

“Coupled with a lack of basic Catholic skills, many young people are unable to participate in the liturgical life of the Church with its ritual splendor. It is not uncommon to experience a sea of blank faces before the Tabernacle.”

Go “YOUCAT”!

By Dr. Joan M. Kelly

I support the School Model of Religious Education!

Ouch! I can feel the darts stinging me already by those opposed to such an “out of date” approach.

I rest my case, however, on the pathetic state of knowledge about the Catholic faith evident in many of today’s young people. Often formed in “alternative models” one finds little if any shared Catholic vocabulary among these folks. There seems to be a vague connection to the institutional Church but an equally accepted position that “one Religion is as good as another.”

Post Vatican II texts were thin on content. You reap what you sow. Key Catholic doctrines and terminology (e.g. Trinity, Redemption, Incarnation, Real Presence, Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit, Cardinal Virtues, etc.) once the grasp of so many Catholics cannot be articulated now by too many in the younger generation with accuracy and clarity.

Coupled with a lack of basic Catholic skills many young people are unable to participate in the liturgical life of the Church with its ritual splendor. It is not uncommon to experience a sea of blank faces before the Tabernacle.

When we socialize American children we tell them about the colonies, Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln. We teach them to salute the flag and to sing the national anthem. We insist that they have ample knowledge of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Let us do the same in our Religious Education programs. Get a copy of the *Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church* [<https://www.ignatius.com/promotions/youcat/>] (“YOUCAT,” published in 2011) into the hands of every Religious Education teacher and every Middle School and High School student including candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Pope Benedict XVI urged young people to study this Catechism “with passion and perseverance making a sacrifice of your time for it in the quiet of your room.” He stated that one needs to know what one believes and how to convey that depth of faith to others.

Study the YOUCAT and its four pillars (Doctrine, Sacraments, Morality and Spirituality)
NOW! Help stamp our Catholic religious illiteracy in your lifetime!

Go YOUCAT!

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