

# Teaching Catholic Studies:

A support document for educators

Commissioned by:



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Bernadette Cey  
Holy Trinity Catholic School Division

Ken Loehndorf  
Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards  
Association

Gilbert Chevrier  
Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division

Miles Meyers  
Regina Catholic School Division

Lynn Colquhoun  
Holy Family Catholic School Division

Deanna Pellatt  
Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division

Laurianne Gabruch  
Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division

Harrold Salahub  
Prince Albert Catholic School Division

Marie Graw  
Light of Christ Catholic School Division

Andrea Sparrow  
Light of Christ Catholic School Division

Darcie Lich  
Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Division

Lorel Trumier  
Prince Albert Catholic School Division

Richard Lucas  
Lloydminster Catholic School Division

Darrell Zaba  
Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division

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## **An Invitation to a Journey of Faith: Teacher & Students:**

“Faith is strengthened when it is given to others.” – Saint Pope John Paul II

Written in the 1990 encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (Mission of the Redeemer: On the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate) this statement strikes to the heart of an effective Catholic Studies program. Perhaps the most effective way to strengthen faith, as St. John Paul II points out, is to give it to others. As faith is shared it is nurtured not only in those who welcome and receive it, but also in the one who offers the faith. This giving and receiving of the faith allows people to join in a pilgrim journey of faith, which grows as the pilgrim virtue of joy (Pope Francis, 2013) is shared among the faithful.

According to Canadian theologian Josephine Lombardi (*Disciples of All Nations: A Practical Guide to the New Evangelization*, 2014), this act of passing on an invitation of faith (i.e. to believe in, know and trust God) can be encapsulated in one word: evangelization. Lombardi sites the Decree of the Second Vatican Council (1965) on the Missionary Activity of the Church titled *Ad Gentes* (To the Nations) in order to further illuminate the nature of evangelization. She indicates evangelization is something which entails more than just feeding the mind through the teaching of doctrine (e.g. catechesis, apologetics), but feeds the heart as well so as to proclaim Jesus in word and deed. However, one cannot give what one does not have. This is why, it is imperative that a Catholic Studies course be taught by an instructor who has come to believe in, know and trust in Jesus Christ themselves (i.e. in order to evangelize, one must have been evangelized).

### ***A Mission of Evangelization:***

An effective Catholic Studies program is to be taught by educators committed to holistic growth in their students, including the faith and religious development of the students. While this aspect of development includes the proverbial head (i.e. information to learn and process) it is to also include the hands (i.e. our actions) and the heart (i.e. the orientation of our soul). Simply put, it is to be a mission of evangelization. As such, teachers of Catholic Studies are encouraged to take time in their professional preparation to consider the following challenge through personal reflection, group discussions, or led by a spiritual leader in their community.

### **A Challenge to the Teacher(s) of Catholic Studies:**

*Jesus said to them, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” - John 20: 21*

To be a Christian is to be a follower of Christ, that is, a disciple of Christ. And here, a significant task is laid before any follower of Christ through what is referred to as “The Great Commissioning”. It is a sending forth of the apostles (the first of Christ’s disciples) recorded in all four Gospel accounts as well as a fifth time in the Acts of the

The Great Commissioning of the Apostles by Christ is recorded in:

- Matthew 28: 16-20
- Mark 16:14-18
- Luke 24: 36-49
- John 20: 19-23
- Acts 1 : 6-8

Apostles. In these accounts, we find the resurrected Christ sending out his apostles prior to the Ascension. The apostles are sent forth with a missionary purpose— a role Jesus challenges all his followers with including (and perhaps especially) Catholic teachers. Going a step further it would seem to be an inherent responsibility of Catholic teachers of this curriculum. Yes, missionary work. You are to create opportunities for students to have an encounter with the Good News, to develop a relationship with Jesus as the Christ involving an *obedience* to His commands (Mt. 28: 20a).

This very word: *missionary*, may seem jarring, and possibly even out of place. After all, don't missionaries go to far off lands spreading the Good News? Well, some do, but really missionaries simply go to where they are needed, where God calls them, to bring the joy of the Good News. And now you may need to reflect on God's call to you as a missionary in your classroom of young people of varying experiences, cultures, gender, religiosity, faith, and more. You are *missionary* in the here and now of your classroom - truly this is your role, and it does not end with the term *missionary*. Beyond the *missionary* call is the challenge to become an *evangelist*. Through your words and actions you are to be an *evangelist* inviting others to share in the Good News, and develop a relationship with God that will take root in the core of their being. It is an invitation into a genuine sense of *metanoia*, which is to say, a *conversion process* of mind, heart and actions. This is a call that echoes in the words of John the Baptist who emerges from the wilderness to proclaim a baptism of repentance, for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 1: 4) and by Jesus himself who proclaims the Kingdom to be near and thus the need to repent (Mark 1:15). Translated from the Greek, "metanoia" becomes the single English term of "repent" which we see used in modern translations cited here. However, *metanoia* is perhaps more accurately translated in the Common English Bible with the phrase of "changing their hearts and lives". Truly these passages from the Gospel of Mark read a bit differently if we replace the words "repentance" and "repent" with this five word phrasing. Consequently, an evangelist's goal is to lead and invite others to Jesus through "changing their hearts and lives" – this is your goal as an evangelist in your classroom: changing hearts and lives. By definition, that means to *convert* – and this can be a jarring word indeed, so let's pause to clarify. While your *mission*, via *evangelization*, may be to spur a *conversion process*, it is **not** to *convert* in the jarring sense which the term may conjure throughout history - a history that sometimes, sadly, involved the sword rather than the Spirit. Nay, you are to invite others into a *conversion experience* which is a *metanoia* as proclaimed by John the Baptist and Jesus himself:

The terms *conversion* and *metanoia* are used in light of work by the Congregation for the Doctrine on Faith in the 2007 [Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization](#) which is based upon Pope John Paul II's 1991 Encyclical letter *Redemptoris missio*.

The concept surrounding the term *proselytization* is used in light of the 2007 Doctrinal Note which is further rooted in *The Joint Working Group between the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches, The Challenge of Proselytism and the Calling to Common Witness* (1995)

Key italicized terms are described in light of, or with direct quotations from:

[Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization](#), from the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, approved by Pope Benedict XVI and issued on Dec. 3, 2007 (Feast Day of St. Francis Xavier, Patron of Missionaries)

a turning to God in heart and actions. This type of conversion can only be achieved in a fashion that truly respects one's *freedom of religion* and is, thereby, *ecumenical* in nature. To accomplish this is **not** to engage in a process of *proselytization* – “a term that has taken on a negative connotation, to mean the promotion of a religion by using means, and for motives, contrary to the spirit of the Gospel; that is, which do not safeguard the freedom and dignity of the human person.” (from Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization, pg. 18), but rather to begin a process of *evangelization* – which “does not mean simply to teach a doctrine, but to proclaim Jesus Christ by one's words and actions, that is, to make oneself an instrument of his presence and action in the world” (from Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization, pg.2). With this *mission* named in such fashion, hopefully greater clarity will emerge as to why *evangelization* not only is, but must be, at the root of this curriculum. It is a root that is hoped will not only grow (in part through catechesis and apologetics to feed the mind), but will also bear fruit in your classrooms (e.g. emergent or developing discipleship). Clearly this is no easy task, especially if the soil is not yet plowed, or is infertile. And what of this word *evangelization*? It may seem overwhelming to you as you seek to enter your classroom; wait, what? I am to be an *evangelist* – an instrument of Christ's presence by my word and deed? I thought I was just teaching a class here? Where do I even start?

Let us turn to the words of Pope Francis to find a key starting point for **you to be an evangelist**. In Mass on May 8, 2014, Pope Francis spoke directly to the root of evangelization (and perhaps specifically, though unintentionally, to evangelization in classrooms), when he said:

*You can't evangelize without dialogue. It's impossible. Because you must begin with where the person who is to be evangelized comes from. This is so important...And this is so important.... because every person has his or her own story, he or she comes with their own ideas.... Dialogue. Spend time with that person because that person is who God wants you to evangelize, it's important to give him or her the news about Jesus. But according to who he or she is, not how it should be: how he or she is right now.*

So teach a curriculum, but also teach a person - who she or he is and where that person is at in the moment. **Dialogue**. Fill them with knowledge as you would when teaching any curriculum, but *dialogue* with them to foster wisdom. Use a dialogue process which invites: invite them to think, to reason, to feel, to pray... to agree... to disagree... to grow and change. Through dialogue you will discover a curriculum rooted in relationships, and hopefully employ a pedagogy which fosters them. No one is expecting great moments of *conversion* in your classroom. No. What is hoped and prayed for is that the soil will be tilled and enriched (Mt. 13:1-9, Mk. 4:1-9, Lk. 8:4-8), that the depth and importance of relationships will be discovered as well as lived, and that perhaps His joy may be their joy too (John 15: 11).

