

CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AND MORAL INSTRUCTION

Secondary Three

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This new Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program for Secondary III is issued in accordance with section 461 of the *Education Act* (R.S.Q., c. I-13.3). It has been approved by the Catholic Committee of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation in conformity with the provisions of paragraph (c) of section 22 of the *Act respecting the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation* (R.S.Q., c. C-60). This program has been authorized for use in schools as of July 1, 1998. It will be compulsory as of July 1, 1999.

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INTRODUCTION

This program is intended for all Secondary III students enrolled in the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program, whether the school they are attending is public or private, anglophone or francophone. The program describes what students aged 14 and 15 may reasonably be expected to learn within the 50 hours of instruction prescribed for them by the Regulations of the Comité catholique¹.

This program is a continuation of the official 1985 program. It is based on recent developments in the way the Comité catholique and the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation view the role of religious and moral instruction.

In a report on the situation of Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction in secondary school², the Comité catholique recommended a reduction in the number of objectives and content bearing specifically on theological issues. It suggested, as well, that the language in the relevant programs be simplified and that the latter take new cultural and social situations into account. Finally, the report concluded that the new programs should lead students to question themselves in order to determine where they stand in today's world, and it advocated a more liberal use of biographical material and lively and inspirational accounts of individual experience.

In a notice to the Minister of Education, the Comité catholique recommended « that concrete measures be taken to make Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction in secondary school more relevant³ ». In this respect, it is recommended that, throughout secondary school, this type of instruction :

- take into consideration the current context of the diverse and pluralistic world that surrounds us, the new concerns of young people, and recent expectations with respect to Secondary Education⁴;
- take into account six essential types of learning, in other words, enable students to orient themselves with respect to the main aspects of the Judeo-Christian tradition; to open themselves up to their inner world; to deal with religious diversity in a respectful and intelligent manner; to

1. On this subject see Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Comité catholique. *Règlement sur la reconnaissance comme catholiques et le caractère confessionnel des écoles primaires et des écoles secondaires du système publique* (Québec : Direction des communications, 1988), art. 11; and *Règlement sur la reconnaissance comme catholiques et le caractère confessionnel des institutions d'enseignement privé du primaire et du secondaire* (Québec : Direction des communications, 1988), art. 11.

2. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Comité catholique. *Rapport d'une étude du Comité catholique : La situation de l'enseignement moral et religieux catholique au secondaire* (Québec : Direction des communications, Juin 1991).

3. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Comité catholique. *Avis au ministre de l'Éducation : L'enseignement moral et religieux catholique au secondaire : Pour un enseignement mieux adapté aux jeunes et aux contextes actuels* (Québec : Direction des communications, Juin 1991). [Free translation].

4. *Pour un enseignement mieux adapté aux jeunes*, pp. 3-5.

understand Biblical texts in their original context and be able to understand their meaning today, and to interpret day-to-day events in light of the Judeo-Christian experience⁵.

- facilitate the renewal of teaching practices in class by basing pedagogy on the act of learning with a view to mastering essential learning⁶.

In a notice to the Minister of Education, the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation recalled that « the learning of autonomy and responsibility is part of the overall development of the student and, as such, should be an objective of the curriculum and a concern within the teaching of each program⁷ ». Therefore, it recommended that, in future, revisions of secondary programs take account of the « development of the basic capacity for critical thinking⁸ ».

In this program, an attempt has been made to incorporate all the considerations and suggestions arising from the educational concerns stated above. This program is, therefore, the product of extensive consultation with teachers, Christian Education Consultants and Regional Representatives for Catholic education.

This document is divided into two parts. The first reviews the mission of Québec schools and outlines the major orientations underlying this program. The second describes the six sections of the program by using their main constituent elements. These parts are supplemented by a bibliography comprising official documents, and other books and periodicals.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-10.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

7. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. *Avis au ministre de l'Éducation : pour une école secondaire qui développe l'autonomie et la responsabilité* (Québec : Direction des communications, 1993) p. 43. [Free translation]

8. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

I. ORIENTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

The orientations of this program stem from the mission of Québec schools, the psychosocial profile of 14- and 15-year-olds and the guiding principles to be observed in the realm of Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction. They are subsequently specified in the competencies to be acquired in the program and the strategies that help students attain them.

1. THE SCHOOL'S MISSION

This program, like others, is in keeping with the educational mission of Québec schools, which is to prepare young people for life by helping them to develop all dimensions of their personality. Value is placed on the students' need for knowledge, love and self-fulfilment. Students are helped to acquire competencies that open the way to a rewarding social and personal life. Their aspirations for autonomy, freedom and happiness are also taken into account.

This Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program contributes to the development of the whole person by providing students with an opportunity to explore the range of knowledge and meaning to be found in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

2. GUIDELINES

Intended to contribute to the development of the whole person, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction follows three guidelines that take into account the school's mission, the psychosocial profile of the student and the set of six essential learning tasks outlined by the Comité catholique.

The Development of the Person

Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction seeks to satisfy the student's fundamental needs for knowledge, love, a productive and meaningful life and openness to God. To accomplish this, it draws upon the students' inner resources and enables them to develop their creativity, critical thinking capacities and their sense of independence and responsibility.

Fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds are in the middle of adolescence, and at a key phase in the process of forming identities as they struggle with the changes taking place within themselves. On the physical level, the bodies of adolescent boys and girls undergo swift transformation, and soon take on adult characteristics. Sexual interest becomes more pronounced. On the emotional level, adolescents may go from being expansive, exuberant and extroverted to sullen and ill-tempered. Their complex emotional life may cause them to experience feelings of instability. Sometimes they become apathetic and hide their deepest feelings. They become involved in a search for their true selves and for happiness. By comparing and contrasting themselves with others, they often become anxious about whether or not they are loved. Moreover, their tastes and areas of interest start to become more defined at this point. On the cognitive level, Secondary III students gradually become aware of the power of thought, developing their critical sense. They support or contradict others with varying degrees of boldness or timidity. They learn to distinguish reality from dreams and structured knowledge from the dynamic creativity of the imagination. On the social level, they become interested

in cultural, political and socioeconomic issues. They take part in social life, be it in their class, recreational milieu, workplace, or in the community. Wherever young people congregate, they attempt to assume their place, to win recognition, to become useful and accepted as members of a society. On the spiritual level, adolescents in this age group are more than ever involved in a search for meaning in life. In situations of silence and solitude, they explore the world and each other.

The themes and content, along with the skills to be developed, in the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program for Secondary III, contribute to the adolescents' overall development by drawing upon the dynamic forces inherent in the various dimensions of their intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual growth, as well as on those associated with their self-affirmation and their search for meaning in life. This program enables the students to substantially clarify some of the existential realities they increasingly encounter, such as evil and suffering, symbolic language and daily life. The program also gives them an opportunity to convey their experiences and feelings when faced with these realities, and promotes attitudes conducive to harmonious growth, e.g., boldness, courage, confidence, perseverance and hope. Finally, the students learn to face these realities in an autonomous and responsible manner by studying them critically and by finding creative solutions to the problems that arise.

