

Dear DREs and Youth Ministers:

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From the Religious Education Office

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Ripe for Learning: Catechesis for Children in the Intermediate Grades Grades of Fourth through Sixth by Bryan Reising

Students in the 4th through 6th grades are filled with opportunities. Their vocabulary has increased, their reading ability has increased, and they are starting to discover their talents like sports, music, and the arts. It is indeed an exciting time for these students. And their faith formation is no different. They are indeed ripe for learning! The following are some opportunities for reading, vocabulary, and some hands on experiences.

Reading Opportunities

For many students of this age level, reading is really starting to blossom! Take advantage of this timely opportunity to encourage your students to read good literature with values. *The Chronicles of Narnia* by CS Lewis is a favorite for this age group. Other books include *Book of Virtues* by William Bennett, *Song of Hiawatha* and other poems by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Beauty and the Beast* by Charles Lamb, *Black Beauty: The Autobiography of a Horse* by Anna Sewell, *Kateri Tekakwitha: Mohawk Maid* by Evelyn Brown, *Little House in the Big Woods* and others by Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Prairie Boy's Summer* and others by William Kurelek.



There are also biographies of saints that are geared for this age group. Consider Tomie DePaolo's books on Francis, Patrick, and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Also Loyola Press has a "Saints for Children" section on their Web site with short stories of the saints. It is part of the *Christ Our Life* series. They also have a retreat for children on their Web site focusing on saints and their charisms.

What about the Bible? There are many stories within the Bible, both Old and New Testament, that children of this age would enjoy and learn. Children this age can begin reading from the NAB (New American Bible), the Bible used during the liturgy. In addition, a Catholic bible geared to this age group is the *Breakthrough Bible* published by Saint Mary's Press.

Increase in Vocabulary

Children of this age group, because of reading and verbal skills, are increasing their vocabulary. Most curriculums have glossary sections of words they should be able to learn. Terms for the sacraments are pretty standard for this age: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders. Other terms can include Incarnation, Salvation, Paschal Mystery, Resurrection, Holy Trinity, Corporal Works of Mercy, Catholic Social Teaching, Spiritual Works of Mercy, RCIA, liturgy, real presence, sin, Divine Revelation, the Church, Scriptures and Tradition, and the Marks of the Church. Check your glossary to see what other terms they will learn.

How do you teach these terms in an exciting, engaging way? Make these terms relevant to them as much as possible. Some things seem to be hard to explain because some are abstract concepts or mysteries. Analogies and stories do help to explain to this age group.

Hands on Experiences

Also this is the age that they really learn by doing. This can include volunteering their time to visit residents at a nursing home, cleaning up the neighborhoods of their town, perhaps helping out at a soup kitchen, and so on. Some of these acts of charity can be extended to the entire family, like helping to serve a community Thanksgiving meal and making sure elderly neighbors' needs are taken care of. Even prayer can be built into an activity, like making rosaries, writing an icon, or drawing a picture for prayer.



Many curriculums have activities that are built into the lessons, like the *Project Disciple* found in Sadlier's curriculum. Check your curriculum for further ideas for this age group.

Regarding curriculum, the following list are those approved by the USCCB:

<http://www.usccb.org/catechism/document/Currentlist.pdf>

Children in 4th, 5th, and 6th grades are at a ripe age to learn. Regarding learning the faith, both catechists and parents need to take advantage of the opportunity!

Mohr Catechist Formation Fund

A Gift for You, Catechists, Youth Team Members, Teachers of the Religion

This scholarship fund is a great gift for your catechists, teachers, youth ministry team, and many of you! You can receive scholarships for Faith Formation Day and other catechist formation opportunities, opportunities outside through the University of Dayton's VLCFF (Virtual Learning Community of Faith Formation), and even some college courses on faith formation. An application is on our website:

<http://www.dnu.org/word/documents/MohrScholarship-CatechistFormationFund-Application.pdf>.