Oh, and if you still feel uneasy about this opening challenge of a mission of evangelization emanating from Jesus' words in the Great Commissioning ....don't forget the closing words of Jesus in the Matthean account:

*“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* - Matthew 28: 20b

## **An Invitation to Prayer:**

“Do nothing at all unless you begin with prayer.” – St. Ephraem the Syrian

An effective Catholic Studies course recognizes that we are creatures made by our Creator, and that we are in relationship with our Creator. This relationship has a history we can learn from, but also has a present and a future to be maintained and cherished. One of the primary methods of maintaining any relationship is to communicate. Saint Teresa of Avila recognized this readily, referring to God often as an intimate friend and thus referred to prayer as “a close sharing between friends.” Further, this friend in God was one who could offer her guidance in all aspects of her life, and so she sought to communicate with this friend always about all things. The spirit of her lived relationship with God is summed up well by St. Ephraem’s quotation, and both serve as a model for teachers and students within a Catholic Studies classroom where prayer not only should, but must, be included in the pedagogical approach of teachers in order to be most effective.

With this spirit in mind, the following prayer is offered as a resource for teachers to contemplate and pray prior to the beginning of a Catholic Studies course.

### **Prayer for the Evangelist of Catholic Studies:**

#### **Preface:**

“In preaching the Gospel, bishops should be appealing rather than censorious, upholding church teaching not in order to measure how far the world falls short of the truth it contains, but to fascinate the world, enchant it with the beauty of love, seduce it by offering the freedom of the Gospel.”

- Pope Francis in a speech to the Congregation for Bishops on Feb 27, 2014

This message can be easily applied beyond bishops to all evangelists, especially those within the classroom. An evangelist/teacher must connect with those in their care and not be, as the Pope says (and I had to research the meaning of), censorious – or overly-critical, condemning, or judgmental. Yes, we are to uphold the truths, but in doing so create a sense of wonder and awe – a sense of freedom and joy. In fact, it is this very sense of freedom and joy that often leads to conversion experiences or the metanoia process of turning to God in heart and action. This was the case for famous author, and U.S. ambassador, Clare Booth Luce. Prior to determining her ultimate conversion to the Catholic faith, she claims to have taken time to look at Catholics and said to herself: “You say you have the truth. Well the truth should set you free, give you joy. Can I see your freedom? Can I feel your joy?”

### **Let us Pray:**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Creator God, I am a humble evangelist embarking upon the missionary work before me through the teaching of a curriculum to those entrusted to my care. Let me welcome your grace to allow me to be both mindful of, and open to, the potential impact such a curriculum may have on my own faith and those in my care. Bless me, and those in my care, to create and sustain nurturing and appropriate relationships in your name so as to freely dialogue with one another and to ultimately experience joy – for where joy resides, your loving presence dwells.

I ask this through the most holy name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **Christian Action Projects – Go Forth You Are Sent! :**

### **A Mandatory Pedagogical Component of Catholic Studies:**

A critical concept within an effective Catholic Studies curriculum is the concept that faith, spirituality, religion, and church are not simply nouns or things we refer to, but rather are to be understood more from the perspective of verbs or things that we do. Put into more religious and academic language, a Catholic studies program should go beyond catechesis and apologetics (i.e. learning about and defending faith, spirituality, religion, and church) to a greater sense of evangelization (i.e. living the Gospel through proclamation, worship, community, witness, and service so as to inspire and inform others to do the same). This concept must affect the pedagogy of Catholic Studies, giving teachers pause to consider how to bring an active element to the learning process. While there are a variety of means and methods that teachers may wish to implement to include an evangelical approach to their pedagogy, there is one method that is mandatory for every student in every Catholic Studies course from grades 9 – 12: the Christian Action Project.

### **What is a Christian Action Project? (C.A.P.)**

**What's in a name?** - In this case, there is quite a lot. First, a C.A.P. is Christian in nature, that is to say, it is focused on the values contained in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Second, it involves action. This endeavor is not to be static in nature, but rather involves a sense of doing. In the sense of Catholic studies, it involves a shift from catechetical learning to evangelical learning. Finally it is a project, which will require elements of preparation, planning, inquiry, implementation, critique, potential revisions, and presentation of learning.



**Complementary to the actions of the Church to achieve her mission** - A Christian Action Project (C.A.P.) is not merely volunteerism, service, or stewardship. Broader in some aspects and more specific in others, it is to encompass the spirit of the actions taken by the Church in pursuit of her mission. Thus, C.A.P.'s at various grade levels, and in various classrooms, will have a flexibility built into them to be explored by both the classroom teacher and the classroom students in order to assist all in achieving learning outcomes. C.A.P.'s may involve some form of proclaiming Jesus Christ, worship of Christ through the sacraments, building community, giving witness to Christ, and/or serving.

**Individual, Pair, Group, and/or Class work** – C.A.P.'s can vary in terms of their individual vs. group dynamics. Teachers, working within their classrooms, may choose to have students participate in C.A.P.'s as individuals, in pairs, as part of smaller or larger groups, or as an entire class using whatever formulation seems most appropriate for their classroom dynamics and goals for achievement of course outcomes.

### **An Outcome-based Focus, with Flexibility:**

The C.A.P. in Catholic Studies 9, 10, 20, 30 is not an outcome unto itself, but rather is seen as a mandatory means to a selected end (i.e. course outcomes). The course outcomes are the learning targets for teachers and students, and the C.A.P. becomes a tool for teachers to implement at least once per classroom for the attainment (partial or full) of a selected outcome. As such, flexibility is an inherent feature of the C.A.P. as teachers can use this tool as a teaching methodology leading towards various or multiple curricular outcomes to either fully attain an outcome, or to support additional learnings towards the attainment of an outcome(s). Teachers will be able to determine how time (both within the classroom and outside of the classroom) is best utilized as part of a C.A.P. as well as if a C.A.P. is best suited to an entire class, large groups, pairs, or individual work. Examples could include:

- In grade 9, an environmental stewardship project may facilitate learning regarding teachings of Genesis (e.g., stories of Adam & Eve and Noah). Actions may involve connecting with a community organization planning a Spring clean-up of public space, or preparation of a community garden.
- In grade 10, a project based on Canadian prostitution laws may facilitate learning in multiple outcomes including Catholic social teachings of marginalization and social sin, morality discussions of sexual behaviour and its personal and communal consequences as well as the challenges and obligations of living both as a person of faith and a public citizen. Actions may involve letter-writing/petition campaigns to be presented to a local MP.

- In grade 11, a project based on the corporal works of mercy could be used to facilitate learning on the nature of being a disciple of Christ, and/or to explore the mystery of suffering and death. Actions may involve groups or individuals in various acts of the corporal works of mercy from visiting the sick to feeding the hungry.
- In grade 12, a liturgical project could provide students opportunity to explain their own attempts to hear and heed God's call in their life. Actions may involve leading children's liturgy at a local parish or facilitating a retreat for an elementary school class.

### **What a Christian Action Project (C.A.P.) is NOT:**

**C.A.P. is not... Mandated Service** - The first thing that should be noted about the inclusion of a C.A.P. in every Catholic Studies course from grades 9 – 12 is that this is not a form of mandated volunteer service; something that is a bit of a paradox in and of itself. Rather, the C.A.P. is a mandated means to a selected end (i.e. a learning outcome). Teachers and/or students will be able to choose where to include a C.A.P. as part of a student's educational journey towards achievement (partial or full) of various course outcomes.

**C.A.P. is not... A set of service hours to complete** - Christian Action Projects do not involve a pre-set or curricular mandated number of hours for the project (or possible service component within the project) to entail. While it is anticipated that many projects will involve some sort of service feature (e.g. assisting at a local Food bank, animal shelter, or health care facility) other projects may involve some of the other aspects of the Church's actions to pursue her mission such as:

- aspects of community (e.g. support or participation in a charitable walk/run event, coaching an athletic team, participating in Special Olympics training/activities),
- worship through the sacraments (e.g. Mass participation, sacramental participation, or Eucharistic adoration),
- witness (e.g. walk for life, or diocese-sponsored retreat participation)
- proclaiming (e.g. liturgical ministry or diocese-sponsored retreat leadership)
  - \*Note – it is certainly possible (and likely) that some activities pursued as part of a C.A.P. will encompass multiple actions of the Church in pursuit of her mission, and students should be able to recognize this.

When it comes to the time-commitment for students to achieve their learning outcomes, teachers will need to consider a variety of factors including, but not limited to, time needed in and out of class for project preparation, inquiry, and

research prior to involving themselves in an action component as well as time in and out of class to critique/discuss/revise any appropriate aspects of their process, as well as class time to present learning to their teacher and/or peers and/or others. In terms of the action component itself, teachers in consultation with their colleagues and school divisions will have flexibility to determine if a specific number of hours is necessary to name. It is recommended that the action piece of the C.A.P. entail between 5 – 10 hours of proclaiming, worship, community, witness, or serving action.

**C.A.P. is not... Actions targeting Family members** - It is generally understood that the action component of a C.A.P. should not be tied to action directed to family members. Thus, an action project involving the service of shoveling snow for one's parents or grandparents would not be a suitable action to root a project in. However, this can be distinguished from an action such as service at the local animal shelter managed by an aunt, or student mentorship in a classroom taught by a parent. Here the action is rooted in the service to the animal shelter or children being mentored, not the relative managing the space. Furthermore, it is recognized that in some instances, actions directed toward a family member may provide an excellent opportunity for achieving an outcome as part of a C.A.P., especially in instances where student participation in an alternative action may be seen as unduly burdensome to the student in question. Such exceptions would need to be made by the classroom teachers after discussion with the student(s) in question and in consultation with his/her collegial leaders (e.g., an Educational Leader, Chaplain, or Principal).