Moral Instruction

Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction enables students to learn moral values. And these values, in turn, enable them to acquire a better quality of life and a sense of belonging, and to integrate harmoniously into society and the surrounding environment.

Fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds are called upon to use their judgment in their experiences of self-affirmation and in their relationships with others and with the environment. For guidance they turn almost automatically to the values transmitted to them by their families and friends.

The activities proposed in the Secondary III Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program contribute to the adolescents' moral development. Situations and examples taken from daily life, speculation on the future of the world, suffering and evil, as well as symbolic language are used to promote reflection and participation in discussions designed to develop moral judgment. This type of reflection is necessary in a society that has become less and less homogeneous in terms of values. Moreover, the Secondary III Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program teaches young people to have respect for life and for the environment. It promotes their involvement in the building of a better world, heightens their social awareness and develops their sense of responsibility.

Québec's Cultural and Religious Heritage and Interculturalism

Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction introduces students to the cultural and religious richness of the Judeo-Christian tradition which characterizes the Québec heritage. This tradition is presented as a productive way that helps to make contemporary society more human. Respect for cultural and religious diversity is promoted.

Today's adolescents live in a society whose culture has been profoundly marked by the Judeo-Christian tradition. They grow up in an environment that displays signs of a specific spiritual, moral

and religious heritage. Moreover, the pluralism surrounding them in Québec brings them into close contact with other cultural and religious traditions that may spark a healthy intellectual curiosity.

The activities proposed in the Secondary III Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program enable adolescents to develop their interest in the Judeo-Christian tradition. These activities also give them an opportunity to interpret various existential realities in the light of this heritage. Adolescents also acquire the capacity to determine where they stand in relation to certain aspects of the Christian life and tradition that point them in a specific direction and that may help them in their search for meaning in life. The program also fosters a knowledge of religious diversity. By learning about the world views of other religions, students come to respect cultures and values different from their own. In addition, the resources of science, particularly of astrophysics and medicine, are proposed as means for students interested in pursuing other avenues of thought that may be fruitful in their search. Throughout the program, students discover the diverse expressions of a common human quest for meaning.

3. COMPETENCIES TO BE ACQUIRED

The program guidelines provide the basis for the set of competencies⁹ to be acquired. They are organized sequentially, beginning with a general competency and moving on to specific competencies and cross-curricular competencies¹⁰.

The General Competency

The general competency expresses the global objective pursued by this program. It is stated as follows :

To quest for meaning by studying how they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life while focusing particularly on the Judeo-Christian tradition.

This general competency, which takes a lifetime to acquire, indicates the importance which this program attributes to the concerns of 14- and 15-year-old students. Its acquisition depends on students' acquiring a range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will be useful to them and will contribute to their overall development. In this way, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction becomes meaningful to them.

9. « Competency » as a concept encompasses the three broad domains of learning that must be contained in every program intended to further the overall development of the student. These are, respectively, knowledge (cognitive level), skills (psychomotor level) and attitudes (affective level). This concept contains the essentials of the school's educational mission, which consists not only in helping students to acquire knowledge, but also in helping them to « learn how to learn » and « learn how to be ».

10. The concept of « cross-curricular competency » refers to the set of competencies that students must acquire in each discipline outside their area of concentration.

« *To quest for meaning....* »

« To quest » is an active verb. It suggests the idea of searching and researching, of putting various elements together to form a consistent and durable whole. The framework constructed in this program is oriented toward the search for meaning in life, one based on the spiritual, moral and religious experience of the students. This exercise is meant to help them in their quest for identity and happiness. Through it, students are encouraged to act with hope in their hearts and to take up the challenges that each day presents on their path of growth.

Fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds already possess a varied stock of spiritual, moral and religious knowledge and experience, which has been transmitted to them by their families, schools and churches, and by the surrounding culture as found in their neighbourhoods, recreational activities, newspapers, music, etc. This knowledge and experience are basic elements that can contribute to the search for meaning in life. This search is forever incomplete, and the students are encouraged to pursue it by studying the issues covered in this program. In doing so, they will consult sources of information that are likely to be of help in their search, and that will help them in supplementing and evaluating what they have learned. Thus the competency covered in the « quest for meaning » leads students to reconsider, to reevaluate and rearticulate their spiritual, moral and religious experiences by combining their discoveries with what they already know.

«by studying the way they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life.... »

Fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds sometimes ask questions like : « What's this good for? » or « Why do I need this? » These questions express their difficulty with some task they are required to do, or the trouble they may have understanding how it could be useful in their lives. On other occasions, these questions express young people's apathy before the realities of the world they live in. Often, these expressions subtly convey their quest for meaning in difficult day-to-day situations. Sometimes, they express their struggle with existential questions. Fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds are becoming more aware of the relationships that bind them to the world, evil and suffering, symbolic language and life. These universal realities are bound up with their spiritual, moral and religious experiences. Thus the competency expressed as « to quest for » will be acquired in studying these four themes and the issues raised in connection with them.

«by focusing particularly on the Judeo-Christian tradition »

Four additional sources of information contribute to the acquisition of the general competency. These are : diversity, the inner life, action and the Judeo-Christian tradition. The choice of content related to these sources reflects the psycho-pedagogical capacity of 14- and 15-year-olds and their current social reality. Exploration of the theme of « diversity » will enable students to become aware that other religions and cultures throw light on the existential questions they are confronted with. Students will be able to see how the paths they suggest are unique and complement each other. Scientific knowledge will sometimes be applied to the question of the inner life, helping students to become aware of the profound and intimate paths that people embark upon in their search for meaning through the way they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life. Exploring « action », students will discover that it is through the desire to act and to make solid commitments that people express their search for meaning and bear witness to the moral values that inspire them. Finally, the

Judeo-Christian tradition will play a key role in this search. Various Christian doctrinal material and biblical texts will be used to illuminate diverse aspects of the problems raised.

Specific Competencies

In the program, the general competency is divided into specific competencies. These, which reflect a particular aspect of the experience of 14- and 15-year-olds, enable them to acquire a knowledge of the Bible, and to adopt attitudes and develop skills which they can use. The following table presents the specific competencies of the four thematic sections of the program.

Table 1 - THEMATIC SECTIONS AND SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

THEMES ¹¹	SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES ¹²
Section 2 The World	Students are able to distinguish, from among various perceptions of the world, the ones that best direct them in their quest for meaning.
Section 3 Evil and Suffering	Students are able to discern, in the experience of evil and suffering, paths to liberation and salvation that direct them in their quest for meaning.
Section 4 Symbols	Students are able to interpret symbols from the world of religion in order to direct themselves in their quest for meaning.
Section 5 Life	Students are able to recognize, in human and religious experience, guideposts that direct them in their quest for meaning.

11. The present sequence of thematic sections was chosen for pedagogical reasons, and for theological consistency. If they so desire, teachers can deal with a number of themes at the same time, since the issues they raise are all closely related. In addition, Section 4 (*Symbols*) could serve as a basis for teaching the other three themes.

