

## Characteristics of the First Grader

Six years old

### Qualities

Active, changeable, emotionally responsive and highly imaginative

Egocentric – brings all things into herself/himself – starts with home, neighbor and parish

Has difficulty separating fact from fantasy

Thinks through perception – via senses, learns by doing, showing, experiencing

Needs individual security, to be loved and to love in return, to grow to identify

The first grade child begins to develop a filial relationship with God as she/he becomes aware of the importance of God in her/his life as the giver of all good gifts. God is important to her/him, and she/he will love Him as such similarly to the way she/he loves her/his parents.

Before entering first grade the conscience of the child is influenced by her/his parents. She/he tends to copy their actions for right and wrong. This attitude is changed when she/he is confronted with peer pressures on the first grade level. Her/his attentions and decisions tend to follow the rights and wrongs of her/his classmates.

At this age level the child takes rules as absolute, therefore, it is necessary to teach the meaning of the rule. As a catechist one must strive to make the child know the value of the law. By doing so, one is helping the child form wholesome moral judgments.

Emphasis must be placed on the fact that God loves her/him. Once this is established, later concepts of good judgment can be developed because, at this age, there is an awakening of spiritual liberty and responsibility.

### **SPECIAL NOTE**

#### ***Safe Environment Children's Program***

The Safe Environment Children's Program was introduced in the Catholic Schools in the spring of 2003. There program consists of three lessons which are taught over a period of three years and then repeated.

The program was introduced in the parish Religious Education programs in the fall of 2008. Each parish is required to present one lesson to the children (grades K – 10) in the parish program each year. It is preferable that the lesson be taught in the fall of the catechetical/school year.

Following the lesson, a record of training must be sent to Kathleen Bolinski, Safe Environment Coordinator, 300 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503.

All materials needed for teaching the lessons in the *Safe Environment Children's Program* in the parish and school are found in the *Safe Environment* binder in the parish/school office.

### **CATECHESIS**

1. God is our Father as well as Jesus' Father. (CCC 1265, 1266)
  - a. God is a loving Father who cares for us.
  - b. I am special, I am loved, and I belong to God's family through Baptism. (Isaiah 43)
  - c. Prayer is a special way of talking to God. (CCC 2559)
  
2. Life is a gift from God our Father.
  - a. God made each of us. (CCC 295)
  - b. God shares His goodness and beauty with us in creation. (Genesis 1)
  - c. God gives us special helpers to watch over and protect us – guardian angels. (CCC 328, 329-336)
  - d. God shares His life with people on earth. he makes people like Himself. He gives them power over many things. (Genesis 1:27; CCC 335, 355-357, 377, 380-382)
  
3. Jesus is the Father's greatest gift to us. (CCC 426)
  - a. We learn about Jesus from the Bible (Heb 1:1-2; John 1:1-4; CCC 65)
  - b. Jesus teaches us how to love and care about others. (CCC 478, 544, 2443-2446; Luke 10:30-37)
  - c. Jesus will help us forgive others who hurt us if we ask him. (CCC 1421)
  - d. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us become holy and to help us pray. (CCC 733, 741; Acts 2:1-4)
  
4. Mary was called by God to be the Mother of Jesus. (CCC 495)
  - a. Jesus gave us Mary, His mother, as Mother of the Church. (CCC 963)
  
5. The church is a community of people gathered together to hear God's word and live out His gospel commands. (CCC 749-752)
  - a. As members of God's family we listen to Jesus speak to us through the gospels. (CCC 104, 131, 134)
  - b. God's family includes people of every age, race, culture, and ability. (CCC 775)
  - c. We praise and thank God in the Eucharist. (CCC 1193, 1358-1361)
  - d. We join with the parish community in celebrating the Feasts of the Church year (Advent, Christmas, Lent Easter, All Saints Day). (CCC 1194-1195)

## Grade One -- Words to be Taught

Advent  
Amen  
Bible  
Blessed Sacrament  
Catholic  
Christmas  
Church  
Creator  
Easter  
Guardian Angel  
Lent  
Mary  
Mass

Parish  
Prayer  
Priest  
Sacrament  
Sacrament of Baptism  
Saint  
Sign of the Cross  
Trinity  
God, the Father  
God, the Son  
God, the Holy Spirit