Please submit your applications soon!

VIRTUS Trainings

11/11/2010	6:30 PM	Granite Falls – St. Andrew
11/11/2010	7:00 PM	Silver Lake - Holy Family
11/15/2010	6:00 PM	New Ulm - NUACS – St. Anthony Elementary School
01/18/2011	7:00 PM	Renville - Holy Redeemer
02/21/2011	7:00 PM	New Ulm – NUACS – Anthony Elementary School
03/10/2011	7:00 PM	Benson - St. Francis
04/05/2011	7:00 PM	Green Valley - St. Clotilde (Marshall)

All Catechists are required to:

1. Have a background check before beginning to volunteer;

2. Sign Forms A & B of the diocesan sexual misconduct policy before beginning to volunteer;
3. Attend VIRTUS training within 90 days of beginning to volunteer;
4. Do the on-line training as assigned. This is to be done as soon as possible – communicate this with your catechists, volunteers, and youth ministry adult team.

The VIRTUS training is for adults ages 18 or older. If you have a question about VIRTUS, please contact Margy Manderfeld at **507-233-5305**. Please do not contact VIRTUS directly unless you need a password.

Remember: Lesson One of Touching Safety Children's Training is to be done in **October or early November** (Lesson 2 is to be done in January). Please send in your reports to Margy after you completed the children's lessons. Thank you!

University of Dayton's VLCFF

Cycle 1: Jan 23 - Feb 26

(Registration: Opens Oct 26; Closes Jan 19, 2011)

- [Catholic Beliefs](#)
- [Christology - Info coming soon](#)
- [Church and Communication](#)
- [Communication and Community](#)
- [Conscience](#)
- [Designing and Implementing Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 7\)](#)
- [Digital Catechesis: Web Literacy](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church](#)
- [Ecumenism](#)
- [Facilitating Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 4\)](#)
- [Faith and Human Development](#)
- [Foundations and Visions for Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 1\)](#)
- [Images of Jesus](#)
- [Introduction to Catechesis](#)
- [Introduction to Liturgy](#)
- [Introduction to Practical Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Prayer](#)
- [Introduction to Scripture](#)
- [Introduction to Paul's Life and Letters](#)
- [Islam](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Community](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Education](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Mary - Info coming soon](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Virtues](#)
- [New Testament](#)
- [Old Testament](#)
- [On Bended Knee \(Seminar\)](#)
- [Our Hearts Were Burning \(Seminar\)](#)
- [Overview of the GDC & NDC \(Seminar\)](#)
- [Poverty in the U.S. and Around the World](#)
- [Sacraments](#)
- [Spirituality and Inclusive Faith Communities](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Doctrine](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Social Teaching](#)
- [Theological Reflection: Key to Connecting Faith and Life](#)
- [Vocation, Spirituality, and Discipleship of Catechists](#)

Upcoming Gather for October for Parish Catechetical Leaders (PCLs or DREs) & Youth Ministers

Our next Gather will be Monday, November 15, from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm at the Barn south of Renville and north of Delhi on County Road 6. Erin O'Leary, consultant from OSV and DRE of St. Gerard's Church will be our presenter! Her presentation? "Teaching Religion, Scripture, and Prayer Using Art: No Crafts Involved!" RSVP to Cindy Blickem at 507-233-5325 or cblickem@dnu.org if you plan to attend. OSV (Our Sunday Visitor) will sponsor this event!

ACRE

Starting this year, ACRE is optional for parishes and schools. If you are with a parish faith formation program and are implementing this assessment, please contact Bryan Reising at the diocese. There is some extra money to fund this for parishes (and for schools). Let him know as soon as possible and how much money you are spending for your assessment. Thank you!