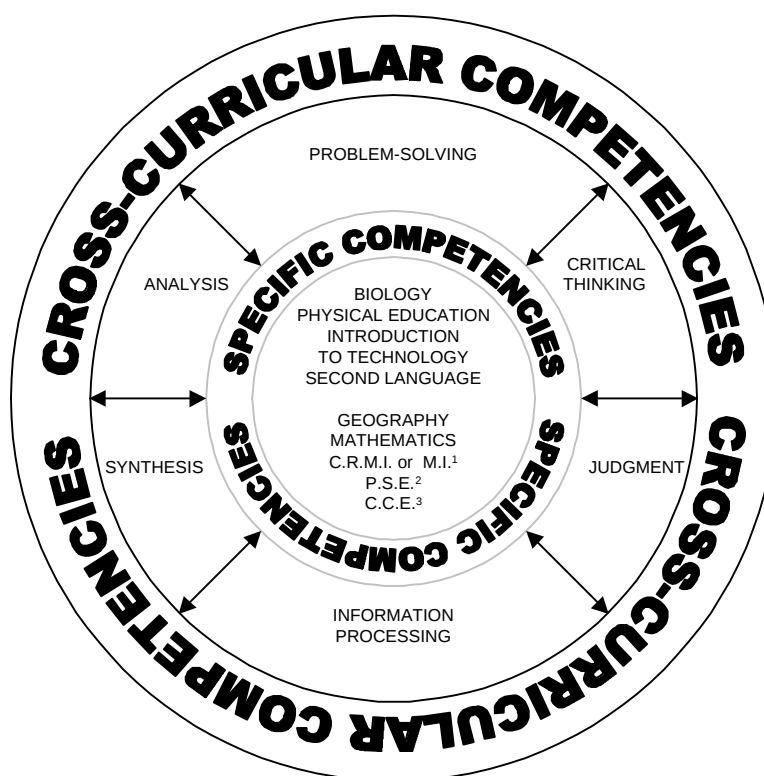
12. Sections 1 and 6, respectively, the introductory and closing chapters of the program. They are not included in this table because they are not designed to promote the acquisition of specific competencies.

Cross-Curricular Competencies

Like other programs, the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program enables students to acquire cross-curricular competencies which, as the name suggests, can be used in all subjects or school activities.

The following diagram shows how the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program contributes to the acquisition of cross-curricular competencies.

**Diagram 1 - CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AND MORAL INSTRUCTION
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES**



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1. Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction or Moral Instruction
 2. Personal and Social Education
 3. Career Choice Education

The wide range of learning activities proposed in this program enables students to have a better understanding of themselves. They discover their richness and potential, increase their self-esteem, develop their ability to live with others and cultivate feelings of competency and satisfaction in the performance of tasks. Throughout the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction course, they are given many opportunities to better understand their environment, to live in harmony with it, and to use it in a responsible manner. Emphasis is also placed on the students' interest in reading and writing, as well as on their ability to communicate orally. They are given many opportunities to acquire a knowledge of certain methods such as information retrieval and processing, time and work management, planning, using logical reasoning, problem-solving and decision-making.

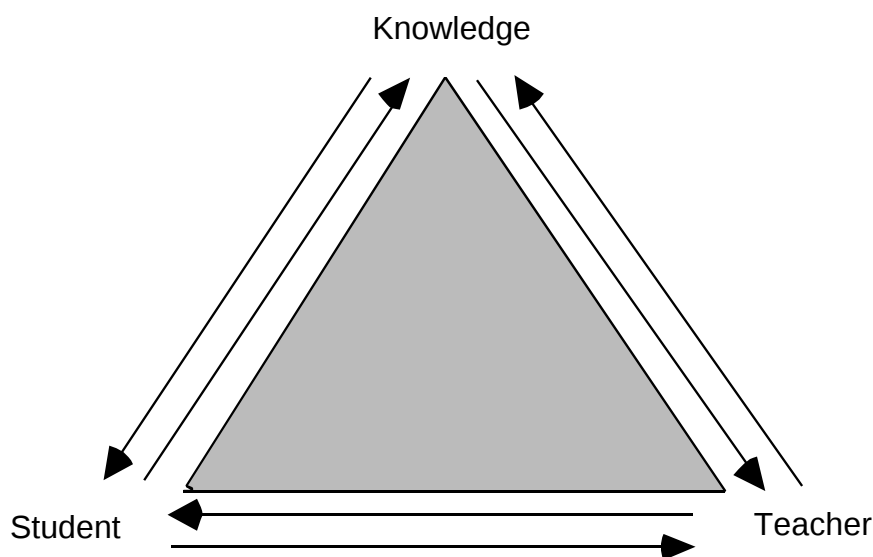
By participating in a wide variety of tasks, the students can satisfy their intellectual curiosity, sharpen their desire for accuracy, develop their appreciation of team work and team spirit, show respect for others, accept differences, acquire perseverance, desire to produce good work and demonstrate intellectual rigour.

The program helps students to acquire skills relative to cognitive processes such as analysis, synthesis and judgment. It helps them to connect what they learn in school with what they learn outside school. In the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction class, the students are also made aware of the values founded on the Judaeo-Christian tradition, as well as values transmitted by the media. They are given the opportunity to identify the moral behaviours that are compatible with the values they favour for themselves. Other factors taken into consideration include the exercise of critical thinking skills and the adoption of attitudes and skills based on a recognition of the rights and responsibilities of all. Finally, the students are encouraged to undertake projects that stimulate their sense of responsibility and solidarity. This program, like other programs, helps students to obtain a better understanding of the world in which they live, and of the role they are expected to play in it.

4. THE LEARNING PROCESS

In this program, learning is conceived of as a process of inner change that fosters the development of the student's personality. Here, learning is based on a process which brings students, teachers and ideas together in a dynamic interaction. Students are considered to be the main agents of their own development, and are constantly encouraged to take part in activities so that they can acquire the competencies they need and evaluate what they have learned. Given their knowledge and skills and their privileged relationship with the students, teachers play an essential role with respect to the competencies that the latter are expected to acquire. Presenting a knowledge of religious matters in a dynamic and appealing manner can stimulate the student's personal growth. The following diagram represents the dynamic interaction of the three essential elements of the learning process.

Diagram 2 - THE LEARNING PROCESS



The Stages of the Learning Process

The learning process developed in each section of the program is broken down into three distinct yet related stages : preparation, activation and integration. It is through these stages that the students gradually acquire the competencies.

Preparation

This stage places students in the learning situation. At this point, they become acquainted with the specific competency to be acquired, attempt to grasp its scope and significance, express what they know and think about it, and identify the existential and Biblical experiences it refers to and the issues it raises. The students also indicate which aspects of their lives they will be examining relative to this competency.

The students become acquainted with the task they will have to carry out in the context of the learning activities. By asking themselves how it can be useful to them in their daily lives, the students will be motivated to pursue their learning. They subsequently plan their work in terms of this task, anticipating the strategies likely to help them attain their goal.

