

St. Laurence Catholic Parish
Kindergarten Faith Formation
Week 1 Lesson Plan



'Meet & Greet'

Building a Faith Community Lesson Plan

(Based upon the *Beginning the Catechetical Year: K-8 Systematic Catechesis* lesson,
developed by Dr. Sharon Skeans dated August 2017)

Note to Catechists:

Welcome! Thank you SO much for your generosity of heart in guiding our young learners in their journeys with Christ and their Catholic faith formation. And so, your own journey begins.



During the first two gatherings of the year with your learners (i.e., tonight and next week), your main goal is not merely to inform them of the routines and expectations of their time at weekly faith formation sessions, but more importantly to discern their current understanding of age-appropriate faith concepts AND to create an environment for faith sharing and learning.

Focusing on activities that share our Catholic Identity clearly communicates to these students in public schools that *faith formation sessions are quite different*. Before even beginning Unit #1 (Who is Jesus Christ?) in two weeks, *we want to achieve the following three goals over this week and next:*

- 1. Get acquainted with each other** (with tonight's *Meet & Greet* Lesson)
- 2. Build a Faith Community** (starting with tonight's *Meet & Greet* Lesson and continuing next week depending upon which ice-breaker activity you choose below)
- 3. Pre-assess whether or not your learners understand or can "use" the Bible** (next week's *Bible Literacy* Lesson).

CATECHIST PREPARATION

To prepare for this week's lesson:

- **Prepare your adult heart and mind** by watching the following video ahead of the lesson: [IMPORTANT LESSONS FOR CATECHISTS](#) (please watch up to 19:57 – beyond that to the end is optional for this session) **and** reading [TO TEACH AS JESUS DID](#) **plus either** [FOUR WAYS MARY INSPIRES CATECHISTS](#) **or** [LESSONS CATECHISTS CAN LEARN FROM ST. JOSEPH](#)
- **Reflect upon a favorite Scriptural passage** about Jesus and his love for children that you would like to share with your learners and why it is important to you, or consider any one of the following:

[MATTHEW 18: 2-5](#), [MATTHEW 18: 10](#), [MARK 10: 13-16](#) or [LUKE 9: 47-48](#)

- **Review the *Meet & Greet Lesson Activities Resources* outlined below** as the end of this lesson outline to decide which you would like to explore with your learners in class In the EXTEND section of this lesson outline and plan accordingly. (Note: Many supplies can be found in the RE Workroom of the AMC. Can't find something? Just ask!).
- **Consider or plan out your classroom *Sacred Prayer Space* or *Prayer Table*:** Since prayer tables are not found in public schools, take some time to consider what your room's prayer space (or table) should have on it and how you will call attention to it for your learners. **Be sure to open and close your weekly lesson with an age/grade-appropriate prayer around the Prayer Table** (see the [Common Prayers and Formulas by Age](#) handout on the Catechist webpage of the St. Laurence website) or use any of the suggestions incorporated into the *Opening* and *Closing Prayer* sections of the weekly lesson outlines.

Typical prayer table items include: A cloth of the liturgical season's color, a crucifix or cross, a Bible or Book of Gospels, a candle and something representing Creation (e.g., a plant or flowers). **Basic items, including a crucifix, battery-operated candle and table cloth – one side green, the other side purple to change with the Liturgical seasons – are provided in the 'Elementary CCE' drawer (upstairs classrooms) or closet (Kinder & 1st Grade).** The upstairs classrooms are also each equipped with a console table, typically under the TV screen. You are free to move the furniture for your set-up, but please return it to its proper place at the end of class.

Make the prayer space aesthetically appealing. To emphasize that all lessons have a Christological (i.e. *Christ-centered*) focus, try adding pictures of Jesus during different times in his life (i.e. pictures from some or all of the mysteries of the Rosary can be used- beautiful images can be found and reproduced from [THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY](#)). As we progress through the **4 Big Ideas/Units**, their underlying **Essential Questions (EQ's)** and the **Liturgical season EQs** listed on the **KINDERGARTEN FAITH FORMATION LESSON SCHEDULE** (found on the [CATECHIST](#) webpage) during the course of the year, *build your prayer table* as the catechetical year progresses by asking learners what might need to be added from week to week based on the topics/themes discussed. This is also a beautiful way of engaging the children by perhaps rewarding them each with a turn to reverently add a special item to the table. For more ideas, check out [How to Make a Prayer Table for Kids](#). **(Note that the security of any personal items left in the classroom cannot be guaranteed, as multiple ministries use these classrooms. Please do not leave items of significant personal value in the classrooms).**

Keep the Bible reverently displayed on your Prayer Table to be used for readings in your lessons. When proclaiming *The Word* to children, it is more impactful to read directly from the Bible and not just from their workbooks. This gives them the sense that this is not just any old book and should be revered. In next week's lesson, you will explore the Bible more deeply with your learners with the *Bible Literacy Lesson Plan*.

As always, please be sure to disassemble your prayer space at the end of each session, returning the standard devotional items to their proper storage place for use by other teaching teams.