**C.A.P. is not... Actions providing direct financial benefit** – It is generally understood that the action component of a C.A.P. should not have a primary result of financial gain or profit for the individual involved in the C.A.P. nor to a private business that is directly affected by the C.A.P. Therefore, work done for a private company in lieu of a company employee (e.g. working for free at a local tire store in the Fall to assist with organizing and keeping inventory on winter tires) or work done in a private company to ensure employees can be more efficient in their own work (e.g. setting up seasonal decorations in a local dental office so staff can continue in and be more efficient in their work) should not be considered as the action component to a C.A.P. However, an action through a private business that is directed towards and through a charitable/community – oriented endeavor would not need to be negated (e.g. assisting at a local grocery store as part of a feeding the hungry program by assisting staff with packaging food hampers or with a dance company that runs a program for the disabled.) Similarly, an unexpected honourarium or gift to the student at the conclusion of the action would not negate an action wherein the primary purpose was to proclaim, worship, build community, give witness, or serve. In such instances, however, it may be suggested that the student consider donating such gifts to a connected cause, or other charity if they wish.

**C.A.P. is not... Court-mandated service** – It is to be understood that under virtually all circumstances a court-mandated action should not be used as part of a C.A.P. project. This is a separate experience for the individual involved relating to a justice issue, and course credit should not be seen nor actualized as a side benefit of a restorative justice act.

**C.A.P. is not... Action taken that is, or is on behalf of an organization, directly opposed to the Gospel Message** – Due to the fact that action projects are to be “Christian” by name and nature, actions need to align themselves with Gospel values in order to be effective (i.e. connect with learning outcomes labelled within a Catholic Studies course). Therefore taking action that is opposed to Gospel values (e.g. a project promoting Dr. Assisted suicide as a virtuous act) or aligning oneself with an organization whose teachings are opposed to Gospel values (e.g. serving in a peer counselling role through an organization that promotes the use of artificial contraception as a positive means of birth control) would not be seen as appropriate actions to centre a C.A.P. around. However, this stipulation does not discount an action project that would involve an action through an organization that is not Catholic, or even non-Christian. Indeed, Gospel values run through many non-Catholic and non-Christian organizations (e.g. the Gospel value of feeding the hungry can be achieved by a student involving themselves in a food distribution project through their local Mosque during the season of Ramadan). Furthermore, actions that can be viewed as ecumenical or inter-faith in nature would not only be appropriate but could be encouraged as part of meeting learning objectives focused on ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue (e.g. in Catholic Studies 20 a student, group, or entire class may involve themselves in a visitation process to various Christian denominational churches to learn about the commonalities shared).

## **Catholic Rally and Retreat Experiences:**

### **A Recommended Pedagogical Component of Catholic Studies 9, 10, 20, 30**

**Head, Hands, and... Heart** - It is important to acknowledge that effective Catholic Studies 9, 10, 20 and 30 courses, while academic in nature, are not solely academic. This is to say that they are not solely “of the head”. Catholic Studies is to engage the “hands” (e.g., the active element of a C.A.P.) as well as the “heart” of the students involved in this curriculum. In an attempt to engage the hearts of students, it is recommended that Catholic Studies 9, 10, 20, and 30 are each to include a Catholic retreat or rally type of event used in the attainment (partial or full) of a course outcome(s). A key aspect to any retreat or rally is that it takes the student out of the normal structure of their classroom, and in most cases will involve them physically leaving their school building in order to do so. By doing this, students are signaled to the fact that they are doing something differently, that they are being invited to engage their course in a different fashion. That something different is to be a shift of

engagement from head to heart as Catholic retreats and rallies seek to be affective beyond the academic to the spiritual and/or religious.

**Differentiating Catholic Rallies from Catholic Retreats** – It is important to recognize that there is a distinct difference from participation in retreat vs. rally. Catholic retreat work connotes creating opportunity for such things as peaceful dialogue, gentle wonder, and quiet introspection. Participants are called to retreat from the busy-ness of their everyday environs to a place (physical/mental/spiritual) of such things as pondering, questioning, discussion, meditation or prayer. Catholic rally work, on the other hand, connotes such things as a generating of enthusiasm, a stirring of passion, a building of community through activities designed to imbue a great variety of Gospel values, gifts or fruits of the Holy Spirit, teachings of the Magisterium, lessons of the saints, etc. Due to this differing nature of Catholic retreats and rally-type events it is generally understood that retreats tend to involve smaller groups of people (i.e. a single class at a time) whereas rally-type events can involve larger groups (i.e. single classes, groupings of classes, or entire grade populations).

**Structural Recommendations** – While various school systems hold flexibility in terms of how/ when they will implement Catholic retreats and/or rallies into each Catholic Studies course, it is a curricular recommendation that every class from grade 9 – 12 will participate in some form of a structured retreat or rally as part of their course with a particular course outcome(s) targeted by the planned Catholic retreat or rally. It is the curricular recommendation for:

- Catholic Studies 9 to involve a half day Catholic rally style event for students. This can be done in a single event for an entire grade level or it can be repeated (i.e. duplicated) for individual classes or groups of classes.
  - e.g. A welcoming rally focusing on the culture of the school (workshops or keynote speeches could focus on school motto, school patron saint, key Gospel values emphasized in the school community, etc).
- Catholic Studies 10 to involve a half day Catholic rally style event for students. This can be done in a single event for an entire grade level or it can be repeated (i.e. duplicated) for individual classes or groups of classes.
  - e.g. A learning and working trip to a charitable organization emphasizing understanding of and living out mercy, justice, generosity, joy and/or an examination of treatment of the marginalized.
- Catholic Studies 20 to involve a half day Catholic retreat for students. This should be done one class at a time, or by grouping 2 classes at a time if the event can accommodate these numbers, and repeated (i.e. duplicated) for subsequent classes or class groupings.
  - e.g. A pilgrimage-modelled experience to a local church, shrine, holy site.

- Catholic Studies 30 to involve a full day Catholic retreat for students. This should be done one class at a time and repeated (i.e. duplicated) for subsequent classes
  - e.g. A graduation-themed retreat considering the concepts of vocations and discernment involving stages of reflection on past, present, and future of participants.

## **First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Ways of Knowing:**

An effective Catholic Studies curriculum must be cognizant and respectful of the various ways of knowing and spiritual traditions of our country's First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people. In some instances, both historical and in the present, FNMI and Christian traditions have integrated well with one another. This positive union is evidenced in many Catholic churches infused with First Nations culture, traditions, and rituals, as well as the 2012 canonization of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Conversely, there have also been areas of friction, both historical and in the present, leading to separation between Catholic Christians and those in the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. Lessons have been, and continue to be learned, from these struggles. One such example involves over-zealous missionaries who brought a spirit more of proselytization to some FNMI peoples in contrast to other missionaries who sought to evangelize by word and deed through respectful dialogue and cultural respect. Here we can point to the positive example of St. Jean de Brébeuf who serves as a model of inter-cultural faith dialogue to this day. As a more modern example one can point to cases of abuse that occurred within the broader residential school experience of some First Nations people of Canada. Though wounds still exist, hope draws us forward through examples of positive dialogue such as that which occurred between Pope Benedict XVI and Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine in 2009 wherein His Holiness expressed his sorrow, and offered his sympathy at the actions of some within the Church involved in the abuses that occurred. Further, he prayed with Chief Fontaine for healing and offered encouragement to all First Nations people to move forward with a renewed sense of hope – a gesture graciously accepted and lauded by Chief Fontaine.

From such struggles and successes over time, a better understanding can emerge of what an effective Catholic Studies course entails with regard to the inclusion of FNMI ways of knowing and spiritual traditions. These culturally rooted ways of knowing offer an important lens through which to view sections of Catholic Studies course content, and as such must be introduced and given respectful consideration at various stages of the course. Furthermore, FNMI spiritual traditions need to be recognized for both their symmetry with Catholic teachings in some cases, as well as their distinctiveness. As such, dialogue between Catholic religion and FNMI spirituality must be considered from the perspectives of both inter-faith dialogue in some instances and ecumenical dialogue in others. Finally, and from a practical perspective, there is no reason why a student or class C.A.P., retreat, or rally could not involve aspects of First Nation, Métis, or Inuit ways of knowing or cultural spiritual expression (e.g. smudging ceremonies, sweatlodge experiences, and drumming).

## **The Importance of Student Voice and Dialogue:**

An effective Catholic Studies curriculum, as has been stated, is one that seeks to educate and evangelize. However, it must be recognized that effective evangelization is not something that is done to or for another person, but rather something that is done with or alongside another. As such, dialogue becomes a crucial element; dialogue in many forms from the obvious such as between student and teacher or student to student, but also in the less overt spaces such as between a student and God, within the students themselves (i.e. inner dialogue), or between the Church (e.g., teachings) and the student as well as other religious and spiritual teachings and the student. As one can see, dialogue is a crucial element of an effective Catholic Studies curriculum. Looking closer, one notices a commonality in all the previous examples of dialogue: the student, or more specifically, the voice of the student. Student voice will be very important to an effective Catholic Studies curriculum as students must be encouraged to give voice to their thoughts and feelings as they seek to make sense of the content within this curriculum and make choices as to how it will be incorporated into their lived experience.

