

A Glimpse

At Protestant Moral and Religious Education

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Gouvernement du Québec
**Conseil supérieur
de l'Éducation**

Comité protestant

SHOULD YOU CHOOSE PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR YOUR CHILD?

According to the Education Act parents have the right to make a choice among Protestant Moral and Religious Education (PMRE) or Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction (CRMI) or Moral Education (ME). Parents exercise their choices at the time of enrolment. If the choice is not made at that time, the principal places the student. Students make their own choice in secondary three to five.

Since many parents may be unaware of the content of the PMRE program the Protestant Committee of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, the committee which approves the PMRE program, would like parents to know that :

- the PMRE program is informational in nature
- it is not designed to impose a particular belief system on students
- the PMRE program recognizes the right of the individual to interpret religious and moral questions according to personal conscience
- it is designed to interest students who have a wide range of religious and philosophical orientations
- PMRE (or its alternates) is one of the compulsory subjects in the curriculum
- the credits earned in PMRE at the secondary level are applied to the high school leaving certificate.

The members of the committee are parents and educators who, like yourself, are concerned about the quality of education our children receive. We are committed to the promotion of a program which encourages students to think, to reason and to make responsible decisions.

We have produced pamphlets about the program's three modules to enable you to make a more informed choice. Please take the time to examine the material and to ask questions before making the choice for your child.

More information may be obtained from the Secretary of the Protestant Committee (514) 873-5056.

With best wishes,

The Protestant Committee

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**Should I choose
Protestant
Moral and
Religious
Education?**

According to the Education Act parents have the right to make a choice among Protestant Moral and Religious Education (PMRE) or Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction (CRMI) or Moral Education (ME). This choice is exercised by the students themselves in Secondary III, IV and V.

This choice is made at the time of enrolment. If the choice is not made at that time the principal places the student in the option chosen the previous year or in Moral Education.

Here are some common questions about the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program.

ARE YOU TRYING TO PROSELYTIZE, THAT IS TO MAKE PROTESTANT CHRISTIANS OF THOSE WHO ENROL?

No. The program recognizes the right of the individual to interpret religious and moral questions according to his or her conscience. The PRME program is informational in nature and is suitable and interesting to students of a wide range of religious and philosophical orientations. It is not intended that a particular religious position be promoted or imposed upon those who enrol in the program.

BUT WHY STUDY THE BIBLE ?

A knowledge of the Bible has always been at the heart of Protestant education. The Bible is not only the source of the moral and spiritual values of the Protestant tradition, but it is also the foundation of many of the values found in Western culture and civilization. Western literature is full of themes and allusions reflecting the concerns and influence of the Bible. The form and contents of both law and government owe much to concerns that have their origin in the Bible. Moreover, the Bible is the standard by which Protestants and many others in North America critically evaluate Western cultural norms

WHY STUDY OTHER RELIGIONS?

An understanding of other religious traditions is important in today's diverse and religiously pluralistic society. The program seeks to make students aware of the practices, the morality and the beliefs to which members of other religious traditions adhere in order that the students may respect the sincerity of commitment of adherents of other religions and welcome their differences.

WHY STUDY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND MORAL ISSUES?

The program provides a context for the student to see moral and spiritual values brought into focus in the concerns of life and work. Topics such as human sexuality are examined within the context of positive human relations. The environment, sustainable development, peaceful solutions to conflict, concern for the vulnerable, such as the aged and poor, are also explored from the perspective of religious and spiritual values.

WHAT PLACE DOES VALUES TEACHING HAVE IN THE SCHOOL?

Values teaching in the school is intended to help the student become aware of the moral principles by which he or she acts. It also contributes to the reasoning used to make moral judgments.

HOW MUCH TIME IS ALLOCATED TO PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION?

At the elementary level the student should receive 100 minutes per week of Protestant Moral and Religious Education. At the secondary level the student should receive a minimum of 50 hours per year of Protestant Moral and Religious Education.

DOES PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COUNT FOR HIGH SCHOOL LEAVING CREDITS?

Protestant Moral and Religious Education (or its alternatives) is one of the obligatory subjects throughout the high school program and students may use credits from the program in Secondary IV or V as part of their high school leaving certificate.

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OBJECTIVE OF MODULE ONE

One of the important aims of the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program is to give students a knowledge of the Bible while leaving religious commitment to the family and its own religious community.