By presenting the competency to be acquired and attempting to help students grasp its scope and significance as well as the issues it raises; by promoting reflection, explaining the task to be accomplished, and by motivating students and informing them about the resources available, the teacher creates the best possible conditions for learning. He/she functions as both an initiator and catalyst.

Activation

The students gradually acquire the specific competency targeted at this stage and begin to use certain cognitive and metacognitive strategies¹³ pertaining to the task at hand. They manage their work and environment, consult the available resources, discuss their achievements and problems, seek solutions to the issues and questions raised in the Preparation stage, broaden and examine their perceptions, and verify what they have learned.

The teacher functions as both a facilitator and guide by having the students reiterate the objective they are pursuing and the competency they have set out to acquire, by explaining the strategies required to carry out such a task, by helping students to implement such strategies and to manage their work, by pointing out their achievements and by paying particular attention to students in difficulty.

Integration

This stage enables the students to go back over the learning situation in terms of the problems raised at the outset. They confirm what they have learned, particularly in relation to these questions, and explain how and why they learned what they did. They also highlight their strengths and weaknesses with regard to the strategies used, and seek ways they might use to overcome such problems if they had to use these strategies again. The students also use what they have learned in other situations, in matters pertaining, for example, to their own experiences or to those of others. They express what they think and feel about the competencies they have acquired, and indicate how these competencies might be useful in other circumstances.

The teacher's role as integrator is to encourage the students to review the learning situation, to confirm what they have learned, apply it in other situations and indicate how it is useful.

13. The cognitive strategies cover the entire set of tasks that enable the students to learn what they know, e.g., how to solve problems and make decisions, use critical thinking, apply a method for exploring the Bible, and processing information. The metacognitive strategies cover the entire set of tasks by which the students evaluate themselves or question their cognitive strategies. Examples of such strategies include the self-evaluation grids as well as all the ways they confirm what they have learned.

Table 2 - THE STAGES IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

The Teacher	The Students
STAGE ONE : PREPARATION	
- identifies the competency to be acquired. - has the students relate what they know about the competency and the individual and group experiences to which it pertains. - encourages the students to ask questions and defines a range of issues for discussion. - motivates the students and introduces them to the task to be carried out. The teacher functions as a CATALYST in the learning process.	- become acquainted with the competency to be acquired and attempt to determine its scope and significance. - relate what they know about the competency and the experiences to which it refers. - formulate their questions and define a range of issues for discussion. - become acquainted with the task to be carried out and attempt to see how it could be useful in daily life. The students PREPARE for the learning process.
STAGE TWO : ACTIVATION	
- has the students reiterate the competency to be acquired and the task to be carried out. - explains the learning strategies that students can use to solve their problems. - guides and encourages the students in their studies and helps them to manage their work. - pays particular attention to students in difficulty. The teacher functions as a FACILITATOR in the learning process.	- know how to express the competency in their own words. - ensure that they understand the strategy to be followed, i.e. can explain it in their own words. - manage their work, as well as the resources available to them; seek possible answers to initial questions; examine their perceptions; verify what they have learned. The students IMPLEMENT the learning process.
STAGE THREE : INTEGRATION	
- asks the students to express what they have learned (discoveries, answers to questions, issues). - asks the students to relate how it affects their personal lives. - asks the students to use the competency they have acquired in one other life situation. The teacher functions as an INTEGRATOR in the learning process.	- confirm what they have learned in relation to the initial issues, explain how and why they learned what they did, and how they feel about the task they have carried out. - say how the competency could be useful to them. - apply the competency they have acquired to one other life situation (their own or someone else's). The students INTEGRATE the learning process.

The Learning Process and the Development of Moral Judgment

The second guiding principle shows how this program contributes to the student's moral development. Each of the three stages in the learning process enables the teacher to help the students acquire the skills associated with the use of their moral judgment.

Thus, within each thematic section, the preparation stage gives the teacher an opportunity to make the students aware of different issues or situations that call upon them to act. This stage also enables the teacher to help the students grasp what they have to lose or gain by their behaviour.

During the activation stage the teacher, using the four sources of information to be explored, invites the students to identify positive attitudes and values that human beings can adopt when dealing with the issues or situations outlined during the first stage. The teacher also asks the students to make judgments pertaining to negative attitudes and values that have harmful repercussions on the individual or society's well-being.

Finally, at the integration stage, the students envisage solutions to the issues and situations studied as well as actions for dealing with them.

In each of the four thematic sections, the part on **The Development of Moral Judgment** provides ways for the students to acquire or develop the following moral skills : seeing, discerning, judging and acting.

The Learning Process and Class Management

The learning process outlined in this program influences the way in which Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction classes are conducted.

Material Resources Management

To help students acquire the entire range of specific and cross-curricular competencies mentioned above, the class can be treated as a laboratory equipped with an array of technical and teaching services¹⁴. These resources could, for example, be grouped according to kind in areas where students could have easy access to them. They could include, among other things¹⁵, bibles, dictionaries, periodicals, books, a globe and maps, along with a blackboard, a screen, an overhead projector, a bulletin board for displaying students' works, a tape recorder and computers. Finally, a diagram showing the work to be completed over the short and long term at home and in class could be very useful for both teaching and learning.

14. Obviously such an arrangement is greatly facilitated when the teacher has a single classroom for all groups at the same level.

15. The technical materials referred to here include such things as felt markers, crayons, poster board, scissors, transparencies, construction paper, adhesive tape, thumb tacks, etc.

Human Resources Management

Without being exclusive, each stage in the learning process draws upon particular activities that affect the management of human resources in class, i.e. the students and teachers, as well as other resource people who could eventually contribute to the class such as pastoral animators, teachers in other subject areas or other invited guests.

During the preparation stage there is greater emphasis on individual and group activities. The students' input (questions, comments, clarifications, worries, etc.), like that of the teachers', must be acknowledged as an original contribution to the progress of the group. This must be maintained throughout the process. Resource people could also set up a learning context to motivate the students.

During the activation stage, group activities at the beginning and end of each period are required so that the teacher and students can go over what is to be done, or what has just been accomplished. The teacher explains the cognitive and metacognitive strategies to be used. This stage essentially involves supervised and supported teamwork that fosters autonomy, responsibility and cooperation among the students. Also, during this stage the teacher ensures that those students who seem capable of helping the others are given the opportunity to do so.

The integration phase covers individual and group activities : reports, class presentations, evaluation, etc. Individual activities make it possible to evaluate the individual's learning. Various people from the community could be invited to share their experiences relating to a human situation described in a particular section. On the basis of these experiences, the students could use what they learned in the implementation stage.

5. THE EVALUATION OF LEARNING

The evaluation of learning is an essential aspect of the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program. It enables teachers to monitor the students' progress so that they can help them to see where they stand in the learning process. It also provides an opportunity for teachers to determine the effectiveness of their teaching methods.