## **Upon Completion of Catholic Studies:**

As is noted in the main curricular documents:

The aim of Catholic studies is for students to understand, value and engage in Catholic Christianity so they may hear an invitation or deepen their commitment to live as followers of Jesus Christ. (sic)

Furthermore, the curricular document notes four goals of Catholic studies in that by the end of grade 12 students who complete Catholic Studies will be able to:

Goal 1 - understand and appreciate God's plan of salvation as expressed through Jesus Christ as it applies to meaning, self-worth and purpose in their lives in relationship with God, self, others and creation (sic)

Goal 2 - demonstrate an understanding of the dignity of the human person in making informed moral decisions based on scripture and Church teaching (sic)

Goal 3 - understand and appreciate the centrality of the liturgical and ritual life to the Catholic community (sic)

Goal 4 - understand and appreciate the diversity of religious expression through study of various Christian, religious and spiritual traditions. (sic)

## Appendix A: Catholic Studies Lexicon

Throughout the process of the development of this curriculum, it was repeatedly noted by the SCSBA representatives, the project Reference Committee, and the Curriculum writer that there is a common vocabulary used within the Catholic community to express faith experiences and religious knowledge. As such, it was felt that a support document should include an expanded listing of key vocabulary terminology, or a Catholic Studies Lexicon, to assist teachers and students as they discuss various topics. This is to be seen as a supplement to the existing glossary within the main curriculum documents. While some terms within the lexicon have been defined for simplicity with wordings structured by the author of the document based on general research comprised from the body of resources listed within the main curricular document's bibliography, other terms are taken directly from documents authored by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and other Magisterial or academic sources. In these instances symbols have been used to designate the source material. A legend for sources of these direct definitions follows below to provide ease of reading in the lexicon itself. Formally documented reference entries are within the bibliography of the main curricular document.

### Lexicon Legend:

▣ = A Church in Dialogue: Catholic Ecumenical Commitment (2014, Episcopal Commission for Christian Unity, Religious Relations with the Jews)

♥ = Be With Me (1997, CCCB)

♠ = Catechism of the Catholic Church (2003, Vatican Press)

♦ = Christ and Culture (2001, CCCB)

▣ = Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (2007).

§ = Episcopal Commission for Doctrine - Pastoral letter (Jan, 2011, CCCB)

▲ = Evangelium Vitae (1995, Pope John Paul II)

◇ - <http://www.nfpsask.ca/> (retrieved Aug, 2016)

♣ = In Search of the Good (2004, CCCB)

∞ = Why the Church Opposes Assisted Suicide – Catholic Update (1997, Bishop Wilton Gregory)



## Catholic Studies Lexicon:

**Abba** – a term of endearment, like “daddy”, which refers to a father. The use of this term by Jesus reveals the type of relationship we are called into by God --- one of intimate trust, like a small child with a parent.

▲ **Abortion** – Direct Abortion is considered a grave evil to be avoided, while indirect abortion, while to be grieved due to the loss of life, would be morally acceptable:

- **Direct** – Abortion willed as an end or as a mean; the deliberate killing of an innocent human being in the womb.
  - NOTE – Abortion is willed as an end (or as a specific goal) if the specific goal is to end the pregnancy. Abortion would be willed as a means in examples such as a child being killed in order to harvest the body for medical utilization (i.e. tissue research, stem cell use, organ transplantation, etc). Here abortion is the means to obtain a goal (the example being medical utilization of the child’s bodily components).
- **Separation of Mother from Child** – sometimes referred informally to as Indirect abortion; if abortion is used neither as a means nor an end the abortion may be deemed indirect. Examples of indirect abortion may occur if life-threatening disease were to occur in the womb, or in the case of a tragic accident involving a pregnant woman.

♣ **Absolution** – In the sacrament of reconciliation, the priest absolves the penitent from his/her sins. Absolution is the remission of sins pronounced by the priest (see also John 20: 22-23).

**Afterlife** – involves an acknowledgement/belief in the spiritual dimension of the human condition and questions of what is to come after physical death:

- ♠ **Heaven** – To live in heaven is to reside eternally in the presence of God and all those who reside in his love (the communion of saints, angelic host, etc).
- ♠ **Purgatory** – Based on doctrines established at the Councils of Florence and Trent, is the final purification of all who die in God’s grace and friendship (and thus assured of eternal salvation) but are in need of purification to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the kingdom of God.
- ♠ **Hell** –To reside in Hell is to separate oneself from God and God’s love, it is a definitive and eternal self-exclusion from God, and those who reside in His love (the communion of saints, angelic host, etc). Separation from God involves an act(s) of choice / free will.

♠ **Agnosticism**- can sometimes include a certain search for God (that is often seen as incapable of revealing itself), or makes no judgement about God’s existence (claiming it impossible to prove), but it can equally be express through indifference.

♠ **Amen** – rooted in the Hebrew language, Amen is a standard religious response within the Christian vocabulary designating affirmation of that which is true, a sense of agreement, solidarity and trust.

♣ **Annulment** – The determination by the diocesan marriage tribunal that a marriage covenant is invalid, and therefore void, based on evidence that one or both of the marriage partners did not fulfill the conditions for a valid sacramental marriage. What may have seemed to be a marriage, never was.

♣ **Anthropocentrism** – from the Greek anthropos – man. A worldview that considers the human being as the most significant entity in the universe. This is in contrast to **theocentrism** – from the Greek theos, meaning God – which is a worldview that considers God to be the most significant entity in the universe.

♦ **Anthropology** – the science that studies the origin, development and customs of human beings.

♠ **Apostasy** – the total repudiation of the Christian faith.

♠ **Apostle** – the title traditionally given to the 12 specially chosen by Jesus to preach the Gospel and to whom he entrusted responsibility for guiding the early Church.

♠ **Apostolic Tradition** – Also referred to as Holy Tradition, it is one of two modes of Revelation. Apostolic Tradition refers to the Living of the Word of God as has been handed down through the apostles.

**Artificial Contraceptives** – Artificial is rooted in the Latin term for a cunning trick or skillful contrivance, and our modern understanding is of something not naturally occurring. Contra is a prefix which in its Latin origin means to be against. The second half of this word has its roots in the Latin term that has evolved into our modern term of conceive – meaning to bring forth new life. Thus, artificial contraception involves man-made devices which “skillfully trick” the body in order to avoid birth, as they are against the bringing forth of new life. Examples of artificial contraceptives would include male and female condoms (of both latex and natural fibre construction), birth control pills, shots, or patches, spermicidal solutions (such as foams and jellies), or mechanized devices such as an intrauterine device (IUD).

♠ **Assumption of Mary** –The Catholic dogma which states The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son’s Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body.

♠ **Atheism**- The rejection or denial of God’s existence.

- ◆ **Authority** – is given by others, institutions, the Church, and the state to regulate power.
  - ♥ **Legitimate Authority** – Authority is legitimate when it is recognized by the population as a whole and when it serves the common good.
  - ◆ ♥ **Illegitimate Authority** – Authority becomes illegitimate when it wields power in a violent fashion, no longer serves the common good, or is no longer recognized by the population as a whole.

♣ **Autonomy** – Free self-direction; responsibility.

♥ **Beatitude** – From the Greek term “makarios” which means both “blessing” or “promise of true happiness”. Jesus’ beatitudes will lead us to happiness of true and lasting friendship with others and with God.

♣ **“Big Bang” Theory** – postulated in the 1920’s by Catholic priest and scientist Fr. Georges Lemaitre, this theory of cosmic evolution is now held by most cosmologists as being the most likely explanation for the way that the universe is expanding.

**Canon Law** – is the body of laws, codes, or regulations made by church authority.

**Canon of Scripture** – the list of writings officially recognized as inspired by the Holy Spirit and accepted as the books of Sacred Scripture by the Catholic Church.

♣ **Capitalism** – an economic system based on private or corporate ownership and control of resources and means of production and distribution. Goods and services are exchanged on the free market.

♣ **Catechesis** – The means by which the Church, through her faithful, instructs members in the faith, making the faith living, conscious and active.

**Catechism of the Catholic Church** – the official compendium of Catholic teaching. The Catechism covers four major areas of Catholic life: 1) the profession of faith: all the major beliefs of our faith tradition, 2) the celebration of the Christian mystery: the sacramental life of the Church, 3) the life of Christ: how Jesus intended for us to live in our relationships with others, and 4) Christian prayer: how to pray as Jesus did.

♣ **Charity** – The power of God’s love working through us. This love incorporates action on behalf of the needy.

§ ♠ **Chastity** – is much more than simply the “absence of sexual relations”. Chastity can involve the presence of sexual relations as chastity requires what the Church refers to as the truthful living out of the sexual language of our bodies – or living and expressing our sexuality according to our state in life (including single, married or consecrated celibacy).

**Christmas** – celebration of the birth of Christ; the second most important holiday in the liturgical calendar recognizing the Incarnation.

◆ **Church** – rooted in Greek meaning “those belonging to the Lord”, church is much more than a physical building; it is the gathering of the religious community to foster its growth, affirm the journey of one’s spirituality and re-inforce the validity of a personal faith encounter. The Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, makes the risen Christ alive in history until he comes again.

