



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Center for the New Evangelization

cne@catholicaoc.org
513.263.6620

Choosing a Religious Education Curriculum

Selecting a religious education curriculum shapes how faith is taught, lived, and shared within the parish. This process should be approached thoughtfully and prayerfully with attention to mission, people, and resources of your parish. Regularly reviewing your curriculum (once every three years) allows your approach to stay relevant, engaging, and aligned with the best practices in religious education.

This checklist is designed to help guide your discernment process by highlighting key considerations for your families, catechists, and students. For further assistance in selecting a religious education curriculum, please contact Christine Baumgardner, Associate Director for Children and Family Evangelization, at cbaumgardner@catholicaoc.org.

Discernment Process Considerations

- Who should be included
- Who will make the final decision
 - Consider: clergy, staff members, catechists, parents, students, etc.
- How you will pray and listen to God's voice
 - Eucharistic Adoration
 - Lectio Divina
 - Silence
- When a decision will be made

Instructional Pedagogy Considerations

- Align pedagogy with parish approach to adult formation
 - Classroom / traditional model
 - Family catechesis & evangelization
 - Montessori approach
 - Other: _____
- What training will be needed for existing and new catechists

RADIATE CHRIST

Catechist Considerations

- Curriculum is user-friendly and easy to implement
- Lesson plans are clearly structured
- Structure of curriculum supports religious education calendar
- Print and digital resources are readily accessible
- Publisher provides training & active support
- Encourages the catechist to accompany students relationally

Family Considerations

- Curriculum supports the domestic church with:
 - Parent and at-home supplementals
 - Catechesis that spans multiple age groups
 - Activities are practical for at-home use
 - Encourages family participation

Student Considerations

- Content is kerygmatic (focused on the story of Jesus)
- Engaging & developmentally appropriate activities
- Includes up-to-date references and examples
- Sensory-friendly activities and lesson extensions
- Artwork is age-appropriate, beautiful, and evangelistic
- Fosters an encounter with Jesus

Sacramental Preparation Considerations

- Engages the whole parish community in formation
- Contextualizes individual sacraments in the sacramental life
- Includes mystagogy
- Focuses on sacramental grace
- Curriculum developed specifically for Christian Initiation for children

Supplemental Considerations

- Identify areas of weakness & gaps
- Find additional resources for weaknesses & gaps
- Reinforce parents as primary catechists¹
- Provide encounters with Jesus beyond the curriculum
- Offer seamless sacramental preparation experiences