



Middle School Religion 2009-2010

The goals of religious instruction at the middle school level are to strengthen the student's religious experience and relationship with God through prayer, catechetical instruction on Church doctrine and practice applying biblical principals to everyday life. Students are challenged to articulate what they believe and discover the roots of faith within.

Students have the opportunity to explore their individual feelings, attitudes and choices within the context of a Christian classroom environment. Classes offer the opportunity to discuss morals, values and social relationships in a positive classroom community. It is important that our conflict resolution strategies connect directly to our faith formation.

Social justice and community service are an integral component of our religion studies. Students play an active role in their communities and church by studying justice issues and participating in church and local service projects throughout the year. The social justice curriculum, *Call to Discipleship through Justice: Service and Advocacy*, encourages an awareness that all of life's diversity is interconnected, to motivate students to pursue the common good. Students learn the necessary skills and tools for peacemaking and justice building as a central task and responsibility of our Catholic faith. When they learn to continuously ask, "Who is my neighbor," in response to God's commandment to love, they soon discover that the meaning of neighbor expands.

With the curriculum and holistic catechetical approaches, the religion program focuses on:

- Recognizing that God's love is unconditional
- Developing a faith centered on Christ
- Recognizing that faith development is an on-going, life-long process
- Reading, interpreting and applying Holy Scripture to life
- Demonstrating respect for self, others and all of God's creation
- Showing basic understanding of Catholic faith
- Articulating what they believe and why they believe it

Liturgy: Students attend Mass twice per month at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Snoqualmie. Each class helps prepare at least one of these Masses during the year.

Prayer: Students pray daily using a variety of prayer experiences, both formal and spontaneous. Students have many opportunities throughout the year to prepare, plan and lead prayer sessions for their class and for the school in groups and with partners.

6th Grade: Sadlier: *New Testament; One Faith, One Lord: A Study of Basic Catholic Belief*

New Testament: An Introduction: This course introduces young Catholics to questions people have asked over the ages: Were the Magi historical figures? Did Jesus really raise people from the dead, or were they just asleep? Did Jesus really die, and did his body really come out of the tomb? By tackling such questions, this course will help young people to appreciate the contemporary Catholic understanding of Scripture and give them tools to avoid fundamentalist leanings that distort real Catholic doctrine and Scripture itself.

One Faith, One Lord: A Study of Basic Catholic Belief: *One Faith, One Lord* is a single comprehensive volume that presents the fundamental beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith.

7th Grade: Sadlier: *Creed: Catholic Belief Part II; Liturgy and Worship: Prayer and the Sacraments*

Creed: A Course on Catholic Belief Part II: The Church and the Holy Spirit: Because our first parents rejected God's plan of original holiness and justice, the whole human race is born in the state of original sin. God promised us a savior and that promise was fulfilled through his only son, who became flesh and took on our human nature. Jesus, the Son of God and the son of Mary, is true God and true Man. He offered himself as the perfect sacrifice for us and for our salvation.

Liturgy and Worship: A Course on Prayer and the Sacraments: It is in the Church's liturgy, especially the seven sacraments, that Catholics celebrate all that God has done for us in Christ Jesus through the working of the Holy Spirit. Our salvation was made possible through the paschal mystery of Christ's passion, death, resurrection, and ascension. This mystery is made present to us in the sacred actions of the Church's liturgy.

8th Grade: Harcourt: *Living our Faith: Morality, Church History*

Morality: We are made for a happiness that God alone can provide. Modeling our lives on Christ, we know that the only way to achieve happiness is by rejecting sin and freely choosing to do what is right. Through God's law and God's grace, we are called upon to form our consciences and make moral decisions as followers of Christ and members of the Church. Within this framework, we will explore the 10 commandments and the Beatitudes, and what it means to live a life of virtue. This course will enable young people to navigate through challenging times with a clear and positive moral attitude that is essential for today's Catholic student.

Catholic Social Teaching: The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Catholic social teaching is a body of principles, guidelines and applications offered in an attempt to urge and assist Christians to take up the "joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties" of our brothers and sisters today. Themes addressed in this course include: Life and Dignity of the Human Person; Call to Family, Community and Participation; Rights and Responsibilities, Option for the Poor and Vulnerable; The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers; Solidarity with the Poor; and Care for God's Creation.