- **Encounter with the Numinous** – introduced by German theologian Rudolf Otto to describe one’s initial awareness of a higher power which is characterized by two facets: 1) fear/respect and trembling and 2) an attraction of fascination
- ♠ ♣ **Faith** – to believe that which we cannot fully perceive, faith refers to a right relationship with God - a relationship of trust that God loves humanity and desires totally that it exist. Nothing can come between us and God but sin.
- ♣ **Spirituality** – how one’s personal faith is translated into one’s action.
- ◆ **Religion** – a group of people with a communal faith understanding and shared spirituality involving rites, rules and rituals.

◆ **Chosen People** – When God called the Hebrews out of Egypt through Moses, God chose them, the Bible says, “out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession (Deut. 7:6). Being the *Chosen People* was not so much a privilege as a mission. They were a “summoned” people. The people were to be a “light to the nations.” They were to live the revelation of God to their ancestors for all the world to see and hear.

◆ **Common good** – refers to the social conditions that make human fulfillment possible. It is made up of 3 essential elements:

- Respect for the person
- The social well-being and development of the group as a whole; and,
- Peace, including the stability and security of a just order. (CCC 1906-1909)  
To this list, we could also add our responsibility to care for creation, since the health of our environment affects everyone.

◆ **Communion of Saints** – The Church is the assembly of all the saints, both those living now, and those “who sleep in the peace of Christ” (CCC 955). Christians form a body, a communion, around the person of Christ. There they receive the holy things of God. As the Eastern Church proclaims when the gifts of bread and wine are shown to the people: “God’s holy gifts for God’s holy people.” Christians believe that all the living and the dead remain in this union with Christ.

♣ **Conscience** – Is a law inscribed in human hearts where we are alone with God whose voice echoes in our depths:

- It is our capacity to know and to do good
- It is a process of moral reasoning
- It is the concrete judgment of what one should do
  1. Our consciences develop as we mature; as we take account of norms, values, virtues and commandments; as we deal with our moral failings and sins.

♣ **Consumerism** – A world view whereby one attributes meaningfulness to life through one's capacity and ability to purchase and consume economic goods.

♥ **Conversion** – is a change of heart and a reorientation of one's life. For genuine conversion to occur we often look to the "3 C's of Conversion":

- **Contrition** - the offender recognizes the offence, is genuinely sorry for the offence, and seeks to avoid reoffending.
- **Confession** – the offender is willing to admit the wrongdoing, both privately (in their heart) and publicly, and take responsibility for their actions.
- **Correction** - the offender must do what s/he can to repair the damage done by the offence.
  - \*see also: **metanoia**

**Council of Nicea** – The first ecumenical council of the Church held in modern-day Turkey in the year 325. From this council, the Nicene Creed was born.

**Council of Trent** – A meeting of Catholic bishops from 1545 – 1563 to clarify and define Catholic teaching, especially in contrast to Protestantism. This council became the embodiment of what is often referred to as the Counter-Reformation.

◆ ♣ **Covenant** – God's covenant is a bond of love that calls to us in our freedom to respond in love. The term covenant is used in sacred scripture to express the relationship between God and the Chosen People and is best expressed by the phrase in Jer. 31: 33: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." As such, it is like a treaty or an alliance, but is much more as God serves as its initiator and guarantor. Covenants have conditions, are sealed with a ceremony, and are celebrated with both parties present.

◆ **Culture** – the set of meanings, beliefs, values and rules for living shared by groups and societies as the source of their identity.

♣ **Democracy** – Government by the will of all the people, a will that is expressed directly through freely elected representation. To protect all people within society from tyranny of the majority, democracies must recognize and guarantee the rights of the minority. A democracy that is ruled strictly by the majority without protecting the rights of the minority would quickly degenerate into a system of class or privilege that no longer reflects the will of the governed.

♣ **Determinism** – A point of view that holds that human behavior is a product, not of free will, but of a complex array of physical, social, cultural, psychological and historical causes. In such a theory, morality does not exist because choice does not exist.

- ♣ **Naturalism** – a dominant deterministic philosophy which purports all human actions are located within, and reduced to, their physical components. Naturalism relies heavily on the concept of cause and effect.
- ♣ **Predestination** – The deterministic view that all behaviours are predetermined, whether by God or by other causes.

♠ **Dignity** – as human persons is rooted in our creation in the image and likeness of God.

♣ **Discernment** – to discern is to perceive clearly; in a discernment process one seeks to know the right from the wrong, seeks to know what is good, seeks the truth.

**Disciple** – Name given to a follower of/adherent to a certain discipline or teaching. In the New Testament, it is the term used to identify all those men and women who followed Jesus and were taught by him while he was alive, and who (following the death, Resurrection, and Ascension) formed the Church with the apostles and helped to spread the Good News. Contemporary members of the Church/followers of Christ are referred to as disciples of Jesus.

**Divination** - seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown by supernatural means.

**Divino Afflante Spiritu** – Meaning “Inspired by the Holy Spirit”, and written in 1943, this encyclical from Pope Pius XII urged scholars to use modern methods of biblical criticism in the study of Scripture.

**Doctrine** – a term used to describe general Church teachings (e.g. the importance of fasting, the ordination of men to the priesthood).

**Dogma** – a term used to describe what are seen as fundamental truths of Revelation to be held by all Catholics (e.g., true presence of God within the Eucharist, the Immaculate Conception).

♣ **Dominion** – Word used in Genesis to describe humankind’s rule over creation, so that right order may be achieved. Humans are called to exercise dominion – not domination – over the earth, a dominion of service, wisdom, and love (stewardship).

**Easter** – the celebration of Christ’s victory over death through the Resurrection. Easter is the foundation of the Christian faith and the most important holiday in the liturgical year.

§ **Ecumenism** –is derived from a Greek term in the New Testament referring to the whole inhabited earth. Church leaders organizing the modern effort to promote the re-establishment of unity among all Christians (all of whom belong to the same family of faith) describe this work as ‘ecumenical’. This ecumenical work among Christians is to be distinguished from interfaith activities, which aim to foster understanding between Christianity and other religions.

◆ **Encyclical** – official pastoral letters written by the Pope for the entire people of God to give advice or address issues that need to be better understood in light of Church teaching.

**Epistles** – originates from a Greek word meaning “to send a message.” In the New Testament, epistles are the name for twenty-one formal letters.

♣ **Eschatological** – Pertaining to the end of time, in the sense of its fullness. The coming of the kingdom of God at the end of time, according to Jesus, has already begun in his life, death and resurrection. Eschatological ethics is an ethics that insists that we can already live what God will realize or reveal at the end.

♣ **Ethics** –Greek rooted term relating to good character; a discipline dealing with the nature of the good and of the human person in relationship to goodness (\*see goodness). Ethics can be differentiated from action-based morality (\*see morality). We come to a search for what is good – ethics – through a variety of human experiences, that is, humans seem to be naturally inclined to ethics, or a pursuit of goodness. We see this in 4 types of experiences:

- ♣ **The experience of personal response** – example: the innate reaction when a scream for help rings out, before engaging intellect we seem to be engaged at a deeper level. Is this an ethical experience?
- ♣ **The experience of the other** – In encountering another, especially face-to-face (as Emmanuel Levinas, French – Jewish philosopher, purports), we search for the goodness or encounter ethics. Both pre and post interaction we tend to naturally review the encounter and our actions (i.e. an encounter with a beggar in the street). Is this an ethical experience?
- ♣ **The experience of obligation** – If someone asks, or orders, us to do something we naturally begin an evaluation process. Are we seeking the good? Is this authority legitimate? Is it asking something in support of the common good? Do we feel obliged to obey as a result? Is this then also an ethical experience?
- ♣ **The experience of contrast** - Humanity, it can be argued, seems to have a built in capacity to see how the world ought to be (\*see natural law) and a sense of outrage tends to come through moments of contrast. When one is shocked by terrible and contrasting events around oneself, it would seem that one is also seeking to understand what is truly good (i.e. at the end of WWII when images of the mounds of death in the concentrations camps were revealed, Sept. 11, 2001 when hijacked airplanes were used as weapons, when one encounters the reality of a battered/abused wife fleeing her home). Is this an ethical experience?

**Euthanasia** – rooted in Greek terms meaning goodly and death; literally is “dying well”, or having a “good death”. What does it mean to have a “good” death? As the term euthanasia has evolved over time it has come to connote in a more modern sense to “die easily”. One must then ask what is the difference between dying well and dying easily?

- ∞ **Active Euthanasia** – a doctor or medical staff person administers a lethal dose of medication with the intention of killing a patient/ending a patient’s life.
- ∞ **Assisted Suicide** – a doctor or medical staff person prescribes a lethal amount of medication with the intent of helping a person commit suicide. The patient then takes the dose/administers the dose.
- ∞ **Proportionate Medical means** – medical treatments that offer a reasonable hope of benefit and do not involve excessive burden.
- ∞ **Disproportionate Medical means** – medical treatment that either does not offer a reasonable hope of benefit or imposes an excessive burden. We are not obligated to use disproportionate means to maintain life. To forego them, then, is to accept the likely possibility of natural death.

