



St. Bernard Homeschool CCD Parent Guide

Dear Parents,

Typically, I hold a meeting for parents who are homeschooling for the first time to give some information, pointers, and advice. However, as I try to work on my work-life balance and eliminate some of my evening and weekends at the Church, I realized that this information can be delivered to you just as easily in a written format. You will receive a monthly email newsletter to keep you in the “loop”. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call or email! I am here to help you be successful in teaching your child about our beautiful Catholic faith!

In Christ, Darcy

Make Catechesis Important!

- **Time:** Set a designated non-negotiable time each week to complete your CCD work together. Stick to it!
 - It is too easy to say, “We will get to it after this” and suddenly its April and you’ve only done two chapters!
 - Set a back-up time during the week for when there are inevitable conflicts with your first time.
- **Space:** Create a sacred space in your home to complete the work.
 - Show that learning about our faith is different from doing math homework.
 - Perhaps sit at your coffee table with a candle lit and a favorite cross or small statue.
- **Attitude:** Your attitude towards CCD will rub off on your child! Make it positive!
 - Saying “Let’s get this over with.” or pushing off CCD work for other things shows a child that it is not important or a priority.
 - Look forward to this time of sharing your faith with your child!

Schedule of Lessons

To help everyone stay on track, you will receive in the front cover of the textbook a suggested schedule of lessons to complete each week.

- Even if you get off track with the chapters, make sure to complete the seasonal chapters highlighted in gray when appropriate (Advent/Lent).
- Note that the 2nd grade schedule takes the chapters out of order so that the sacraments are covered before the children receive them.

Unit Tests

There are 4 Unit Tests in each book. These are due to Darcy throughout the year as checkpoints to make sure everyone is on track.

- Unit Tests are due a few weeks after the unit is complete to allow for some extra time.
- Unit Tests can be torn out and mailed, scanned or photographed and emailed.

Resources

<https://religion.sadlierconnect.com/wbcid>

- Click on child’s grade level, then the unit number on the left side.
- You will find online games, extra worksheets and activities, and other resources for each chapter.

We also have many great resources and books in our Religious Ed library in Fontenay that you are welcome to stop by and use!

Three Step Lesson Plan

Each chapter is laid out in three parts:

1. **We Gather** - Prayer and focus on life
 - Look for the yellow star question at the bottom of the prayer. This question focuses the lesson on something the child already knows from his or her daily life.
 - *EXAMPLE: What would you do if you heard someone being teased on the playground?*
2. **We Believe** - Faith content
 - The main pages of the chapter teach the lesson using scripture and doctrine. Vocabulary words are highlighted.
 - *EXAMPLE: Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan helping a man in need, even though their people did not get along.*
3. **We Respond** - Integration (So what?)
 - A paragraph or question at the end of the chapter prompting the student to respond to God in prayer or think about how this lesson relates to their life.
 - *EXAMPLE: Jesus asks us to help others in need, even if we don't like them. How can you be a Good Samaritan to others?*

Project Disciple - At the end of the chapter are some activity pages to reiterate and review the lesson.

Chapter Test - These tests can be done at home as a review but do NOT need to be turned in to Darcy.

Six Tasks of Catechesis

Catechesis is not just about learning facts!

According to the General Directory for Catechesis, the goals of catechesis are to:

1. Learn - knowledge of the faith
2. Celebrate - liturgy and ritual
3. Choose - moral formation
4. Pray - relationship with God
5. Share - community life
6. Live - faith in action through service

Make an effort to bring the lessons to life in your home and family by praying together, going to Mass together, using conflicts as teachable moments, getting involved in parish events, and serving the community!

Be a Witness

"Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses." -Pope Paul VI

- The witness of our lives is what brings faith to life in the eyes of our children. They need to see it being lived out in you and in the parish community for it to be real.
- Share your own experiences of God and faith, including struggles, with your children.

The Church Supports You in this Role

Ideally, all parents would be passing on their faith to their children in practical ways at home. The purpose of CCD is to formalize that knowledge and define what they experience at home.

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church States: "Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. **Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith.**" (2226)

The Importance of Community

"Catechetical pedagogy will be effective to the extent that the Christian community becomes a point of concrete reference for the faith journey of individuals. This happens when the community is proposed as a source, *locus*, and means of catechesis." (General Directory for Catechesis, 158)

- We provide opportunities for children who homeschool CCD to interact with their peers and catechists at the parish to form community. Look for in the included schedules for Celebration Saturday (grades K-5) and In the House! (grades 6-8)