

## Methods and Class Management: Suggested Methods and Strategies for Grades K-3

### Introduction

To be successful as a catechist, it is important to respect the cognitive, physical, and spiritual capacities of different age levels. In this segment you will find some helpful suggestions for children in Grades Kindergarten through 3. You may also want to view the video *Age Appropriate Catechesis Grades K-3*. To get the most out of this session reflect on the *first question*. Then read the article and answer the *reflection questions*.

### First Question

What kinds of methods or strategies do you feel help children in your group to understand God and faith?

### Article

The *NDC* tells us that, “The Church’s catechesis—and even more so, the catechist—must take into consideration all the human factors of a particular age level in order to present the Gospel message in a vital and compelling way” (48). More specifically, “School-age children should receive formal and systematic catechesis in a parish-based catechetical program, a Catholic school, or a program of home-based catechesis in which the content of the faith and the experience of Christian life is presented authentically and completely” (48.E.2).

To effectively help children understand the mysteries of faith, apply teaching strategies and methods based on the child's stage of development.

## Characteristics

- visual; encounters God through images
- vivid imagination
- literal thinkers
- physically active; *needs* to move
- enjoys sharing feelings
- loves to celebrate
- involves all senses
- experiential learners (hands-on, likes to “do” it to learn about it)
- likes to belong to a group; by Grades 2 and 3 begins cooperating and working together in groups to meet a goal

## Strategies

- Be very careful with the visual and verbal images given to represent God and faith; they can last a lifetime. Use a variety of images.
- Use guided meditations with visualizations that build a relationship with Jesus.
- Consider how children are picturing your words: i.e. “Blessed is the *fruit* of your womb...”[apples, oranges].

- Allow opportunities to move, count, pantomime, create sound effects.
- Provide felt boards, pictures, videos, and manipulatives to awaken all senses.
- Provide concrete, engaging tasks to build, create, evaluate and examine.
- Group-work expectations should be based on their abilities.
- Encourage them to share feelings with the people of the Scriptures.
- Turn all things into an occasion for joy.

### Reflection Questions

- What are some images of God that will help children in your group grow in faith?
- Why are activities especially important to children in grades K–3?