



Focus on Faith Overview Chart
Unifying Catholic Themes and Essential Questions



Grade	Catholic Theme	Essential Question	Points for Consideration
K	Stewardship of Creation	Where is God?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Catholic tradition teaches that we are charged with caring for all of God's creation • We come to know God through our experience and understanding of our selves, others, and the rest of the created world • Students explore and experience elements of creation as a trace of God
1	Human Dignity	Who is God?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Catholic Church professes that all human life is sacred • The inherent dignity of the human person is foundational to all other Catholic social teaching • We develop a deeper awareness of our human dignity when we come to more fully understand God, our Creator • Students use Scripture stories to develop an understanding of the attributes of God
2	Promotion of Peace	How are we members of God's family?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace is the work of justice and the result of love • Peace is not just the absence of war. It involves the mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. (Pope John Paul II) • As members of God's family, we are called to seek justice and peace for all of the members • Students develop an understanding Eucharist as a sacrament of belonging
3	Community and the Common Good	Who is the Holy Spirit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Catholic tradition teaches that all humans are called to live with, and for, others in community • The Holy Spirit is God's loving and guiding presence in the community • Students recognize that the Holy Spirit gathers us to be a people of God and inspires us to share in the mission of Jesus
4	Option for the Poor and Vulnerable	What does Jesus ask of us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A distinctly Catholic perspective on the world maintains that we can measure the quality of any society by the way its most poor and vulnerable are treated • Jesus is the ultimate model of how we are called to care for those that society overlooks • Students use Scripture to develop a deeper understanding Jesus, and what Jesus expects of his followers

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5	Community and the Common Good	How do we live in community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Catholic tradition proclaims that humans are not only sacred, but are also social • We must be mindful of the human dignity and rights of all as we come together in community • We are called to critique prevailing social structures to ensure that all are fairly represented • Students investigate covenant stories in Scripture as well as stories of the early formation of the Church
6	Human Rights and Responsibilities	How do we live in accordance with God’s will?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By virtue of our human dignity, our Catholic tradition teaches that all humans have the right to life, food, shelter, health care, education, and employment • We, in turn, have the duty and responsibility to care for one another, our families, and those in society • We come to a greater understanding of how we are to ensure the rights of all, and what our obligations are, by understanding God’s will for humanity • Students examine the Decalogue and the Beatitudes as guides for right action
7	Human Dignity	What is our story?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This foundational social teaching is revisited, allowing students to come to a deeper understanding of its implications appropriate to the developmental stage of an adolescent • A greater appreciation of the sacred and social nature of the human emerges, this time, through an investigation of the Christian story • Students develop an understanding of the Bible as our story to more fully understand what it means to be called into relationship with God through Jesus
8	Solidarity	How are we Church in the world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Catholic tradition proclaims that we are to love our neighbour regardless of national, racial, ethnic, economic, or ideological differences • Solidarity means that “loving our neighbour” has global dimensions in an interdependent world (www.osjspm.org) • Students are challenged, appropriate to their now more advanced developmental level, to extend their prior understanding of the Common Good to the broader global community • Students identify how the Ten Commandments and Jesus’ rule of love are related, and develop an understanding of the Catholic view of social justice and its need in the world

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9	Human Dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belief in the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching • Human life is sacred • The dignity of the human person is the starting point for a moral vision for society • The person is a reflection of God among us • In the Religious Education program, students will explore the importance of fostering a positive, healthy self-esteem physically, intellectually, spiritually, and socially
	Rights and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency – starting with food, shelter and clothing, employment, health care, and education • Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society • In the Religious Education program, students will understand the nature of personal and social sin and the role of forgiveness
10	Option for the Poor and Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who are marginalized and whose rights are denied have privileged claims if society is to provide justice for all • Obligation arises from the radical command to love one’s neighbour as one’s self • The option for the poor is an essential part of a society’s effort to achieve the common good • In the Religious Education program, students will use the preferential option for the poor as the criterion for analyzing social justice issues
	Stewardship of Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic tradition insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. • The goods of the earth are gifts from God, intended for the benefit of all • We are entrusted with the responsibility of caring for these gifts and preserving them for future generations • In the Religious Education program, students will recognize the spiritual and the sacramental dimension implicit in human experience and the created world
11	Global Solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic social teaching proclaims that we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they are • We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences • Solidarity means that “loving our neighbour” has global dimensions in an interdependent world • In the Religious Education program, students will explain the Catholic Church’s position on interfaith dialogue
	Promotion of Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Peace is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements.” John Paul II • Peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent upon right ordering among human beings • In the Religious Education program, students will explain the relationship between religious covenant and how it informs responses to critical contemporary issues

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12	<p align="center">Community and the Common Good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Catholic tradition proclaims that the person is not only sacred but also social • Human dignity can only be realized and protected in the context of relationships with the wider society • How we organize society – in economics and politics, in law and policy – directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community • Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to the good of the whole society, to the common good • In the Religious Education program, students will describe the role of social institutions in promoting the common good
	<p align="center">Dignity of Work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All people have a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to safe working conditions, and a fundamental right to organize and join unions • People have a right to economic initiative and private property, but these rights have limits • No one is allowed to amass excessive wealth when others lack the basic necessities of life • In the Religious Education program, students will define the broad meaning of the term “vocation” as an adoption of a stance before all forms of work as service to God and for others

* Source: Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. *Key Principles of Catholic Social Teaching* (Revised July 2006), <http://www.osjspm.org/files/officeforsocialjustice/files/10%20Principles%20CST>