**Evangelization** – is not simply to teach a doctrine, but to proclaim Jesus Christ by one’s words and actions. Evangelization may involve humility and/or zeal, and is differentiated from proselytization in that it is carried out in fashion aligned with the spirit of the Gospels respecting the dignity and freedom of others.

♣ **Exegesis** – The analysis of texts in their original context. Uncovering the historical, cultural, linguistic, etc., particularities that the original author was dealing with in order to better understand the original meaning and intent of a text. (ie – Biblical or Scriptural exegesis which seeks to determine both literal and spiritual meanings from Bible texts).

**Faith** – \* see Church

♥ **Forgiveness** – Forgiving does not mean that a transgression is now acceptable or “okay”. Forgiving is not to be equated with forgetting, ignoring, or pretending that an offense did not cause harm. Nor does forgiving mean the offending person(s) need not do/say anything to repair the damage they have caused. Rather, to forgive is to desire what is best for the offending person in spite of what has been done. In forgiving, the desire for revenge is replaced with a desire for positive change. Forgiveness then, is rooted in human dignity.

♠ **Freedom / Free Will** – is the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one’s own responsibility.

♥ **Generosity** – flows from true modesty to love in a way that seeks out, and can surpass, the demands of justice (e.g., the workers in the vineyard Mt. 20:1-16). Modesty recognizes what God has gifted us with and the importance of these gifts. As a result, through our love of God and others, we use what we have to serve others in need, giving them their due (justice rooted in their inherent dignity) or exceeding their due (generosity) through our Christ-like love.



♣ **Gentile** – A person who is not part of the Jewish faith, or not of Jewish ancestry.

♦ **Goodness** – God is the source of all that is good. Human beings, by their nature and vocation, are directed toward the good. Coming from God, and going toward God, human beings live fully human lives only if they freely live in communion with God. Goodness, then, is the result of *being “connected” with God*, as branches to a vine. (see John 15: 1-17)

♣ **Gospel** – Literally meaning “Good News”, it is the unique literary genre that proclaims the life, death and resurrection of Jesus from the perspective of the living faith of particular early Church communities.

♠ **Grace** – is God’s gift of self to us (spiritual and invisible, but with tangible and visible effects). Grace is offered by God to all. It is offered freely by God and does not need to be earned in any way – it is an undeserved gift. As such grace is sometimes referred to as God’s generous love.

- ♠ **Sanctifying / deifying grace** – infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and sanctify it – received through Baptism
- ♠ **Habitual Grace** – permanent disposition to live/act in keeping with God’s call.
- ♠ **Actual Graces** – God’s interventions in our lives, whether at the beginning of conversion, or aiding in the work of sanctifying us.

**Heaven** – \*see Afterlife.

**Hell** - \*see Afterlife.

♣ **Hierarchy** – refers to a structure or institution (such as the Roman Catholic Church) in which there is a gradation from higher to lower levels of importance or power or authority.

♠ **Holy Spirit** – to believe in the Holy Spirit is to profess that the Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Holy Trinity.

- ♠ **Fruits of the Holy Spirit** – The tradition of the Church lists 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit named by Paul in his letter to the Galatians (5: 22-23) including: charity (i.e., love), joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty (i.e. humility), self-control and chastity.
- ♠ **Gifts of the Holy Spirit** – rooted in Scripture (Isaiah 11:2-3) and present in their fullness in Jesus Christ, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit include: wisdom, understanding, counsel (i.e., right judgement), fortitude (i.e., courage), knowledge, piety (i.e., reverence), and fear of the Lord (i.e., wonder and awe in God’s presence).

♠ **Hope** – Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the Kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness. Our hope is rooted in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All other things that we “hope for” in this life are ultimately rooted in this ultimate hope of happiness.

♣ **Humanism** – A worldview centred on human interest and values, and the individual’s capacity for self-realization through reason and action. Humanists generally reject reference to the divine.

**Hypostatic Union** – theological term used to describe the supra-rational mystery in which Jesus, the Incarnation, holds a dual nature being at once fully human in nature and also fully divine in nature. (Council of Chalcedon)

♠ **Immaculate Conception** – proclaimed by Pope Pius IX in 1854, this dogma of the Catholic Church confesses that the most Blessed Virgin Mary from the first moment of her own conception was kept free from the stain of all forms of sin in order to make her a pure vessel through which the Incarnation would occur.

♠ **Incarnation** – the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumed a human nature, taking on flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary. There is one person in Jesus – the divine person – but Jesus has two natures: a human nature, and a divine nature. The incarnation is “the Word become flesh.”

♣ **Indissolubility** – Permanence. The sacrament of marriage is dissolved only in death.

♣ **Individualism** – A world view that favours the free action of individuals within society; a philosophical stance that began to develop in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the thinking of Descartes, Hobbes, and Locke that places personal rights and freedoms above other considerations. A social theory that favours personal autonomy.

§ **Interfaith** – work (activities, dialogue, etc.) aimed to foster understanding between Christianity and other religions – distinct from ecumenical work which seeks unity among Christians.

**Jesus Prayer, the** - Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.

♥ **Joy** – is a call to stand in God’s presence. God is the ultimate source of joy and we attain joy through goodness (connection with God).

♠ **Justice** – the cardinal virtue that gives each person his or her due (particularly in the equitable and fair distribution of goods – but not just material goods).

**Lectionary** – a book that contains the Scripture readings, day by day, for liturgy throughout the year. There are 3 cycles for 3 years of liturgy and readings of the day (A - Matthew, B - Mark, and C- Luke; note - the Gospel of John is used during the seasons of Christmas and Easter).

♣ **Liberalism** – A philosophy based on the goodness of the human being, autonomy of the individual, and standing for the protection of economic, political, and civil rights and freedoms.

♠ **Liturgy** – is the common ritual prayer of the people of God (the Church), or the official act of worship of the Church (people of God). The word “liturgy” originally meant a “public work”. In Christian tradition it means a participation of the people of God (the Church) in the “work of God.”

- **◆ Liturgy of the Word** – the Church proclaims the word of God in the midst of the assembled people who listen attentively, essentially huddling around God’s story.
- **◆ Liturgy of the Eucharist** – the basic pattern of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, inherited from the Lord himself at the last Supper and from the apostolic Church, consists of 4 parts: 1) presentation of the gifts, 2) Eucharistic prayers, 3) preparation for communion, 4) communion
- **◆ Mass** – derived from the Latin phrase “Ite, missa est” literally meaning “go you are dismissed” but dynamically translated as “Go Forth, you are sent!”, it is the term that specifically refers to the Dismissal rite of a Catholic Eucharistic celebration, but has come to be the term used to refer to the common Catholic form of Eucharistic celebration itself comprised of: 1) Gathering, 2) Liturgy of the Word, 3) Liturgy of the Eucharist, 4) Communion Rite, and 5) the Dismissal Rite.

◆ **Love** – As described in Scripture (1 John 4:8, John 3:16, John 13:34, etc.) the core identity of God which we are called to abide in and emulate.

- **◆ Agape** – Greek term pertaining to a love that is unconditional in its purity and charity. This is the highest form of love and is the love that Jesus lived and calls his followers to.
- **◆ Eros** – Greek term pertaining to romantic or sexual love based on mutual attraction rooted in passion and pleasure.
- **◆ Philia / Phileo** – Greek term referring to a warm, tender affection between friends; a brotherly or sisterly bond of care.

**Magisterium** – is the living teaching office, or teaching authority, of the Catholic Church, made up of the Pope and bishops, guided by the Holy Spirit, whose responsibility and task is to give authentic interpretation to the Word of God contained in both sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

♠ **◆ Martyr** – does not seek death, but endures death through an act of fortitude to bear witness to the truth of the faith rooted in Jesus as Christ.

**Meek** – Does not equate with “weak”, but rather the meek are those who do not always put themselves first, who recognize that creation is much bigger than they are, who give more than they take. Ultimately to be meek to have *much strength under control*.

**Metanoia** – A Greek term, generally translated as a conversion, but perhaps better translated by the Common English Bible, with the phrase, “changing one’s heart and life.”

♥ **Modesty** – true modesty is honestly seeing our gifts, simply acknowledging them, respecting them, and using them to do God’s will rather than our own. Furthermore, a modest person knows s/he is God’s child and therefore precious/holds dignity. This person protects his/her inner core and treats the precious/sacred gift of self as valuable, important, and dignified.

**Monotheism** – The belief that there is one God. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are considered the “big three” of the modern monotheistic religions.

♣ **Moral Agent** – A person in charge of his/her own life, that is, a person with a certain degree of autonomy and self-direction empowered to act according to his or her conscience, in freedom, and with knowledge.

♣ **Morality** – Translating the search for goodness (ethics) into the way we conduct our lives. It is taking our search for goodness (ethics) and returning to our day-to-day actions, to obligations & responsibilities that we have for one another. Morality, then, involves choice. We choose our day-to-day actions, and thus these actions can be judged. Morality involves value judgement(s) and has evolved into a number of codes, norms, customs, and habits of behaviour.

**Mosaic Law** - The law that God gave to the Israelites through Moses including the Ten Commandments and rules of religious observance given in the first five books of the Old Testament.

♦ **Mystagogy** – a word used to describe the time after receiving a sacrament; the word means “living with the mystery”.

