

What Is the Framework?

“The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ.” These words of Pope John Paul II are quoted in the first sentence of the *United States Catholic Bishops Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*. The intention of the new Framework is similar: it provides the course structure and content instruction to serve as a way for high school students to know Jesus Christ, to grow in relationship with him, and to live according to the truth he has given us.

After several consultations through its development with bishops, diocesan leaders, teachers, catechists, and publishers, the full body of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops unanimously approved the Framework in 2007. One of its first objectives was to provide guidance to publishers who create instructional materials for use both in Catholic high schools and parish youth ministry programs.

Scope and Sequence

Besides providing doctrinal elements for a curriculum, the Framework also strongly suggests a sequence to shape a four-year, eight-semester course of catechetical studies. There are six core semester-length courses that the bishops strongly recommend be offered in the order they appear in the Framework. Those courses are:

I. The Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture

The Scriptures trace the coming of Jesus, the Christ.

II. Who Is Jesus Christ?

Jesus is the ultimate revelation from God.

III. The Mission of Jesus Christ (The Paschal Mystery)

Our redemption only comes in and through Jesus.

IV. Jesus Christ Continues the Mission in the Church.

The Church is the Body of Christ where we meet Jesus today.

V. Sacraments as Privileged Encounters with Jesus Christ

We can encounter Christ in a full and complete way in the Sacraments.

VI. Life in Jesus Christ

There are moral principles that govern the life of Christ's disciples.

In addition five possible elective courses appear in this Framework as options for the other two semesters. Those courses have been titled Sacred Scripture, History of the Catholic Church, Living as a Disciple of Jesus Christ in Society (Social Justice), Responding to the Call of Jesus Christ (Marriage and Holy Orders), Ecumenical and Interreligious Issues.

For a link to the complete document visit our blog @ www.engagingfaith.blogspot.com