- Supplies you may want to have on hand before beginning the Lesson:**

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Say, “Today, we are going to spend some time getting to know each other better and talk about how we will grow in love for our friend, Jesus, this coming year in faith formation. I want to share with you one of my favorite passages about Jesus’ special love for children, found in the Bible... *(Read your favorite passage from the Bible about Jesus’ love for children and explain WHY it is important to you or your favorite passage)* ...You know, Jesus has a very special relationship with all children, and he wants to have one with you too!”

Taking the time to explain who you are and why YOU answered the call to be a Catechist 😊 is a great way for your students to get to know you better! For suggestions on a very visual and

engaging way to do this, see the “*Blessed Particulars*” / *Gift Bag of Faith* activity under the *Meet & Greet Lesson Activities Resources* section below or come up with introductions of your own.

For today’s lesson, **choose and implement at least one ice breaker activity from the suggestions in the MEET AND GREET LESSON ACTIVITY RESOURCES provided below** at the end of this lesson outline. Be sure that the chosen activity is appropriate for kindergartners so that they can successfully participate in the activity. Also be mindful of the possibility of first-day shyness and/or anxiety that may inhibit some learners. Always invite to participate, but do not make it mandatory, if there is significant hesitation. Perhaps assigning a partner/buddy to any such children to pair off in smaller groups might be helpful.

Then, as a class, **brain-storm together and establish classroom expectations** (i.e., respect, patience, etc.) **and procedures** (following the leaders up to class at dismissal, no running in the hallways or getting ahead of the adults, bathroom break rules, etc.). Commit these expectations to a poster to be able to display them during class in order to refer back to them as needed. **Have the students each create and decorate a ‘name plate’ out of construction paper or card stock** to use each week until everyone gets better acquainted.

GUIDED PLAY to the SACRED (GPS)

Children learn through play. *Guided Play to the Sacred (GPS)* is a mode of play guided by the catechist to lead children to the Sacred, to God. Many of our kindergartners and some older children are not reading ready. The *Call to Faith* textbook and *Guided Play to the Sacred (GPS)* together are the core of the weekly lesson. This is the compass that guides the lesson in a way in which the children can interact. Further activities such as videos, coloring sheet, crafts and more can also be included in the lesson.

Today is all about getting to know one another and asking the children what they know about God and the Catholic faith.

- Ask questions:
 - Who is God to you? What does “faith” mean?
 - What is one way you practice your Catholic faith?
 - Who is Jesus? Who is the Holy Spirit?
 - What happens in the Church?
 - Why do we go to Mass?
- Begin *Guided Play to the Sacred (GPS)*. Use the *Church Playset*.
- Ask the children to help you place the figures and items in the Church.
- Discuss each figure and item as you place them in the Church (See illustrated guide with the play set).

At the end of the session, put the playset away. This is to be used during GPS sessions only.



MEET AND GREET LESSON ACTIVITY RESOURCES:

- **“Blessed Particulars”/Gift Bag of Faith** (for the Catechist and/or Assistant to introduce themselves to the children as believers and disciples of Christ):

Choose 3-4 items which represent your personal faith life and journey (i.e., a Bible, rosary, picture of family members celebrating a sacrament, etc.) and place them in a ‘gift’ bag. Bring the bag up to the front of the class and as you bring each ‘gift’ out of the bag to show the students, share with them how each item (or what they represent) influenced your own faith. Remind the students that ALL FAITH is a *gift* from God. For the following week to reconnect with this activity ask the students to brainstorm and be ready to share 1-2 “blessed particulars” from their own lives (i.e., either be prepared to talk about or bring pictures/photos of, or the actual items – you could even send home little ‘gift’ bags for them to decorate with pictures of their items).

- **CCE FIRST DAY ICEBREAKERS**: **Many options** including games, worksheets and activities can be found on the Catechist webpage of the St. Laurence website at <https://stlaurence.org/the-catechist>. If you plan on using worksheets or activity sheets, please be sure to request copies at least 24 hours in advance of your teaching session. Contact Joan at jhastreiter@stlaurence.org to request copies.
- **Catholic Get-to-Know You Game (Beach Ball Game)**: Use a beach ball marked with questions on it about faith, God and Catholic identity. Gather learners in a circle and toss it to have students take turns answering questions. This also works with a ball of yarn. Refer to Page 5 of the [FIRST DAY ICE BREAKERS](https://stlaurence.org/the-catechist) on the Catechist webpage of the St. Laurence website at <https://stlaurence.org/the-catechist> for suggested questions. Some questions may need to be adapted for your learner age-group. Some beach balls and yarn can be found in the RE workroom. Help yourselves!
- **What’s in a Name?** (Given, Baptismal) – modeled first by Catechists
 - Move to four corners – based on month of birth (i.e., corner #1 – Jan/Feb/March, corner #2 – April/May/June, etc.) or two corners for smaller classes OR concentric circles for larger classes
 - Share your given name and why you were given that name
 - Share your baptismal name and why you were given that name
- **The Name Game ‘Song.’** See lyrics at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-FssT2ga54>
- **Who in Your Life?**
 - Have the children think of someone in their lives who they consider to be a good Catholic. What makes them think so? Have them think of specific actions/deeds that the person says or does which give them that impression of the person they brought to mind.

