

# **Catholicity Study Summary**

## **St. John's School Board**

### **2009-2010**

This document is presented at the end of a six month study on Catholicity. This study is meant to serve as a Summary of the topics that were covered over the past six months. The topics covered were Service/Charity, Catholic Virtues, Sacraments, Parent Education, Prayer, and Scripture. It is hoped that these will offer insight and ideas as the school continues to address Catholicity.

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## **I. Catholicity and Service/Charity**

- **What we learned about St. John's practices in the study of Service/Charity**

The student body at St. John's is very involved in serving others and performing charitable acts. Some of the ideas for the service projects have come from the students themselves.

- **Suggestion for St. John's in regards to Service and Charity**

Highlight the school service projects on the website, marketing materials and newsletters.

## **II. Catholicity and Catholic Virtues**

- **What we learned about St. John's practices in the study of Catholic Virtues**

The concept of virtues is having a desire and achieving the end by way of the "means." The Cardinal virtues help us get through life while theological virtues help us attain heaven. Virtues are already part of the curriculum. It is reinforced during Catholic Schools week and weekly mass.

- **Suggestion for St. John's in regards to Catholic Virtues**

Use simple phrases to emphasize a virtuous life (faith and to combat peer pressure)

- "faith first"
- "do what is right."

## **III. Catholicity and the Sacraments**

- **What we learned about St. John's practices in the study of the Sacraments**

Students at St. John's are provided the opportunity to be exposed to, prepare for and celebrate the sacraments. In researching practices at other Catholic schools, to see how St. John's compares, we learned that many schools don't list Catholicity on their web sites. Where information was found it showed that St. John's is doing more than other schools.

- **Suggestion for St. John's in regards to the Sacraments**
  - The school children could benefit from greater exposure to the religious life by a presence of the priests and sister in the school.
  - Update the web site to show how St. John's provides children the opportunity to be exposed to, prepare for and celebrate the sacraments.

#### **IV. Catholicity and Parent Education**

- **What we learned about St. John's practices in the study of Parent education:**

Parents are given numerous examples by the school to follow. They are: weekly masses, the school environment, and faculty and staff examples. Parents also receive numerous Catholicity guides provided by the school. Some examples are: textbooks, homework, Season of Holiness e-mails, Partners in Faith newsletters, and the Catholic Family Prayers book. The parish also provides support consisting of parishioner rates, sacramental preparation and adult education.

- **Suggestion for St. John's in regards to Parent education:**
  - Put links to Catholic Resources on the school website
  - Provide resources to mentor parents and provide support. An example would be parents who are not Catholic but are raising their children as Catholics
  - Build parent education into all areas such as PTO meetings, newsletters, and speakers

#### **V. Catholicity and Prayer**

- **What we learned about St. John's practices in the study of Prayer:**

Based on the Diocesan standards, St. John the Baptist Catholic School, teaches specified prayers to students in each grade. St. John's offers many prayer opportunities to the students. Some examples include: Prayer at Friday Mass, Morning Prayer circle in the class rooms, Prayer before Lunch, End of Day school wide prayer, and First Friday adoration. There are also several prayer opportunities for Teachers as well: Morning Prayer before the start of the school day, retreats, and the Loyola website with 3 minute retreats for teachers.

- **Suggestion for St. John's in regards to Prayer:**

A Prayer Buddy Program where individual grades team up with organization within the church and exchange prayer requests. This creates a sense of community between the parish and school as well as exposing the children to some of the organizations within the church.

## **VI. Catholicity and Scripture**

- **What we learned about St. John's practices in the study of Scripture:**

According to an ancient tradition, one can distinguish between two *senses* of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.

- The literal sense-the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation: "All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal."
- The spiritual sense- thanks to the unity of God's plan, not only the text of Scripture but also the realities and events about which it speaks can be signs.

- **Suggestion for St. John's in regards to Scripture:**

Students should be taught context with any scripture. Context and interpretation should always be discussed together so that the full meaning is appreciated.