♣ △ **Natural Family Planning** – a method of birth control (as opposed to the birth avoidance methods of artificial contraceptives) whereby a married couple adapts their sexual relations in line with physical measurements of temperature and biological observations related to a woman’s fertility cycle in order to achieve or delay conception as well as maintain reproductive health. Scientific studies demonstrate this method of birth control to be 99.64% effective, when used properly.

♦ **Natural Law** – formulated by St. Thomas Aquinas, this law states that God created the universe and gave it a natural order. We are part of that order, having been given intelligence to determine and uphold the laws of the natural order. All things in nature operate according to the laws implanted in them by God. Through the use of reason, we can study and come to understand the way God wants us to live through the natural order of the world. All Catholic social justice teachings are based on the natural law theory, as any action or situation that comes into conflict with natural law is seen as an injustice either to people, or to earth’s natural resources, which sustain our existence.

♥ **Obedience** – is the discipline that keeps us from acting as if we were the centre of the universe, it is naturally community focussed. The Greek word for obey comes from the word for ‘listening’. The same word was also used for ‘answering the door’. Obedience is not necessarily about doing exactly what someone tells you to do; it is about listening to those in legitimate authority and opening the door of your heart to recognize the good that may come from doing as they ask, or doing what is asked in trust of their authority that you will one day recognize that goodness.

♦ **Parable** – a teaching device Jesus used to glimpse into the mystery of the kingdom of God. They are stories drawn from ordinary life that convey religious truth by comparing something we do know (from ordinary life) to something we have yet to understand (a religious truth).

**Paschal Mystery** – Redemption from sin brought about by Christ’s Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. The Paschal Mystery is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church as Christ’s saving work is made present via the sacrament of Eucharist.

♦ **Peace** – in common usage, peace means the absence of war or conflict. In the Bible, however, peace is something that exists between people and God. It is linked with justice, truth, faithfulness, grace, and love.

♣ **Penance** – In the sacrament of reconciliation, the priest asks the penitent (person who is cognizant of their sin and seeking forgiveness through sacrament of reconciliation) to do an act of “satisfaction” or penance for his or her sins. This act of penance serves not only to begin to make up for the past but also to help the penitent begin a new life. Acts of penance may take the form of prayer, self-denial, or especially service to others and works of mercy.

**Pentecost** – The fiftieth day immediately after the 7 weeks following Passover. On the 50<sup>th</sup> day following the Resurrection of Christ, Christians celebrate Pentecost (the 3<sup>rd</sup> most important feast day of the liturgical year following Easter and Christmas) when the Holy Spirit came as “tongues of flame” to the followers of Jesus. They were then inspired to preach and teach the message of Jesus. Pentecost is often referred to as the birthday of the Church.

♦ **Power** – has to do with the ability of human beings to act (which generally manifests itself in interactions with others). Power shows itself through one person’s ability to change what another is doing or to assist another.

○ See also:

- ♥♦ **Authority** (Legitimate and Illegitimate)
- ♦ **Service**
- ♦ **Violence**

♠ **Prayer** – rooted in humility, prayer is the lifting of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.

- ♠ **Of Blessing/Adoration**- Blessing expresses the basic movement of Christian prayer; it is an encounter between God and man. God’s gift and human acceptance of the gift are united in dialogue. The prayer of blessing is response to God’s gifts: because God blesses, the human heart can in return bless the One who is the source of every blessing. Adoration is the first attitude of humanity acknowledging that s/he is a creature before his/her Creator.
- ♠ **Of Intercession** – Since Abraham, intercession – asking on behalf of another – has been a characteristic of a heart attuned to the mercy of God. In intercession, s/he who prays looks ‘not only to own interest, but also to the interests of others’ even to the point of praying for those who do him/her harm.
- ♠ **Of Petition** – By prayer of petition we express awareness of our relationship with God, recognizing our nature as creatures in need of the Creator, of sinners in need of forgiveness from the Father. A prayer of petition begins our turning towards Gods as we ask for what we need.
- ♠ **Of Praise** – a form of prayer that recognizes most immediately that God is God. It lauds God for his own sake and gives him glory beyond what he does, but simply because HE IS. It shares in the blessed happiness of the pure of heart who love God in faith before seeing him in glory. Praise embraces the other forms of prayer and carry them toward him who is the source and the goal.
- ♠ **Of Thanksgiving** – characterizes the prayer of the Church which, in the celebrating of the Eucharist, reveals and becomes more fully what she is. Further, as in prayers of petition, every event and need in our lives can become an offering of thanksgiving.

♥ **Preferential Option for the Poor** – Jesus himself tells us that solidarity with the poor is solidarity with God (Mt. 25: 40). In this statement Jesus identifies God with the poor. Jesus reminds us that God has a special closeness with the poor who, unlike the rich, cannot rely on wealth over God. Rather the poor will turn to God in their need, naturally placing God at the centre of their life and therefore serve as a model of faith for all. The poor remind the faithful that it is God who must be the one we rely on and the one at the core of our being. Furthermore, the poor – as a result of their state – will suffer in life in a way that God does not want, and in ways the rich will never experience. For these reasons, God holds this special closeness to the poor and the church recognizes this as the preferential option for the poor.

♠ **Private Revelation** - is a form of revelation which is congruent with and supports public revelation. It does not replace or redefine teachings of the faith, but rather offers deeper understandings to aid spiritual growth. No private revelation is a source for new teachings, but it can provide *confirmation and support* for a newly defined doctrine. Though certain private revelations have been approved by the Church, private revelations do not compel Catholics to give personal intellectual ascent. They can be used to enhance one’s faith (e.g., Our Lady of Lourdes, Fatima)

♣ **Procreation** – The bringing forth of offspring/children.

♦ **Prophet** – A spokesperson or messenger for God (especially amid the Chosen People of Israel). Prophets are not fortune tellers, but are sometimes thought of in such a way due to their message often including potential consequences for success or failure in response to God’s message delivered through the prophet.

☒ **Proselytization** – The promotion of a religion by using means, and for motives, contrary to the spirit of the gospel; that is, which do not safeguard the freedom and dignity of the person. Catholic teaching does not condone the unjust representation of other’s beliefs, or the use of constraint or pressure, exploitation of those in need or weakness, or economic or political pressure to limit the religious freedom of others or motivate them to change their religious adherence.

**Public Revelation** - is the form of special revelation given to the Church by Jesus Christ and passed on via the Apostles and their disciples.

**Purgatory** - see “Afterlife”.

**Q-Source** – A term used to describe a theorized, but unfound, source for passages common to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, but not found in the Gospel of Mark.

♥ **Reconciliation** – Is a process involving two elements: conversion & forgiveness, which restores harmony for those separated from each other. It heals relationships (though not necessarily to “the way they were”) and restores people to community.

♣ **Relativism** – A doctrine that knowledge is not absolute, but is conditioned by relation to another. Everything stands in relationship to everything else, and is judged based on these relationships rather than any absolute principle or Truth.

**Religion** – \* see Church

♣ **Responsibility** – Being morally accountable for one’s actions. Responsibility presumes knowledge, freedom, and the ability to choose to act.

♦ ♠ **Revelation (Divine)** – God communicates God’s self to humankind in stages: through creation itself, through covenants and through the prophets. God’s self-revelation is complete in Jesus. This revelation is passed on to all generations through the sacred Scriptures (see “Sacred Scripture”) and apostolic tradition (see “Apostolic Tradition”). (CCC 82)

\*see also “Private Revelation”

♠ **Rites of the Catholic Church** - The Catechism of the Catholic Church lists seven rites (CCC1203) and notes that all rites within the Church are equal in dignity, enjoy the same rights and are under the same obligations.

◆ **Ritual** – comprised of both a physical (bodily) component as well as a verbal (spoken) one, rituals pass on traditions and aid in the formation of community.

♠ **Sabbath** – the seventh day, on which God rested after the creation of the heavens and the earth – signifying a need for rest and recognition that all of creation is a gift from God.

♠ **Sacrament** – the sacraments are perceptible signs (words and actions) accessible to our human nature. By the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit they make present the grace that they signify. Sacraments are physical, visible human rituals of spiritual, invisible grace from God.

- **Sacraments of Initiation** – Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.
- **Sacraments of Healing** – Reconciliation (Confession) and Anointing of the Sick (Last Rites).
- **Sacraments at the Service of Communion and the Mission of the Faithful** – Holy Matrimony and Holy Orders
- ◆ **Church as Sacrament** – sacraments are effective signs of grace. Christ is present in the world through the Church. Christ is the source of grace. The Church brings Christ and his grace to the world, and therefore is sacramental in nature.
- **Jesus as the Primordial Sacrament** – a term used by modern theologians (see Edward Schillebeeckx and his book titled “Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God”) to recognize Jesus, not as an 8<sup>th</sup> sacrament, but rather as the foundation for the 7 sacraments themselves. For theologians like Schillebeeckx the term “encounter” is a key term in which the sacraments are portrayed not as objective rites, but rather as intimate encounters with Jesus Christ – fully God and fully human – who is the source of grace.

♠ **Sacred Scripture** – One of two modes of revelation, Sacred Scripture refers to the Word of God and is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit – that is to say God’s word, written by humanity under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

♠ **Salvation** – to be saved from sin by God for eternal life in joy with God.

