

Religion

Eighth Grade

The unified content reference used for the religion curriculum comes from *Handing on the Faith* which is the Diocese of Birmingham's adaptation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This serves as the content, doctrinal, and theological basis for all programs offered in the diocese. The reference statements and citations are divided into three topic areas. Within each topic area, content statements are grouped according to the four pillars of the *Catechism* and are intended for the reflection, guidance, and direction of the teachers handing on the faith in these particular areas. Through the use of *Handing on the Faith*, the religion textbook and the teacher's personal interpretations and experiences the students are provided with an in-depth study of Catholicism and their faith. Religion is not only a subject which is studied, but an integration of Catholic faith and values which permeates throughout every aspect of daily life in the school.

A brief description of the three topic areas follows:

1. The **Old Testament** topic area includes foundational principles of Scripture study, especially applied to the Old Testament; tracing and connecting our liturgical and sacramental life to its roots in the Hebrew Scriptures; exploring the foundations for contemporary moral living and practice in the Old Testament; and developing the examples of prayer found in the Hebrew Scripture accounts.
2. The **Jesus Christ** topic area highlights the fundamental beliefs necessary for an informed Catholic's understanding of our savior and redeemer, our sacraments, our moral life, and our practice of prayer in imitation of Jesus.
3. The **church** topic area includes statements on the core doctrines of our tradition, our liturgy, our ethical practice and living, and our prayer life.

The four pillars of the *Catechism* follow:

1. The Profession of Faith
2. The Celebration of the Christian Mystery
3. Life in Christ
4. Christian Prayer

The teachers are also asked to give students a variety of prayer experiences and forms. Some examples are:

- Weekly student liturgy
- Training and experience in liturgy and mass participation
- Daily prayer at the beginning and end of each school day, as well as several times in between
- Opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation frequently
- Seasonal experiences of traditional prayers (depending on grade): Advent wreath, Jesse tree, Stations of the Cross, rosary, May crowning etc.
- Stations of the cross
- Precepts of the church
- Confiteor

- Magnificat
- Parts of the mass