REASONS FOR STUDYING THE BIBLE

Its universal influence

The Bible was the first book printed. It has attained a larger circulation and has been translated into more languages and distributed in more countries than any other book. The desire to have people able to read the Bible for themselves led to the modern concern for literacy.

Its impact on Western civilization and culture

Our concepts of justice and equality before the law have their roots in the Bible. The rules of conduct that were learnt have become the basis of our legal system. Our notions of human dignity and equality and the concern for the poor and needy also have their roots in the Bible.

Music and art are influenced by themes and motifs taken from the Bible. From musical versions of the Psalms to Handel's "Messiah" and other great oratorios, the Biblical influence is obvious. It is also found in contemporary musicals such as "Jesus Christ, Superstar". In the realm of art, one finds a great number of paintings and statues that are inspired by Biblical scenes and persons.

Echoes of the Bible may be heard in poems, plays and novels from Dante and Shakespeare to John Steinbeck and Leon Uris.

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The Judaeo-Christian heritage

A knowledge of the content of the Bible is necessary for an understanding of the Judaeo-Christian heritage which forms an important part of our society.

For students from a Christian background, a knowledge of the Bible will enhance the understanding of their own religious and cultural heritage.

Students from Jewish or Moslem families will encounter teachings which are part of their own religious background. For example, the stories of Moses and other prophets belong to a shared heritage.

Students of other world religions will gain an understanding of the values and ideas which underlie Western civilization and culture.

The influence of the Bible in our everyday lives

Biblical language has become part of everyday speech. Phrases like "change water into wine", "into the lion's den" and "no room at the inn" are commonplace. As well, ideas from the Bible have shaped our way of thinking and behaving. Do not tell a lie, do not steal, do not kill, are Biblical commandments. The practice of the Golden Rule is learned from the Bible.

The Bible is used in private and public worship. Many individuals have drawn comfort and hope from a reading of the Psalms and other passages of Scripture. Public ceremonies, may include readings from the Bible. Religious holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, are also legal holidays and are part of our calendar.

In addition, many persons are named after Biblical figures. Elizabeth, John, Mary, and Thomas are examples of such names.

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DESIRABLE OUTCOMES

Students will be able to recognize the role of religion in life, in relationships and interactions with others and in society.

People who are not part of the Judaeo-Christian heritage will gain valuable insights into the culture which surrounds them.

Since the program encourages openness and the search for truth, students will have an opportunity to develop acceptance and respect for differences.

PHILOSOPHY

Parents are responsible for the religious orientation and commitment of their children. The Protestant Committee insists on the rights of individuals to interpret religious and moral questions according to their own consciences. To this end, it has acknowledged the right of students to receive an education, that includes a knowledge of the Bible, without imposing a particular religious position.

APPROACH IN THE CLASSROOM

The classroom should be a place for free expression of ideas in an atmosphere of trust and acceptance of the views of others.

Literature of the Bible is presented in school to enable students to develop a familiarity with Biblical stories, ideas and values which have been drawn from them. Exposure to Biblical stories and the ideas that flow from them shall not become a pretext for indoctrination and conversion, but rather an opportunity for discussion and exchange. Teachers are expected to present Biblical texts in an objective way, without promoting their acceptance or rejection.

Teachers are not required to express their personal beliefs. However they may do so, while welcoming and respecting the different points of view from their students.

The Biblical module may be adapted to the specific needs of the community served by the school.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS MODULE OF THE PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Contact the teacher of Protestant Moral and Religious Education, the Principal of the school, the School Board's Subject Consultant, or the Direction de l'enseignement protestant (DEP) of the Ministère de l'Éducation.



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OBJECTIVES OF MODULE TWO

Two important aims of the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program are to provide students with an understanding of the moral and religious values of the community in which they live and to cultivate a respect for other religious traditions.

REASONS FOR STUDYING WORLD RELIGIONS**Increasing knowledge of the world in which we live**

In order to understand other cultures and civilizations one needs to take into account their religious literature, beliefs and practices. Thus, the program includes readings from the Torah, the Koran, the Upanishads and the teachings of the Buddha, as well as materials from First Nations' cultures.

Improving ability to live harmoniously in society

Studying world religions and fostering respect for others are essential today, since so many of our schools are multicultural and multi-religious. A knowledge of the celebrations and daily rituals, as well as an understanding of the beliefs that underlie these practices, will help to promote openness towards people of all religions.

