

Alignment of Religion Standards with ACRE Domains

Office of Catechesis, Archdiocese of Indianapolis

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Overview:

“What am I supposed to teach in religion class?” This question is answered through the *Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guidelines*, which are available online at <http://www.archindy.org/catechesis/curriculum.html>. As for the question of how well our students are learning their Catholic faith, a major resource used in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is the *National Catholic Education Association’s Information for Growth: Assessment of Child/Youth Religious Education* (ACRE). This standardized assessment reports data in six domains (categories) that correspond to the six tasks of catechesis outlined in the *National Directory for Catechesis*. They are:

- Knowledge of the Faith
- Liturgical Life
- Moral Formation
- Prayer
- Communal Life
- Missionary Spirit

This document has been crafted as a tool to illustrate which standards from the *Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guidelines* correspond to each of the six ACRE domains. Note that several standards in the document are marked in yellow. This indicates that they relate to more than one domain. A brief explanation of the six ACRE domains, as well as information about the instrument itself, may be found at the ACRE web site: <https://ncea.ets.org/>. Only the 2013 version of the ACRE test is used in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Interpreting ACRE Results:

Standardized tests in math and science help provide data on student success in learning; ACRE, likewise, provides information about the success of religious education efforts and affirms strong catechesis taking place. ACRE results also point out areas for growth by showing a lower percentage score next to domains that need to be reinforced. Please note: Percentages are not on a traditional grading scale, where students pass or fail depending on their score. Rather, percentages are measured using a standardized scale, in comparison with national averages. Parish or school reports should include national average scores to aid in interpretation. You may also view them on the ACRE web site.

Using this tool:

On the ACRE parish or school report, identify the domain(s) which need(s) to be reinforced. Then, reference this document to see which religion curriculum standards are listed under the corresponding domain(s). This will provide the material that should be reviewed. Plan to reinforce these standards for the students just tested (ex. 8th grade) and students who will be tested next year (ex. 7th grade) so those just tested will have a well-rounded faith formation as they go forth, and incoming students will be well-prepared and ready to reflect their knowledge. For best results, collaborate with the Office of Catechesis to plan professional development for catechists/religion teachers and strengthen their understanding of domains needing improvement. Providing faith formation materials to parents is another way of supporting student success and empowering parents to continue forming their families in faith at home.