

## PLANNING THE LESSON

When you begin writing the lesson plan, always

- ask God to help you know and teach the Truth--the whole message of Jesus,
- ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in presenting the lesson,
- and read the corresponding references in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Preview the lesson by reading the entire lesson—student text and teacher material. Decide what parts you will want to use and in what order (and on what days). Don't try to teach too much. It is more important for the students to grasp the essential concepts of the lesson and know how to integrate the message into their own lives, then it is for you to cover every bit of information in the lesson. Determine which student activities will be individual seat work, small group work, homework, or used to check the students' mastery of the lesson.

Decide what techniques/tools will be used to present or enhance the lesson.

Techniques/tools include:

Art work—such as statues, holy cards, and pictures of saints or holy events

Videos—be careful with the use of videos. Make sure the video can heighten awareness or reinforce the message of the lesson. Never replace a lesson with a video. Preview the video to make sure it is age appropriate. Don't let the video stand on its own; that is, set the context with a simple introduction. Point out the things you want the students to watch and listen for. Follow up with discussion or evaluative activity. If you are teaching about a certain event in the life of Jesus, for example, don't show the whole life of Jesus video; just show that portion relating to the lesson.

Music—can set the stage for prayer. It can be played while students are working quietly and is a good transition from one activity to another.

Games—students learn without realizing it. Games can be played to learn vocabulary words, holy days, sacraments, ten commandments, etc.

Make sure to assemble, reserve, or plan the materials needed for your choice of techniques/tools. Practice any craft project or game. Make sure you know how to run the VCR, projector, or recorder.

Get a feeling for how long your lesson will take. Know how you will open and close the class. Will you include time to discuss the upcoming Sunday's readings? Is your presentation varied in activities? Does it meet different learning style needs? Always go over plan.

Reflect on the lesson. Be aware of anything in the news, your life or in the parish that refers to the theme of the lesson. Make sure you are comfortable with all parts of the lesson.

The day of the lesson, pray again. Ask God for patience, understanding, courage, perseverance, joy and faith.