

## Methods and Class Management: Lesson Planning

### Introduction

One key to success in teaching religion is preparation and planning. Good lesson planning will give you confidence, clarity, and assurance with students. To get the most out of this session, reflect on the first question. Then read the article. Then answer the reflection questions.

### First Question

What comes to your mind when you think about lesson planning?

### Article

This article is not designed to be the one and only way to develop a lesson plan. It is a general overview, which highlights the key steps of doing a lesson plan. If you have been using the *Alive in Christ* Teacher Edition, you already know what a helpful tool it is. For those who are just beginning, it will not be long before you realize that you do not have to start from scratch. Your Teacher Edition and the **aliveinchrist.osv.com** Lesson Planner make it easy to do lesson planning.

#### Steps in Planning a Lesson

1. A few days before your session, choose a specific time to plan. It is important to do this so that you will be able to assemble any materials you may need.
2. Begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit asking for guidance, or use the Catechist Prayer, which is on the first Background page of each lesson.

3. Ask yourself these three important questions as you begin your plan: “What am I going to teach? How much time do I have? Which activities will most engage the students I am teaching?”
4. Find the answers to those questions by reading the whole lesson plan in your guide.

a. What am I going to teach?

Open your *Alive In Christ* Catechist Guide and look at the Background pages. There you will find the Key Concept and Doctrinal Content, which describe the Traditions of the Church that underlie your lesson. Read the Catechist Background, this will help by providing reflection on the Tradition from an adult perspective. The Lesson Plan also lists the objective for each segment of your lesson. The same objectives are also in your Guide at the beginning of each segment. On the next page, read the Teaching Strategies for age-appropriate ways to teach the Tradition. *Alive in Christ* is a total program, with content developed for Grades K–8. Acquaint yourself with the Scope and Sequence in your Teacher Edition, especially your grade level, and follow it. Do not be tempted to veer away from your content to present your favorite topic, because the students will lose the benefit of a well developed Scope and Sequence.

b. How much time do I have?

Even though your class is scheduled for a certain amount of time, you may sometimes find that you need more time. Keep in mind that the catechetical process in *Alive in Christ* has three steps. It is important to do each step. Pay attention to choosing activities that will fit your time allotment. Small group discussion with sharing takes more time than a large group question and answer

activity. At times, you may wish to summarize a page rather than read it aloud, or have the students read it aloud or silently. While suggestions are given in your Guide, they are suggestions, you are the one who has to decide what is best. No matter what, do not sacrifice activities that engage the students in order to save time. Students learn better by doing than they do by listening.

c. Which activities will most engage the children I am teaching?

There are several options for using activities offered in your Guide and on **aliveinchrist.osv.com**. Activities give a variety of options for your lesson planning and are based on learning styles, age-appropriateness, and interest. As you get to know your class and observe the activities that the students actively participate in, it will become easier to choose the best activities for them. In addition, the background pages for each lesson contains other tips for presenting the material. For more information, read the article Learning Styles or Multiple Intelligences in the Child Development section.

5. Once you have made your choices, list the supplies you will need and note if there is anything you need to do ahead of time, such as obtaining supplies, or preparing students for a skit, or inviting a guest speaker. This should be easy since the materials needed for every part of the lesson are included on your Lesson Plan page in the Guide, and before each activity on **aliveinchrist.osv.com**.
6. Decide how you need to arrange your space for your lesson to flow. Do you need space for movement, for art activities, or for prayer?
7. Gather your supplies, and copy any handouts you will need.

Following these steps should help you feel confident and competent as you begin your lesson.

## Reflection Questions

- How do you think lesson planning will help you become an effective religion teacher?
- Which suggestion was the most practical in this article?