The Aims of Educational Evaluation

Pedagogical evaluation is designed to evaluate everything that students must learn in order to acquire the specific competencies of the program. It must be applied not only to the knowledge specific to the program, but also to the attitudes and skills inherent in the learning process in which the students demonstrate the competencies they have acquired, or are in the process of acquiring.

The Modalities of Evaluation

There are two major types of evaluation, formative evaluation and summative evaluation. The first, aimed at providing direct educational assistance, furnishes teachers and students with information on the learning acquired throughout the teaching-learning process. Summative evaluation, on the other

hand, is used to gather information for certification purposes, i.e., for promoting students to a higher level. Formative evaluation is favoured for this program, given the philosophy underlying the competencies it fosters. Whether summative evaluation is carried out or not, is entirely up to the individual schools. If it is carried out, the measurement instruments must, however, enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Interactive Formative Evaluation

Interactive formative evaluation takes place throughout the three stages of the learning process. It makes it possible to monitor the students' progress, and to determine whether they are on the way to accomplishing what is expected of them. It involves paying particular attention to their behaviour, questions, actions and errors in order to readjust, if necessary, the planned learning activities and strategies. Careful observation of what takes place in class is still the most appropriate basis for making a judgment.

Formative Evaluation at the End of Each Section

At the end of the learning process applied in this section, formative evaluation makes it possible to verify, on the basis of competency indicators, whether the students have attained the expected competency. This evaluation takes account of what the students have learned, and considers their capacity to use it in any circumstance. It also makes it possible to modify, where necessary, future activities in order to facilitate the students' progress.

Various measurement instruments can be used for this purpose. They include open-ended questions, written compositions, drawings, posters, oral presentations, self-evaluation scales, role-playing, round table discussions, synoptic tables, etc.

The Use of Results

Given the personal nature of the education envisioned in the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program, a student's results should not be used to compare him/her with other students, but only with the stated behavioural indicators. At the end of each section the teacher allows the students to review their results in a personal and critical fashion (to determine their degree of success and to decide on measures they can take to improve their performance. The parents are also informed of their child's results, and on this basis can assist in their child's progress. The Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program encourages students to achieve their maximum potential.

6. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS AND OTHER PROGRAMS

This program is related, on the one hand, to the entire range of Secondary III subjects and, on the other hand, to the other secondary Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction programs.

Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction and Other Subjects

Like other subjects, Secondary III Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction enables the students to acquire cross-curricular competencies. Furthermore, the learning process favoured in this program is very similar to the approach adopted for all school subjects.

Various aspects of this program's content complement those found in other courses dealing with personal development. Also, this program is closely related to the Secondary III English program, since it stresses reading, writing and communication skills developed in that program.

Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction in Secondary School

This program, like Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction programs for other years of secondary school, makes use of specific competencies and teaching/learning scenarios to help students acquire the six essential elements of learning defined by the Comité catholique in its recommendations to the ministère de l'Éducation¹⁶.

7. HOW THE PROGRAM FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE OVERALL CONTEXT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

This program contributes to the religious education of young people, but does not cover all aspects of such education. Overall, religious education is mainly intended to acquaint students with the essential features of the Judeo-Christian tradition, to help them engage in a serious search for meaning in life and to understand their spiritual, moral and religious experience.

This form of instruction may be complemented at the secondary level by pastoral animation services designed to enable students to deepen, express and live their faith.

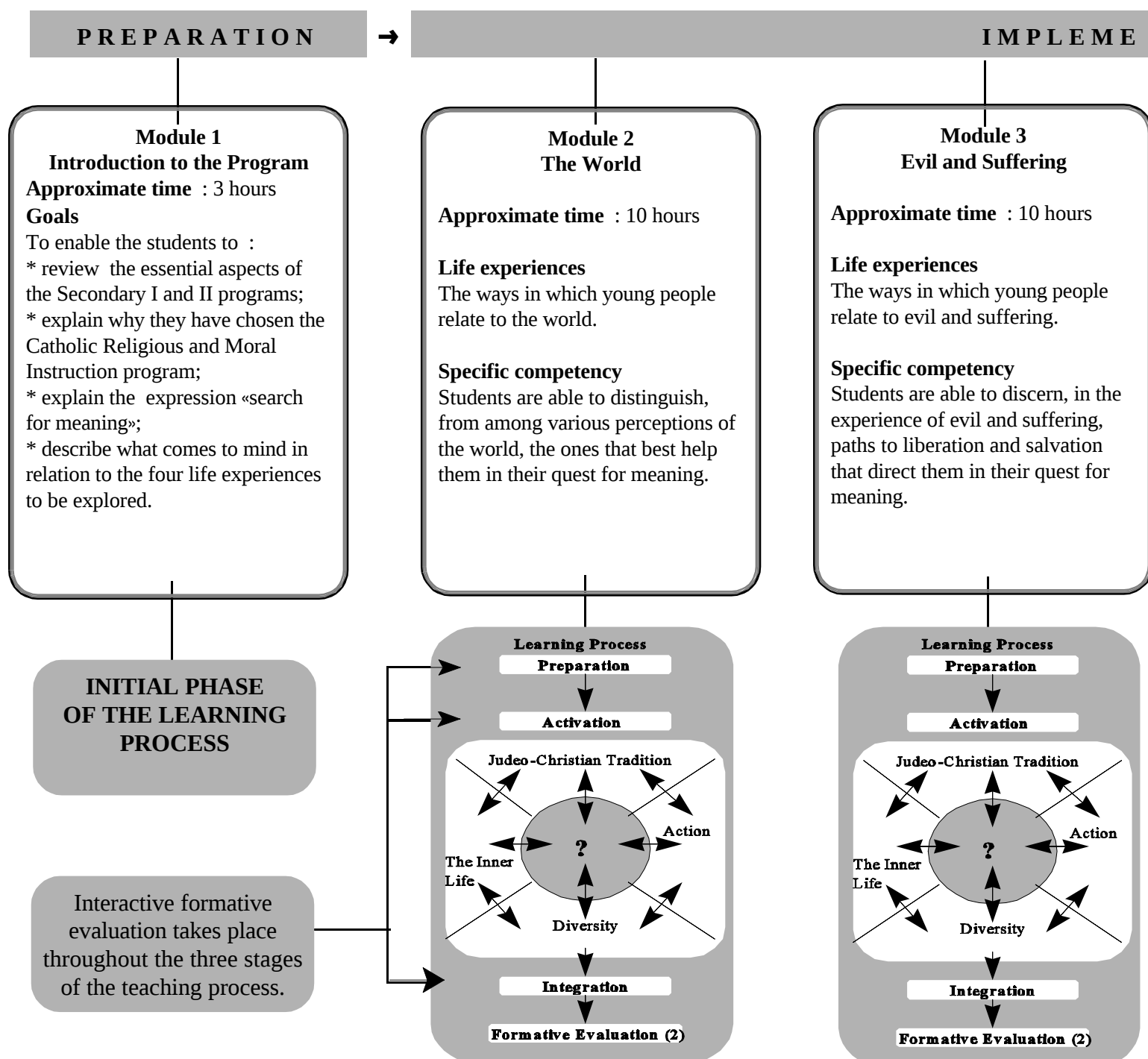
8. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The following table presents the main building blocks of the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program. Approximately 4 of the 50 hours set aside for this program are left open for exploring contemporary issues and making sense of them in light of the Christian message.

16. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Comité catholique. *Avis au ministre de l'Éducation. L'enseignement moral et religieux catholique au secondaire. Pour un enseignement mieux adapté aux jeunes et aux contextes actuels* (Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Direction des communications, Juin 1991) pp. 7-10.

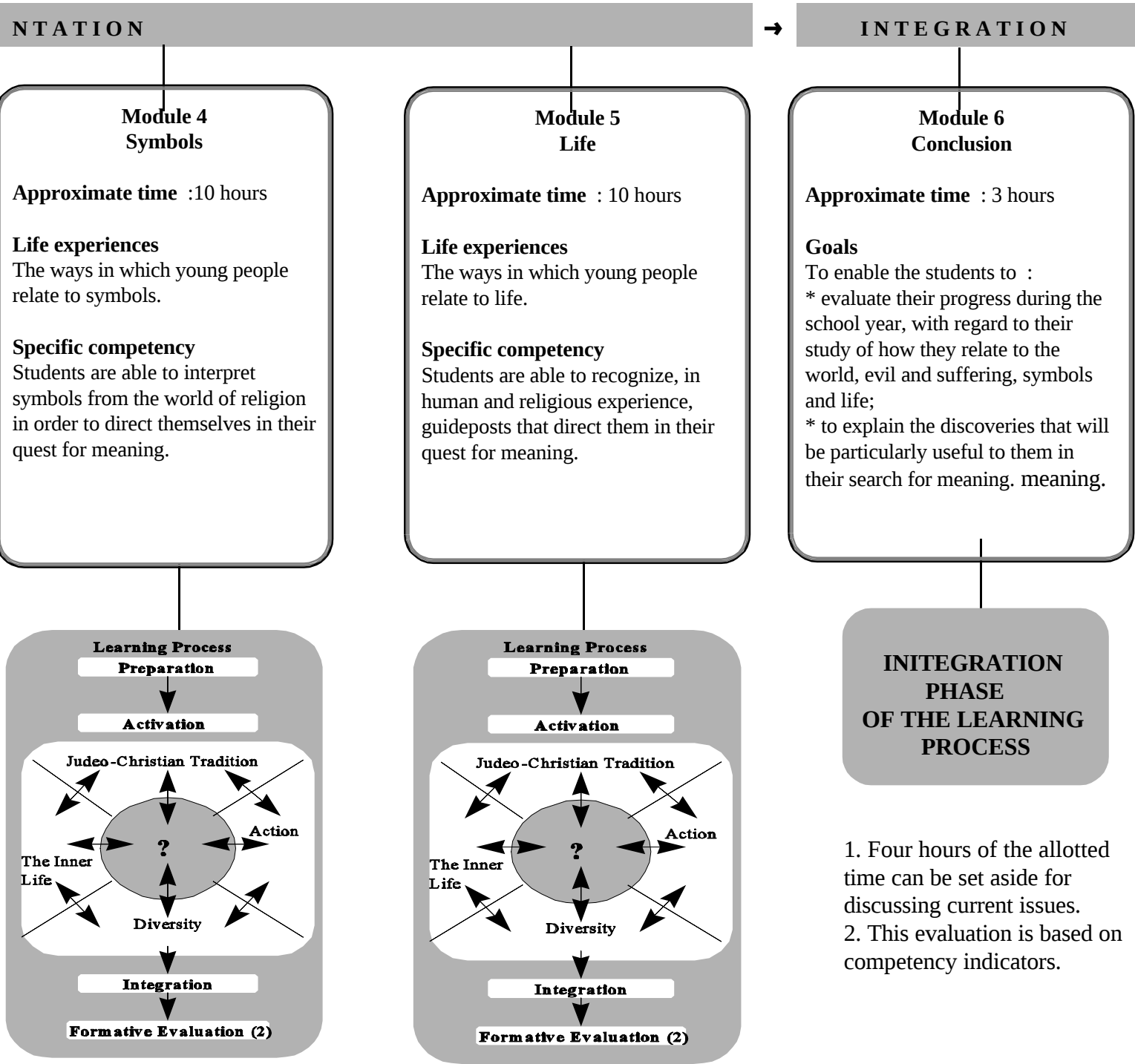
Table 3 – THE STRUCTURE

GENERAL
TO QUEST FOR MEANING BY STUDYING HOW THEY RELATE
WHILE FOCUSING PARTICULARLY ON THE



OF THE PROGRAM

COMPETENCY :
TO THE WORLD, EVIL AND SUFFERING, SYMBOLS AND LIFE
JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION (Time : 50 hours)¹



9. USING THE PROGRAM

The Introductory and Closing Modules

The introductory module (1)

This module allows the teacher to go over what the students have learned in previous Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction courses, to explain how the current one is organized, and to outline the teaching material required for the development and acquisition of competencies. It also provides an opportunity for students to explain what motivated them to choose this program.

The closing module (6)

This module enables the students to evaluate the progress they have made, and provides them with an opportunity to explain what they have learned and how it might be useful in their daily lives.

The Thematic Modules (2, 3, 4 and 5)

Each of these four modules is divided into six parts. Certain concepts necessary for acquiring the competency are explained at the beginning of each module.

1- The psychosocial profile of the student

This section presents a profile of 14- and 15-year-olds in relation to the theme being covered. It outlines how this theme can help them to meet the challenges facing them as they grow and attempt to become better human beings. The content of each module, whether theological or otherwise, has been chosen to reflect the psychosocial characteristics described in it.

2- The specific competency

This section states the specific competency to be acquired. Here one also finds the main elements (problems to be covered, research to be carried out, and students' answers) that must be dealt with in the learning process in order to facilitate acquisition of this competency.

3- The development of moral judgment

This section provides students with opportunities for developing moral skills throughout the three stages of the learning process.

4- Information conducive to the acquisition of competencies

This section explains the program's compulsory learning content. The notes on this learning content can be enriched or adapted to the particular aptitudes or needs of each class. These notes were prepared using four sources of information : the Judeo-Christian tradition, the inner life, action and the experience of diversity. The sources of information can be taken up together.

When dealing with these sources, teachers must pay special attention to the students' questions on existential matters. Moreover, teachers must ensure that students apply a true process of discernment. In short, these sources of information should not be employed in a bookish manner, but should be used to help the students to acquire a true religious education¹⁷.

5- Overview

This table sums up the elements required in planning instruction for each module. It contains the following elements :

A) Competencies

These competencies state the general competency of the program, the specific competency for each module and the life experience to be explored. The essential elements of the four sources of information are also given, along with the moral values and attitudes to be covered in each section and the approximate time devoted to each.