Children's Resources from the Diocesan Media Library

For Children in Grades 4 through 6

- *A Tour of Our Parish Church*, video by St. Anthony Messenger Press (1995)
- *Adventures from the Book of Virtue*, 9 videos by Porchlight Entertainment (1995)
- *Angel's Advent Lesson*, video by Twenty-Third Publications (1995)
- *August Rush*, an inspiring DVD about a musically gifted child by August Rush Movie (2007)
- *Beatitudes*, video by Paulist Press (1993)
- *Beginners Bible Series*, 13 videos by Sony Music (1996)
- *Broken Toy*, video by Summerhills Productions (1993)
- *Celebrating the Church Year for Children: Advent*, video by Paulist Press (1986)
- *Central America Close-Up*, video by Maryknoll Videos (1998)
- *Close Encounters Series*, videos by Oblate Media and Videos with Values (2001 through 2005)
- *Deaf Like Me - A Story of Self-Acceptance*, video by Franciscan Communications (1991)
- *Divine Mercy for Young Hearts: A Captivating Lesson in the Catholic Faith*, DVD by Marians of the Immaculate Conception (2005)
- *Dorothy Day*, video by CTNA (1988)
- *Eucharist: The Source and the Summit*, DVD by Videos with Values (2006)
- *St. Francis: God's Troubadour of Peace*, video by CCC and Leonardo DeFelippis (1993)
- *God's Gift Series*, 3 videos for grades 4-6 by Brown/ROA (1997)
- *Goodnight, Mrs. Foster*, video by Paulist Press (1996)



- *Grandma's Bread*, video by Franciscan Communications (1988)
- *In God's Name*, video by Oblate Media and Communication (2000)
- *Jesus Heals and Works Miracles*, video by Vision Video (1989)
- *Joseph: The Man Closest to Christ*, DVD by Ignatius Press (2006)
- *Kevin's Temptation*, video by Brown ROA Publishing (1995)
- *Martin the Cobbler*, DVD by Billy Budd Films
- *Saints Gallery Series*, videos by Oblate Media (1996-2001)
- *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, DVD by Miramax (2009)
- *The Secret of the Horse*, DVD by Family Theatre Productions (2006)

For Those Working with Children

- *Becoming a Successful Catechist Series*, video by National Catholic Catechists Society (1992)
- *Conversations on Catechesis Series*, video by CTNA (1991-1993)
- *Developing Minds Series*, videos by WGBH in Boston (2002-2003)
- *Differentiated Instruction in Action: Elementary School*, DVD by Advent Film Group Movie One, LLC (2008)
- *Echoes of Faith: Methods for Grades 3 and 4, and for Grades 5 and 6, and other topics*, videos by RCLBenziger and NCCL
- *Empowering the Catechist Series*, videos by Twenty-Third Publications (1995)
- *Teaching Children in the Church Series, Teaching Fourth through Sixth Grades*, videos by Group (1992)

These and many other resources (DVDs, videos, and audio) can be used by member parishes, schools, and individuals. Check out the Media library catalogue at

<http://dnu.kdsi.net/search/search.php>

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) Membership

The cost of an individual membership to NCCL is only \$60.00. This is only \$5.00 a month. For further information, check out the website: <http://www.nccl.org/>

Parish Catechesis Question

Which curriculum do you use for Grades 4 through 6? What are the advantages to this curriculum? This feedback is very important as you look at your curriculum for all grades and then you can have a chance to compare this with others when you visit the diocese and for our Curriculum Day in the spring (April 11, 2011).



From the Youth Ministry Office:

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Going Grateful



A story is told of a king in Africa who had a close friend with whom he grew up. The friend had a habit of looking at every situation that ever occurred in his life (positive or not) and remarking, "This is good!"

One day the king and his friend were out on a hunting expedition. The friend would load and prepare the guns for the king. The friend had apparently done something wrong in preparing one of the guns, for after taking the gun from his friend, the king fired it and his thumb was blown off. Examining the situation, the friend remarked as usual, "This is good!"