Professing and living one's own religion

Module Two introduces students to different religions and invites them to examine and explain their own. An understanding of one's own religion is enhanced by a knowledge of the practices, moral principles and beliefs of other religions.

The study of other religions helps students to understand religious influences in the lives of others. This does not mean however approval for the actions of some of their adherents or agreement with their beliefs.

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DESIRABLE OUTCOMES

Module Two should lead students to an increased respect for their own cultural and religious traditions as well as those of others. It should enable students to develop the ability to express and affirm their own cultural heritage in the presence of diversity.

In addition, students should gain an appreciation of the contribution of other cultures and civilizations to today's world. For example, we use the Hindu-Arabic number system. The game of chess and the science of astronomy were transmitted via civilizations from the Middle Eastern region. Islamic prohibition of images influenced the development of geometric design. In many religions originating in India we can see the importance of the spiritual aspect of life rather than the material. Amongst Canada's First Nations, the preservation of harmony with all forms of life is central to their concern for Mother Earth.

Such knowledge will enhance the status of other religions and cultures and should contribute to an easing of tensions between various cultural and religious groups in school and society.

PHILOSOPHY

Parents are responsible for the religious orientation and commitment of their children. The Protestant Committee insists on the right of individuals to interpret religious and moral questions according to their own consciences. To this end it has acknowledged the rights of students to receive an education that presents various religious opinions without imposing a particular position.

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APPROACH IN THE CLASSROOM

A factual or objective approach is used to teach world religions. This approach focuses on a search for the meaning of various religious beliefs rather than their acceptance or rejection. Exposure to the literature of world religions and the ideas that flow from them are not meant to be a pretext for indoctrination and conversion, but rather provide an opportunity for discussion and exchange.

Teachers are required to make a distinction between the teaching function and religious participation. Explanations by a teacher, as well as demonstrations of rituals by adherents of these religions, do not imply religious participation by the other students.

The focus and content of this module may vary according to the beliefs of the students in the classroom. The module may be adapted to the specific needs of the community served by the school.

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OBJECTIVES OF MODULE THREE

Two important aims of Protestant Moral and Religious program are to encourage an understanding of self and an awareness of the need to respect the integrity of other people.

REASONS FOR STUDYING RELATIONSHIPS AND PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**A focus on underlying moral values**

Values are taught within the context of the other modules of the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program. Respect for one's self, respect for others and a sense of social responsibility are fostered in a learning environment where continuous examination of values is encouraged.

The human sexuality component is dealt with in the context of the values inherent to human relationships. This approach offers an opportunity to link the material on sexuality with the values that are basic in our relations with others. It goes beyond the simple transmission of information about the physiology of sex, which is done in other school subjects. Rather, when relationships and personal and social development are explored within the moral and religious education program, the focus is to encourage the values which underlie human sexuality to be heard and integrated by the students.

Access to accurate information

In the North American context young people are confronted with much misinformation and distortion in advertising, on television, in movies and video clips. They also must contend with many social problems ranging from AIDS to sexual violence and the problem of teenage pregnancy. For many students, the peer group is the main source of information about sex. Module Three in Protestant Moral and Religious Education seeks to provide accurate information and to complement the values that are developed in the home. Young people equipped with such information and an understanding of their feelings, attitudes and values can better deal with human sexuality in a way which promotes sound relationships.

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DESIRABLE OUTCOMES

The program outcomes include the development of respect for one's self, respect for others and a sense of responsibility towards society. In order to achieve these outcomes, the following themes are used:

AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL : RELATIONSHIPS

1. **With my Family**
All life comes from life like itself; need of nurture and protection for newborns; family roles and responsibilities.
2. **With my Friends**
Life produces its own kind; importance of friends, expressing feelings, dealing with mistakes and making up.
3. **Being Together**
Physical characteristics of a boy, a girl; self-image, self-esteem, belonging to a group, roles and responsibilities.
4. **Working Together**
Self respect, the miracle of human procreation, rules and responsibilities, working together in a community.
5. **Growing Awareness**
Physical and emotional changes at puberty; expanding one's social world, respect, understanding, communicating, cooperating.
6. **Deepening Awareness**
Reproduction; new attitudes towards male and female roles, school work, authority, freedom, responsibility; factors in decision making.

