

Grade 3

Theme: The Catholic Church - Community

Grade 3 examines the Catholic Church on many levels – parish, diocese, and worldwide. It looks at the Four Marks of the Church and how we, as the Church, are called to reflect in our lives what it means to be One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. The students will explore the mission of the Church and also review the Seven Sacraments as experiences in which the community worships and celebrates God's loving presence.

Key Concepts

The Blessed Trinity
Jesus
Mary and the Saints
The Sacraments
The Church
The Church Year

Our Faith Believed Doctrine – Message

The Blessed Trinity

1. The Blessed Trinity is a community of Love: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. God created us to be part of a community – our family.
3. God called the people of the Old Testament and calls us to have a covenant relationship with God.
4. Jesus left us a community to belong to – the Church.
5. The Holy Spirit came to the disciples on the first Pentecost.
6. The Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church today.
7. The Holy Spirit comes to us at Baptism and Confirmation.

Jesus

1. Jesus is the Messiah – the promised One.
2. Jesus gathered his first disciples into a community, which became the Church.
3. Jesus calls us to be his friends and disciples.
4. Jesus gathers us into the Church through the Sacraments.
5. Jesus brings us freedom through the New Covenant of his death and resurrection – the Paschal Mystery.

Mary and the Saints

1. Mary is the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of God, and the Mother of the Church.

2. The special community of holy people - past, present, and future - who live as God wants them to is called the Communion of Saints.
3. Some saints died for Jesus, and are called martyrs.

Our Faith Celebrated Sacramental Life in Community

The Sacraments

1. God shares life with us in the loving relationship called grace.
2. We celebrate our relationship with God/Jesus/Holy Spirit through seven Sacraments.
3. A review of each of the seven Sacraments:
 - a. We enter the Church community through the Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist
 - b. The Sacraments of Healing restore us to the Church community - Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick
 - d. Through the Sacraments of Service (Vocation) - Matrimony, Holy Orders – we share our talents with the Church Community.

The Church

1. The Church is the People of God.
2. The Church is the Body of Christ.
3. The Church is the Family of Jesus.
4. The Church began on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples of Jesus.
5. The Holy Spirit guides the Church today.
6. The Four Marks of the Church are One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic.
7. “One” reflects unity, and means that all Jesus’ followers are united with him and with one another in the Holy Spirit.
8. “Holy” means the way we are called to live to reflect the holiness of God in all that we do in our lives.
9. “Catholic” means universal – that the Church is open to all people.
10. “Apostolic” means that the Church is built on the teaching of the Apostles.
11. The Mission of the Church – our mission – is to continue the work of Jesus in the world today, to serve others, and to spread the Good News of God’s Kingdom.
12. The Church is an institution with different roles of service and leadership.
 - a. The Pope – Bishop of Rome, serves, unites, and leads all Catholics throughout the world. The pope is the successor of Peter.
 - b. Bishops – serve, unite, and lead Catholics in a diocese. A diocese is a gathering of parishes around the bishop.
 - c. Pastors – serve, unite, and lead Catholics in a parish. A parish is a local gathering of families around a pastor.
 - d. Deacons – serve Catholics in a particular parish.
13. The parish has different ministries of service – teachers, catechists, lectors, eucharistic ministers, ministers of hospitality, parish councils, committees, etc.
14. Study the seven Precepts or laws of the Church that Catholics should follow.

The Church Year

1. The Church celebrates different seasons of during the year to help us prepare for Jesus.
2. There are special feast days that celebrate events in Jesus' and the saints' lives.
3. Seasons and feasts to cover: Feast of All Saints, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter.

Our Faith Lived Our Moral Life and the Church's Social Justice Teaching Leading to Mission - Service through Action

The Law of Love/The Great Commandment/The Virtues

1. Jesus gave us the command to love God and to love others as we love ourselves.
2. Jesus tells us love our neighbor.
3. Everyone is our neighbor.
4. God gave us three virtues, or qualities to help us love God and our neighbor.
5. These virtues are Faith, Hope, and Love.
 - a. Faith makes us strong in our belief in God/Jesus.
 - b. Hope helps us trust God will be with us always, even in difficult times.
 - c. Love means that we give our heart to God and we open it up to others.

Our Moral Life

1. God created us to be in relationship with and connected with others.
2. The first "community" to which we belong is the family.
3. Through the Sacrament of Matrimony husbands and wives celebrate their love and commitment for each other.
4. They share their love for each other and are open to God's gift of children.
5. Together, with love, families build up the larger community of the Church.

Social Justice Teaching

1. The Church carries on the mission of Jesus in the world today.
2. As the Church, we are meant to carry on the mission of Jesus in the world today.
3. We do this and share the Good News of the Kingdom of God by being a witness.
4. As a witness we show by our actions God's care and love for people in need, such as the poor, ill, and lonely.

Suggested Action

1. As a class, talk about the needs of people in the parish community – people who may be ill or lonely. Perhaps there is someone the class knows who may be ill or in a nursing home.
2. Decide upon an action that the class could do to make that person(s) feel part of the Church community, even though they may be separated.
3. As a class, plan and complete the action of bringing the Good News of God's and the Church's care and concern to the person(s).

Our Faith Prayed

Required Prayers and Doctrine

Review of Grade 2 Prayers:

1. Sign of the Cross
2. Glory to the Father
3. Hail Mary
4. Our Father
5. Act of Contrition
6. Mass responses
7. Pray the Rosary

Prayers and Doctrine to Know

1. Apostles' Creed
2. The Four Marks of the Church and the meaning of each
3. The Precepts of the Church

Suggested Prayer Service

Ways for us as individuals to show in our lives, or live out, the Four Marks of the Church – how we are One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.