To which the king replied, "No, this is not good!" and proceeded to send his friend to prison. About a year later, the king was hunting in an area that he should have known to stay clear of. Cannibals captured him and took him to their village. They tied his hands, piled some wood, and bound him to a stake.



As they came near to set fire to the wood, they noticed that the king was missing a thumb. Being superstitious, they never ate anyone who was less than whole. So untying the king, they sent him on his way.

As he returned home, he was reminded of the event that had taken his thumb and felt remorse for his treatment of his friend. He went immediately to the prison to speak with his friend. "You were right." He said, "It was good that my thumb was blown off." And he proceeded to tell the friend all that had just happened. "And so, I am very sorry for sending you to prison for so long. It was bad of me to do this."

"No," his friend replied, "This is good!"

"What do you mean, 'This is good!?' How could it be good that I sent my friend to prison for a year?"

"If I had not been in prison, I would have been with you."

-story taken from [A Basket of Gems](#) by Mark Stibbe

It's one thing to have a positive outlook on life. At times, we are just a little shy in expressing our gratitude. Perhaps you've heard about Ole who was sitting on the porch with Lena, his wife of forty-eight years, just beginning to realize what a great partner and help she had been to him all these years and how much she meant to him. Ole turned to Lena and said, "Lena, you've been such a wonderful woman that there are times I can hardly keep from telling you!"



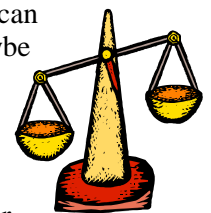
Both good mental health and sound spirituality are founded upon an "attitude of gratitude." Many of us learned this early on from our parents and grandparents. For example, my dad frequently shared a certain piece of wisdom with us. He said it so often that the ten of us knew it by heart and were ready to complete the sentence in unison as soon as he began with the intro, "There are two kinds of people in this world..."

Dad's bit of wisdom became such an antiphon during our years at home that one of my brothers recently included the quote during his toast at a family wedding reception! Now after forty-five years of training under my dad's tutelage, I am ready to pass this on to the next generation:

***"There are two kinds of people in this world:
whiners and worshipers."***

Some of these traits seem to be inborn; others are more the result of choices we make in life. But depending on which side that we find ourselves or place ourselves, the result is a whole different set of outlooks and actions from those who operate out of the other camp.

Grateful people and ungrateful people. Those who whine and those who worship. You can hardly be both. Maybe in spots, maybe in seasons. But throughout the balance of your life, one or the other will dominate the way you view and respond to most everything. You will choose to either be thankful or unthankful, to recognize a blessing or to overlook it, to acknowledge a kindness or mindlessly ignore it.



You decide.



Nancy Leigh DeMoss writes in her book, *Choosing Gratitude*, “**A grateful person is a humble person while ingratitude reveals a proud heart.**” That’s because gratitude is a revealer of the heart, not just a reporter of details. And among the things it reveals about us most is our level of humility. Every hint of

ingratitude--even when not extremely blatant--is an indicator of pride in our hearts. Henry Ward Beecher observed, “A proud man is seldom a grateful man, for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves.” Pride is the father of ingratitude and the silent killer of gratitude

We think we deserve so much. But what does any of us have that we haven’t received? What does any of us possess that doesn’t come down from the One “who richly provides us with everything to enjoy?” I Tim. 6:17

A grateful heart is a full heart, while an unthankful heart is an empty one. Ungrateful people are much like a container that has a hole in it, leaking out every blessing that’s been poured in, always needing something else, something new to consume for satisfaction fuel.

“By any measure of affluence,” Chuck Colson has said, “the average American enjoys a quality of life beyond anyone’s wildest dreams even a few decades ago.” Even during the lowest points of the recent economic downturn, Americans are still blessed beyond what most of the world can fathom.