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AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL : PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- I. The Individual and Search for Identity**
The development of a sense of personal identity and the physical and social changes associated with adolescence; heredity, family, culture, religion, media, physical and emotional needs, personal values.
- II. The Individual and Ways of Living**
Personal responsibility for one's behaviour and the consequences of that behaviour; emotions, social norms and standards of behaviour.
- III. The Individual and the Community**
Interpersonal relationships; parenthood and its responsibilities, friendship, love, commitment and responsibility.
- IV. Persons in Society**
Principles of justice and love; love, friendship, family relationships, marriage and sexual relationships.
- V. The Search for Meaning**
Quality of life and human dignity; exploitation, abortion, violence; freedom, responsibility, rights and equality; the ethical framework of life.

PHILOSOPHY

The Protestant Committee believes that parents are the primary educators of their children. They nurture and protect, while demonstrating and passing on values that reflect respect, consideration for individual differences, and the foundation of their faith.

APPROACH IN THE CLASSROOM

Each school community may adapt the Relationships and Personal and Social Development module of the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program to suit the needs of its particular community. The school's actions complement the process of learning which is begun in the home.

The skills necessary to make responsible lifestyle and behavioral choices, based on knowledge and values, are taught. Sound relationships are promoted. In some circumstances, a teacher may need to provide support for a student in difficulty to enhance the values of self worth and affirmation of personal importance. Students are informed that professionals, such as a counsellor, a religious animator, a nurse or a doctor, or the personnel of the CLSC are available.

The component of the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program which deals with the question of sexually transmitted diseases is in accordance with local school board policy where one is in place. You are encouraged to check with your local school board about the existence and content of that policy.

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PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION *ELEMENTARY*

THEME Elementary	MODULE 1 THE JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN STORY	MODULE 2 CELEBRATION	MODULE 3 RELATIONSHIPS
1.WITH MY FAMILY	<p>General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of the traditions and an awareness of the values of the Judaeo-Christian story as they pertain to the family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stories from the Old Testament about families of long ago ● stories from the New Testament about the birth and childhood of Jesus 	<p>General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of various celebrations and develop a sympathetic awareness of these celebration practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● celebrations which centre around the home and family including secular as well as religious events 	<p>General Objective : To learn of the relationships and values found in families and to develop an understanding of one's role as a family member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● new life in plant, animal and human families ● the contribution of individual members to a caring family unit
2.WITH MY FRIENDS	<p>General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of the traditions and an awareness of the values of the Judaeo-Christian story as they pertain friendship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● stories from the Old Testament about the importance of friendship ● stories from the New Testament about Jesus and his friends 	<p>General Objective : To acquire a deepening knowledge of various celebrations and to develop a sympathetic awareness of these celebration practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● celebration of religious and secular events which involve classmates and friends 	<p>General Objective : To learn about relationships that exist among persons beyond the family and to develop a deeper understanding of the responsibilities and values implicit in such relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the life cycle of plants, animals and humans ● making friends, having friends, being a friend

3.BEING TOGETHER

General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of the traditions and an awareness of the values of the Judaeo-Christian story as they pertain to people coming together in the community

- the story of how Moses and his people came together to form a community
- stories about Jesus and the people who followed him

General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of various community celebrations and an awareness of their significance for the community

- celebrations of religious and secular events, both planned and spontaneous, which bring people together as a group

General Objective : To learn about the importance of relationships with others as well as one's uniqueness as an individual

- Characteristics which make a person a girl or a boy
- developing as an individual
- belonging to a group

4.WORKING TOGETHER

General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of the traditions and an awareness of the values of the Judaeo-Christian story as they pertain to people working together in the community

- caring and co-operation in the story of Moses and his community
- Jesus' teachings about caring and co-operation within a group

General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of various forms of community celebration and an awareness of the role that ritual plays in celebration

- celebration of various community events, secular and religious, with emphasis on the ritual aspects of the celebration

General Objective : To learn of each person's responsibility in relationships as well as his uniqueness as an individual

- care and respect for the human body
- correct terminology for the human reproductive process
- rules and responsibilities within the group

5.A GROWING AWARENESS

General Objective : To acquire a knowledge of the stories of David and Jesus and an understanding of the values exemplified by their actions