B) Issues

Developed on the basis of the questions raised during the preparation stage, these issues translate the concerns of the students and are the *raison d'être* of the study being carried out. They motivate students to work on the learning activities presented to them.

C) Learning Content

The compulsory content listed here can be enriched. The distribution shown for the first two stages of the program is optional. The biblical references that appear in the table are also optional, aside from those written in bold letters. The choice of learning content is meant to respond to the questions of young people about existential matters, while taking into account their psychopedagogical capacities : comprehension, analysis, synthesis, judgment, etc. This content does not exhaust all potential avenues of response to the problem in question. It is merely a realistic contribution to the religious education of young people.

D) Competency Indicators

These indicators define the skills that students must gradually acquire throughout the three stages of the teaching process. They serve as the basis for the measurement instruments used to carry out evaluations within each specific section.

17. For more on this subject, see Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Comité catholique, *L'évaluation du vécu confessionnel : L'école catholique, un choix éducatif et culturel* (Québec : Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation, 1996), pp. 25-26.

6- Possible applications of the learning process

This section provides suggestions for applying the learning process throughout its three stages. A number of avenues for formative evaluation are also provided.

Bibliography

This section includes a list of works used in drafting the present program. Reference works useful to teachers are also suggested.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM BY MODULE

MODULE 1 : INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

Program Goals

This module introduces the program by means of the following four goals :

1. To enable the students to review the essential aspects of the Secondary I and II programs.

By means of this review, the teacher acknowledges the learning carried out by the students in Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction programs during the preceding two years. He/she also points out that what the students have learned can be used over the course of the school year. This review can also be a motivating factor for the students.

2. To enable the students to explain why they chose Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction.

By explaining why they chose Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, the students give reasons for their choice and see where they stand in relation to the program. This discussion provides teachers with an opportunity to motivate students and to adapt their strategies to suit the emerging class profile.

3. To enable the students to say what « quest for meaning » means to them¹⁸.

In explaining what they understand by « quest for meaning », the students recognize that they are asking questions about existence and that this process of questioning plays a key role in their quest for personal identity and happiness. This exercise gives the teacher an opportunity to emphasize how important it is, in our daily lives, for us to take time, either alone or with others, to reflect on our experiences and to anticipate those yet in store for us.

4. To enable the students to express what they understand by the four life experiences to be explored : the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life.

The students are introduced to the four broad themes of the program. In order to stimulate their curiosity, they are encouraged to say what they think or know in general about the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life. They can put their individual opinions and questions in writing. This written work could be reviewed at the end of the school year.

18. See « General Orientations of the Program, » Section 3.1 (« The General Competency ») pp. 8-9.

Table 4 - MODULE 1

Introduction to the Program

Time : Approximately 3 hours

Goals	Learning Content	Indicators of Expected Behaviour¹⁹
To enable the students to review the essential aspects of the Secondary I and II programs.	• The broad themes of the Secondary I program (see the program currently in use) • The broad themes of the Secondary II program (see the program currently in use)	The students review the major themes of the Secondary I and II programs.
To enable the students to explain why they chose Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction.	• The reasons the students are taking the Secondary III Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program (personal interest, obligation, research, culture, desire to learn, desire to be with friends, personality of the teacher, etc.)	The students explain why they chose the Secondary III Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program.
To enable the students to express what « quest for meaning » means to them.	To « quest for meaning » means to find reasons or explanations for a situation, an event or a life experience; to accept ongoing questioning; to be open to questions and change; to undertake a dynamic process that motivates action, etc.	The students explain what they understand by the expression, « quest for meaning ».
To enable the students to express what they understand by the four life experiences to be explored : the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life.	The students' initial perceptions of the program's four themes : the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life.	The students express their perceptions and questions with respect to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life.

19. The behavioural indicators express visible behaviour which the teacher can observe in the students throughout the activities in the introductory section. These behaviours help the teacher to determine whether the students are attaining the objectives of this section. Since there is no attempt at this point to acquire a specific competency in the three steps of the learning process, « indicators of expected behaviour » is used instead of the expression, « competency indicators », which is used in the four thematic sections.

MODULE 2 : THE WORLD

THE WORLD

How 14- and 15-Year Olds Relate to the World

Fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds are at a stage in life where they are opening up to the world. They like to hang out with their friends, and are becoming familiar with the world of work. They often fantasize about travelling, and are increasingly conscious of the world's immensity. While acknowledging its grandeur and beauty, they are also able to see some of its more negative aspects, such as wars and the misery generated by natural catastrophes and environmental problems. For adolescents, the world is also the personal and social space that emerges from the web of human relations in which they seek to make a place for themselves.

Adolescents at this stage are fascinated by the infinity of the space that surrounds them. They are interested in scientific exploration aimed at revealing the origin and evolution of the cosmos, and are aware of humanity's attempts to penetrate the mystery of the universe. They often wonder where it comes from and where it is going, and are sometimes even led to say what they know about the subject during science exhibitions and fairs.

Adolescents are often particularly sensitive to the warnings of scientists and ecologists about the future of the world. They worry about pollution, the exploitation of natural resources and the depletion of the ozone layer, or about the extinction of certain species of animals. They often wonder about the Earth's chances for survival, and lay the blame for these problems on preceding generations, whom they hold responsible for the degraded state in which things have been handed down to them.

Young people's interest in the world often gives rise to existential questions, such as : Why am I here? How did the world get started? Was it created by God, or has it always existed? Is it a lost cause, or does it show signs of hope? Is its future in the hands of scientists, or is it subject to chance or the laws of the universe? How will it end—if, indeed, it must end some day? All of these questions are closely linked to their search for meaning in life, and represent a real challenge to growth.

This module looks at young people's relationship to the world, and at what its representation signifies in terms of challenge. By trying to answer the questions that the world poses for young people, one helps them to study the origin, evolution and purpose of the world, as well as the responsibility that human beings must constantly assume with respect to its future. The recourse to scientific, mythological and religious language enables them to develop an overall concept of the world and to become more aware of the role that they can play in it. In this module, students will discover the richness of the Judeo-Christian concept of the world, which is intimately linked with the history of a covenant between God, the eternal creator, and human beings, who draw from God the vital forces they require to participate in the work of creation.

The Specific Competency

The specific competency of this module is as follows :

Students are able to distinguish, from among various perceptions of the world, the ones that best direct them in their quest for meaning.

In the process of acquiring this competency, the students define what the world is to them. They also convey their opinions of the universe and the questions it raises for them. They become aware of the different types of language used by human beings to express their opinions. On this basis, the students are asked to formulate questions outlining the issues they encounter in this introduction. For example : I am in the world. Where did the world come from? Where is it going? What am I doing here?