There’s a word used today to describe what takes place when a person adjusts the thought patterns that have become ingrained into his or her emotional makeup. It’s called: “attitudinal change.” It’s a fancy way to say that new behaviors start with new mindsets. The pathway to change requires a change in the brain. For those of us (myself included) who are a little deficient in the gratitude department, Nancy Leigh DeMoss coined a new word, “gratitudinal change.” She suggests a series of practical choices to make this a reality.

- 1) **Acknowledge that God is in charge.** It’s not our stuff, it’s his. It’s not our house, it’s his. It’s not our ministry, it’s his. It’s not our church, it’s his. It’s not our place to make demands and call the shots. It’s his. Gratefully trust him with everything. Make a gratitudinal change.
- 2) **Commit to a set season of gratitude.** Reading an article or book on gratitude doesn’t give you a grateful heart. Nor do we become grateful by merely *thinking about it* or *wishing it*.

A grateful heart is a magnificent edifice of the Holy Spirit. The most effective and lasting manors of the Spirit require a *gradual*, slow but sure course of construction. You and I have to be willing to make the effort and commit the time to in order to set a good

foundation in the mansion the Holy Spirit wishes to build of our hearts.



Determine the time frame, mark your calendar, and let your spouse or some other accountability partner know that you are going to make this a season focused on gratitude. They might want to join you in the journey!

For example, I’ve decided to grow in gratitude during the month of November. Would you care to join me? Call, drop an e-mail, or visit in person. We can encourage one another along the way!

- 3) **Journal your blessings and write down your reasons for being grateful.** One time, for an entire year, I did a daily journaling exercise:

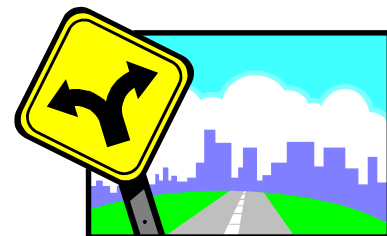
Today I was most grateful for...
Today I was least grateful for...

It became my daily examination of conscience at the close of each day.

- 4) **Tell God you’re going to meet him there...in that ungrateful place.** Tell him you’re going to make each day a fresh opportunity to watch for his blessings in things both great and small. Ask him for his help. Tell him you’re going to offer up to him every situation and circumstance of your life, even the ones that are still sensitive to the touch, even the ones that make absolutely no sense.

No matter how bad it gets, no matter what someone says to you, no matter how long it goes on or where it might lead, you will drop the full weight of it at his feet every night, be thankful for his strength to you through the day, and wait for his mercies that will be new in the morning.

*“There are two kinds of people in this world:
whiners and worshipers.”*



Which will you be this Thanksgiving?

Mark Your Calendars for 2010-2011

Mon, Nov 15 10:00 am-3:00 pm	DRE/YM Gathering Erin O'Leary, consultant from OSV and DRE of St. Gerard's Church - "Teaching Religion, Scripture, and Prayer Using Art: No Crafts Involved!"		Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Dec 6	DRE/YM Gathering	10:00 am-3:00 pm	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Jan 10	DRE/YM Gathering	10:00 am-3:00 pm	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Feb 7	DRE/YM Gathering	10:00 am-3:00 pm	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Mar 7	DRE/YM Gathering	10:00 am-3:00 pm	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Apr 11	DRE/YM Gathering (Curriculum Day)	10:00 am-3:00 pm	Pastoral Center, New Ulm
Sun, Apr 10	Junior High Festival	11:00 am-5:00 pm	Hutchinson?
Mon, May 16	DRE/YM Spring Fling	Noon-4:00	TBA
Check out the dates for the Summer Camps!			
Sun, June 12- Thurs June 16	Girls Discipleship Camp	Sun 4:00 pm til Thurs 11:00 am	Flandrau Group Camp (New Ulm)
Sun, July 10- Thurs July 14	Boys Discipleship Camp	Sun 4:00 pm til Thurs 11:00 am	Flandrau Group Camp (New Ulm)



**More Information on World Youth Day and NCYC 2011
in the December *Gatherings Reflections*.**