

# The Catholic Essentials: A Checklist for Graduating 8th Grade Students

## Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston



**Overview:** The purpose of this checklist is to empower schools in the Archdiocese of Boston to fulfill their catechetical mission as Catholic educators. All students who graduate from the 8th grade in a Catholic school should satisfy each of the following learning objectives, which have been divided into 12 separate learning categories.

### 1. The Blessed Trinity

- 1.1. Students are aware of logical arguments for the existence of God.
- 1.2. Students have a basic understanding of the Blessed Trinity as one God in three persons.
- 1.3. Students can identify God as the one Creator of all that exists.

### 2. The Person of Jesus Christ

- 2.1. Students can explain why the Incarnation was necessary, linking it back to Original Sin.
- 2.2. Students can identify Jesus as true God and true man, fully divine and fully human.
- 2.3. Students can recount the Paschal Mystery.

### 3. Sacred Scripture and Tradition

- 3.1. Students can locate passages in the Bible when given the book, chapter, and verse.
- 3.2. Students know that Sacred Scripture is inerrant and inspired by God.
- 3.3. Students comprehend the trajectory of salvation history with a view toward the covenants.
- 3.4. Students understand that Sacred Tradition is also a mode of revelation, equal in dignity and importance to that of Sacred Scripture.

### 4. The Catholic Church

- 4.1. Students understand why Jesus Christ founded the Catholic Church.
- 4.2. Students have a basic understanding of the structure and hierarchy of the Church.
- 4.3. Students can explain how Catholicism is different from other faiths and world religions.
- 4.4. Students are exposed to all vocations: priesthood, religious life, married life, and single life.

### 5. The Seven Sacraments of the Church

- 5.1. Students can identify and explain all seven sacraments.
- 5.2. Students have a basic understanding of what is necessary for a valid sacrament.
- 5.3. Students know what grace is and why it is necessary for our salvation.
- 5.4. Students are aware that frequent participation in the Sacraments is essential to being a faithful Catholic.

## **6. Holy Mass & the Eucharist**

- 6.1. Students understand the parts of the Mass and know why the Mass is celebrated.
- 6.2. Students recognize the structure of the liturgical year, including Holy Days of Obligation.
- 6.3. Students have a basic understanding of the Real Presence and transubstantiation.
- 6.4. Students are aware that Mass attendance is essential to being a faithful Catholic.

## **7. Prayer: A Conversation with God**

- 7.1. Students know what prayer is and understand the reasons why we pray.
- 7.2. Students can pray all prayers and practices on the “Prayers and Practices by Grade” sheet.
- 7.3. Students have developed a personal prayer routine that is reinforced during the school day.

## **8. The Human Person: Body and Soul**

- 8.1. Students understand that humans alone are composed of both a body and rational soul.
- 8.2. Students recognize that the human person was created to know and love God.
- 8.3. Students know that the ultimate purpose of their life is to become saints in Heaven.

## **9. Catholic Moral Teaching**

- 9.1. Students understand the difference between freedom and license and the difference between natural law and divine law.
- 9.2. Students understand the reality of sin and its consequences.
- 9.3. Students can list and explain the Ten Commandments.
- 9.4. Students can articulate and defend the Church’s position on all key moral issues, especially chastity and abortion.

## **10. Our Lady: Queen of Heaven and Earth**

- 10.1. Students understand Mary’s central role in the story of salvation.
- 10.2. Students know the four major dogmas associated with Mary.
- 10.3. Students understand that Mary can and should play a role in our lives of faith.

## **11. The Blessed: The Holy Saints and Angels**

- 11.1. Students know the definitions of “saint” and “angel,” as well as “demon” and “Devil.”
- 11.2. Students understand that saints and angels can and should play a role in their lives of faith.
- 11.3. Students can name and describe at least ten canonized saints, including their own patron saint.

## **12. The Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell**

- 12.1. Students know about the three abodes of the dead: Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory.
- 12.2. Students are aware that Hell exists and that the Devil works to prevent our salvation.
- 12.3. Students recognize that death is final, that our judgment is permanent, and that Heaven and Hell are eternal.
- 12.4. Students are aware of the Second Coming and what it will entail.