond our vision.
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work...
Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that
the kingdom always lies beyond us.
No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection, no pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.
This is what we are about:
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise...
We lay foundations that will need further development
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.
We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end results, but that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders – ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.*

By Oscar Romero