- the story of David of the Old Testament and the values that guided him in his dealings with others
- the ministry of Jesus and the values that guided him in his dealings with others

General Objective : To become aware of the variety of regular community observances in various traditions

- daily and weekly worship in various religious traditions
- celebration of an annual event among different cultural communities

General Objective : To learn the changes and responsibilities associated with puberty

- physical and emotional changes which accompany puberty
- understanding others by reflecting on one's own needs and behaviour
- factors to consider in relating to others

6.A DEEPENING AWARENESS

General Objective : To become aware of the values expressed in the Judaeo-Christian story

- the value of wisdom as expressed in the story of Solomon
- the values of faith and hope as expressed in the story of Daniel and his friends
- the values of love and hope expressed in the story of Jesus' last days

General Objective : To become aware of the religious significance of food and dress in various traditions

- customs and ceremonies involving food among various religious traditions
- dress and adornment in ceremonial practice among various religious traditions

General Objective : To learn of the changes and increasing responsibilities associated with adolescence

- human reproduction
- developing new attitudes as one reaches adolescence
- freedom and responsibility
- making responsible decisions

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PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION *SECONDARY*

THEME Secondary	MODULE 1 BIBLICAL STUDIES	MODULE 2 PHENOMENA OF RELIGION	MODULE 3 PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
1. THE INDIVIDUAL AND SEARCH FOR IDENTITY	<p style="text-align: center;">OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the relationship between God and man as described in the stories from the Old Testament</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● historical and religious significance of the Old Testament ● values and beliefs of Old Testament characters 	<p style="text-align: center;">BEGINNINGS</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the variety of beliefs concerning the origin and nature of persons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the nature and function of myth in world cultures ● various creation myths 	<p style="text-align: center;">IDENTITY</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the self as an individual and an understanding of the changes associated with adolescence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● uniqueness of the individual ● values and self-identity ● personal growth and development ● decision making
2. THE INDIVIDUAL AND WAYS OF LIVING	<p style="text-align: center;">THE LIFE OF JESUS OF NAZARETH</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the historical Jesus and the influence of his life and teachings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● historical sources for the life of Jesus ● the character of Jesus ● Jesus and social issues ● parables 	<p style="text-align: center;">RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the presence of religion in daily life and the variety of ways it is expressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the Judaeo-Christian influence in North American culture ● diversity of religious expression in various cultures (symbols, art, music, architecture, etc.) 	<p style="text-align: center;">HUMAN BEHAVIOUR</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the factors which influence behaviour and the impact of individual behaviour on the self and others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the influence of emotion on behaviour ● views about social behaviour ● responsibility in relationships

<p>3.THE INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY</p>	<p>THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the early Christian community and its growth as described in the New Testament</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● emergence ● values and activities ● leaders 	<p>RITUAL</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of ritual in secular society and in religious traditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● characteristics of rituals ● secular rituals ● religious rituals ● rites of passage 	<p>RELATIONSHIPS</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the role of the individual within interpersonal relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● family relationships ● friendships ● sexual relationships ● conflict in relationships ● prejudice and community relations
<p>4.PERSONS IN SOCIETY</p>	<p>THE HUMAN CONDITION AND THE BIBLE</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the religious nature of persons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● development and influence of the Bible ● divine-human relationships expressed in the Bible ● questions posed by Job and Ecclesiastes 	<p>THE RELIGIOUS NATURE OF PERSONS</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of the religious nature of persons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● characteristics of religious activity ● perceptions of the divine and/or ultimate concern ● beliefs about the nature of persons 	<p>LIVING IN SOCIETY</p> <p>General Objective : To develop an awareness of moral responsibility among persons living in society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● nature of morality ● justice and related social issues ● love and related social issues ● the relationship between love and justice

5.THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

THE HUMAN QUEST AND THE BIBLE

General Objective : To develop an awareness of the human quest for meaning as represented in the Bible

- views of life expressed in the Bible
- biblical ethics
- expressions of hope

THE RELIGIOUS QUEST

General Objective : To develop an awareness of the religious quest for meaning

- beliefs about life's ultimate goals
- beliefs about death and the hereafter
- contemporary religious trends

THE QUALITY OF LIFE

General Objective : To develop an awareness of the quality of life both for oneself and society

- human dignity and related social issues
- freedom and related social issues
- ethical systems

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