♣ **Secularism** – A worldview that rejects religion and religious considerations. Secularists accept only critical reason.

**Seder** – The symbolic Jewish Passover ritual meal celebrated annually marking the start of Passover (usually near the beginning of Spring).



◆ **Service** – is using our power to assist others; can take the form of physical, emotional, spiritual, or intellectual service.

♠ **Sexuality** – is the force and energy to be creative in response to life. We experience this force both spiritually and bodily. Our sexuality orients us towards others – it underlies our desire for love, friendship, community, and family. Human love and communion are not only spiritual. They are also physical, taking into account the fact that we are male and female. “Man and woman were made ‘for each other’ – God... created them to be a communion of persons... and complementary as masculine and feminine.”

**Sexual Orientation** – refers to one’s feelings of sexual attraction (e.g., attraction to the opposite biological sex as a heterosexual orientation, attraction to the same biological sex as a homosexual orientation.) The Church is clear in her teachings that discrimination based on one’s sexual orientation is not to be tolerated (CCC 2358).

◆ **Sign** – objects or gestures that express one specific message or meaning (e.g., a stop sign means stop and nothing else)

♠ **Sin** – The damaging of a relationship that God established with Creation – a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour. Sins can come in the form of both actions we take as well as the omission of action (or failure to act). This understanding of sin as relational evolved from the legalistic understandings rooted in Mosaic Law.

- ♠ **Original Sin** – Refers to the first disobedience of humankind towards God in which trust in God dissolved and freedom is abused. All subsequent sin can be viewed in light of this notion of disobedience towards God and a lack of trust in his goodness.
- ♠ **Actual/Personal Sin** – are the sins personally/actually committed by individuals for which they bear responsibility. They can fall into two categories:
  1. ♠ **Mortal Sin** – From the Latin word mort, meaning death, these are sins that cause “death to the soul” as they separate us from God and from God’s love by our choice. There are 3 conditions for a sin to be categorized as mortal including:
    - i. The object of the sin being a grave matter
    - ii. The sin is committed with full knowledge, and
    - iii. Is committed with deliberate consent (free will or choice)
  2. ♠ **Venial Sin** – a less serious matter that is more easily forgiven.
- ♠ **Social Sin** – Personal sins give rise to social situations and institutions that are contrary to the divine goodness. Structures of sin lead their victims to do evil in turn thus constituting a sense of social sin. Unlike personal sin, an individual does not bear direct responsibility for social sin, but individuals collectively share in the effects of this as a community and as a community must seek to restore the relationships damaged by the socially sinful structure or institution,

- **♠ Seven Capital (Deadly) Sins** – Articulated by Evagrius of Ponticus in the 4<sup>th</sup> century and revised 2 centuries later in 590 AD by St. Gregory the Great, these feelings are called the capital (or deadly) sins because they can lead us to sinful action and can become serious very quickly (mortal). They are pride, greed, envy, anger, lust, gluttony, and sloth.

**Slippery Slope** – a term used in ethical debate that views decisions not on their own, but through their potential to lead to subsequent decisions and acts. Generally, the argument of the slippery slope states that over time a decision perceived as currently acceptable may lead to future decisions resulting in actions which were once considered unthinkable becoming the norm.

**Social Action** – the means by which the faithful are called to work towards the achievement of social justice.

- **♦ Five steps of:**
  - 1) Be present with and listen to the experiences of the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed in our society (i.e., be present to the poor).
  - 2) Develop an understanding of the economic, political, and social structures that cause human suffering (i.e., understand the causes of human suffering).
  - 3) Evaluate the situation in light of gospel principles and the social teachings of the Church (i.e., judge in light of the gospel and Church teaching).
  - 4) Think and act creatively to come up with a different vision and model for social and economic development (i.e., think creatively, guided by the vision of the kingdom of God).
  - 5) Act in solidarity with the poor, oppressed or marginalized, and with other grassroots groups to transform economic, political, and social situations that are unjust (i.e., act together to transform unjust situations).

**♥ Social Justice** – Christian justice is rooted in love and based on fairness, mercy and compassion; thus, from a Christian perspective there is injustice when a barrier to love is created. Social Justice seeks to identify such barriers to love, give aid to those suffering and then work to remove barriers in order to restore justice. Social justice is seen as having two key steps (sometimes referred to as the 2 feet of social justice):

- 1) taking immediate actions to aid those suffering from injustice (e.g., feeding the hungry),
- 2) transforming situations of injustice over time to prevent future suffering (e.g., developing a hunger-free society)

**♠ Solidarity** – is also articulated in the terms ‘friendship’ or ‘social charity’. Solidarity is manifested first by the distribution of goods and remuneration for work, but solidarity goes beyond material goods to spiritual goods of the faith as well.

**Spirituality** – \* see Church

♣ **Stewardship** – How humankind is to exercise dominion over creation: tending to all of creation through a caring cooperation with God involving a sense of service motivated by love, and understood with wisdom.

♦ **Sunday** – for Christians this is the day of the Lord, the day that Jesus rose from the dead – the resurrection being the central revelation of God, the revelation of Jesus as the Lord and Christ. As such Catholics gather every Sunday to celebrate the memorial of Jesus in the Mass, and every Sunday mass is like a “mini-Easter”.

♦ **Symbol** – comes from a word origin meaning “thrown together” – we take intangible things (desires, emotions, etc) and “throw them together” with something tangible to express meaning. As a result, symbols have different meanings in different contexts for different people (unlike signs).

**Synoptic Gospels** – Term referring to the grouping of the Gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke which recognizes the significant similarity that they share.

♣ **Temperance** – restraint of human passions and appetites in accordance with reason; self-control of the body.

♣ **Torah** – Meaning “the Law”, these are the first five books of the Old Testament (Pentateuch) that contain the core teachings of the Old Testament including: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Numbers.

♦ **Transcendence** – beyond our physical being/way of knowing (see, hear, touch, taste, smell).

**Transfiguration** – A moment of paramount importance during the public ministry of Jesus wherein the appearance of Jesus changed momentarily and God the Father affirmed Jesus as His beloved Son. This occurred in the presence of Peter, James, and John alongside apparitions of Elijah and Moses.

♠ **Trinity** – Catholic dogma states that we firmly believe and confess that there is only one God who is eternal, infinite, unchanging, incomprehensible and almighty; a single God who is at the same time three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

♠ **Truth** – rooted in God who is Truth itself, there is one Truth (one God) to which the universe is ordered. (\*note contrasting connection to ‘relativism’ as it pertains to ‘ethics’ and ‘morality’)

♣ **Utilitarianism** – A philosophy or world view that measures the value of all things according to the principle of usefulness – that which provides the greatest pleasure or well-being for the greatest number.

♦ **Violence** - is the aggressive or unjust use of power or force – this can take the form of physical, emotional, or spiritual violence.

♥ **Virtue** – an attitude or habit that make us more likely to choose what is good even when we don't stop to think first.

- ♠ **Cardinal virtues** – four virtues play a pivotal role and accordingly are called 'cardinal'; all others are grouped around them. They are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.
- ♠ **Theological virtues** – dispose Christians to live in relationship with the Holy Trinity in whom the theological virtues have their origin, motive, and object. The theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity and are comprised of: faith, hope, and charity (love).
- **Capital Virtues** – the seven capital virtues have been part of Catholic doctrine for several centuries having gained prominence in the middle ages representing a remedy or contrast to the seven capital (deadly) sins. The seven capital virtues (and their opposing sin) include: humility (pride), generosity (greed), chastity (lust), meekness (wrath), temperance (gluttony), kindness (envy), and diligence (sloth).

**Vocation** – The term given to the call to each person from God; everyone has been called to holiness and eternal life, especially in Baptism. Each person can also be called more specifically to the priesthood or to religious life, to married life, and to single life, as well as to a particular profession or service. (see US Catholic Catechism for Adults, 531)

- ♠ **The Human vocation** – comprised of 7 elements including:
  - 1) Humans are created in the image and likeness of God (CCC 355-356)
  - 2) Humans are called to happiness and holiness (CCC 1718 – 1719)
  - 3) Humans are rational and free (CCC 1704, 1731, 1733, 1734)
  - 4) Humans are moral beings (CCC 1749, 1750, 1755)
  - 5) Humans have passions or feelings (CCC 1763 – 1767)
  - 6) Humans are blessed with a conscience (CCC 1795 – 1802)
  - 7) Humans are able to sin (CCC 311, 1849, 1850, 1869)

♥ ♦ **YHWH** – The name of God as revealed to Moses at the burning bush, meaning ‘I am who I am.’ This name reveals more of the nature of God (e.g., God is one, God is eternal) than of what we are to call God in terms of a name. By directive of Pope Benedict XVI, and out of respect by Catholics for our Jewish brothers and sisters, we do not use this name of God in speech or song. This is in accordance with Jewish tradition honouring the power and majesty of God; a tradition that in its earliest times recognized the use of one’s name as a form of power over the one being named.

## **Bibliographic Note:**

This support document, produced in conjunction with the main curricular documents of Catholic Studies 9, 10, 20, and 30 by the lead writer of the curriculum, is an extension of the main curricular document. As such, the bibliographic reference list found in each of the curricular documents applies equally to this support document.