Through the four additional sources of information mentioned above (i.e., diversity, the Judeo-Christian tradition, action, and the inner life), the students are asked to look for possible solutions to the issues raised. In using these sources of information, they discover certain scientific and mythological representations of the universe, and the one which Judeo-Christian tradition proposes for the origin and end of the world. The students become aware of the role and responsibility of human beings who are concerned with the quality of the environment and the future of the world. Moreover, they discover the feelings of fear, admiration, contemplation, fascination, hope and trusting courage that believers experience in their encounter with God the Creator. Little by little, their studies help them to grasp the meaning of the world and to understand the importance of the tasks they are called upon to perform.

At the end of the module, the students share what they have learned in their examination of the original questions. They also reformulate their concept of the world in light of the discoveries they have made.

The competency indicators are listed in Table 5, Module 2.

The Development of Moral Judgment

Throughout this module, and in each step of the teaching process, the teacher helps the students to acquire competencies related to the exercise of moral judgment.

In the preparatory stage, when the students share their questions and points of view, the teacher emphasizes situations concerning the future of the world (pollution, depletion of natural resources, etc.). They challenge the students in ways that help them grasp why it is important to assume responsibility for the physical and human environment.

During the activation phase the teacher, using the various sources of information, encourages the students to discern positive attitudes and values that human beings can adopt to ensure the survival

of the world. Examples of these would include respect for the resources placed at the students' disposal, their acceptance of their responsibility to make proper use of these resources, and the development of their sense of belonging to the cosmos. By bringing the students to this level of discernment, the teacher also enables them to evaluate the impact of negative values that threaten the future of the Earth.

During the integration stage, the teacher encourages the students to devise solutions to the problems raised, and to foster activities that will enable them to assume, from within their communities, their responsibility for the quality of the world both now and in the future.

Preliminary Remarks

Before undertaking a study of the different representations of the world, a number of preliminaries are in order, particularly with respect to the definition of certain concepts associated with the subject and with the types of language in which these representations are expressed.

The concepts of « world », « universe » and « cosmos » referred to in this module have specific meanings that, however, complement each other.

World : designates known realities such as the celestial bodies, Earth and its inhabitants.

Universe : designates everything that exists in time and space; when capitalized, it refers to the celestial bodies and the space in which they move.

Cosmos : designates both the world and the universe as an organized, harmonious whole.

Types of Language

The representations of the world covered in this module are described using three types of language, each of which translates some aspect of human experience in this world. These languages are not in opposition; on the contrary, each helps to clarify the others. In this way, they are useful in the search for truth.

Scientific language : This refers to the entire range of expressions or words employed by scientists in their representations of the universe and the cosmos. This language refers to the « what » and « how » of the realities being explored.

The language of the imagination : This refers to the entire range of words and expressions that human beings use to express their representations of the world, the universe and the cosmos. For this kind of language, one can adopt various literary styles : myth, poetry, fable, legends, history, parable, short story, etc.

The language of religion and faith : This language explains the why of existence. It draws largely upon the language of the imagination, composed of the entire range of words and expressions that human beings use to express their sense of the world and how they wish to orient their lives. It is

abundantly used in the Bible, where we see it employed to create images and symbols. It should be interpreted in accordance with the social, cultural and historical context of the authors.

Sources of Information Useful for Acquiring the Competency

Diversity

Students study the « Big Bang » theory and two mythological narratives. An examination of these sources will show how each, using its own specific language, has something to say about God, the world and human beings.

The « Big Bang » : A scientific theory

A scientific theory represents a way of thinking that is based on empirical evidence and logic. Being a methodological and synthesizing intellectual construction, it is applied to a particular field of study. A theory is valuable only insofar as it can be verified empirically. In this module, we will be dealing with a theory of the origin of the universe that is accepted by most scientists. This is the « Big Bang » theory.

According to the Big Bang theory, some fifteen billion years ago the powerful explosion of a tiny mass of energy brought the universe, as well as space and time, into being. The gradual cooling that followed apparently gave rise to galaxies, nebulae and other clusters of astral bodies. Since that time the universe has continued to expand. Some scientists have used the image of an inflating balloon whose surface points are drawing further and further away from each other and toward infinity with increasing speed. Other scientists think that the universe will eventually fold in on itself in one immense contraction, before finally attaining its critical mass.

While God is not discussed in scientific discourse, this does not mean that the existence of God is denied. As a matter of fact, the scientific theory precludes the hypothesis that the universe originated out of nothing. In the face of the macrocosm we call the universe, man appears as a microcosm, as one tiny component among others. Human beings are faced with the challenge of understanding the universe, so that they can eventually obtain a better sense of its beginnings and its future.

Accounts of creation

Rich and complex, myths are rooted in the most profound levels of human life and experience. They are an accurate and valid expression of what human beings feel when confronted with the great questions of existence. Like symbols, they make use of narrative to express an intangible reality. But they are more than simply matters of language or teaching. Some mythological narratives depict the element of mystery in human beings, while others attempt to provide a response to questions for which human beings have not found an answer. Still others are concerned with the mystery of the world or the universe, or touch upon higher powers. This module of the program deals with two mythological accounts of the world and creation. The first originates with the Babylonians, while the second is specific to one of Québec's indigenous peoples, the Huron-Wendat.

The Babylonian creation myth

The peoples of Mesopotamia developed a number of cosmogonies to explain the origins of the world. The most famous of these was entitled *Enuma elish*, which means « When on high ». This poem was recited during the Babylonian celebration of the New Year. The version that we know today goes back to 1100 B.C.E.(Before the Common Era)

According to this mythic narrative, everything began with primordial chaos. This was composed of fresh water under the Earth (Apsu) and salt water from the ocean (Tiamat). These two principles formed the matter out of which the gods were created. The union of two of these, Ea (the father) and Damkina (the mother) produced Marduk, the most powerful of all the gods. As the Lord of Babylon, Marduk fought and vanquished Tiamat. He then created the sky, stars, sun and moon, and set the duration of the year. When he had finished making the universe, he decided to devote himself to his masterwork : the human race. Created from the blood of a defeated god, humans were entrusted with the task of serving the gods. But because they came into being through the blood of a god stripped of his power, human beings bear within themselves malediction and death. Moreover, they are the playthings of cosmic forces, who have condemned them to a painful existence and future.

The mythological representation of the cosmos according to the Huron-Wendat

According to the Huron-Wendat, the world-sky that we see and under which we live resulted from a series of actions by supernatural beings whom they arranged in hierarchical order. These consisted of an unknowable and intangible great spirit and a number of semi-divine beings, both good and bad. It was said that sea animals, wishing to save a woman who had fallen from the sky, built an island on the back of the Great Turtle. Little by little, this island became a continent. While this was happening, the Great Turtle used lightning to create the sun, moon and stars. The first two of these became gods. Next, twins were born to the woman who was saved, or to her daughter. One of the twins was good and the other evil, and to these were attributed, respectively, the good and bad things of this world. Originally these twins were assigned the task of preparing the island for the coming of the human race. But then a duel broke out between them, and the evil twin was killed by his brother, who was unable afterwards to completely eliminate the traces of his sibling's evil deeds. Then the good twin called for the Huron, who was created warlike, like the sun and moon. After the twin had instructed the Huron in the laws and arts, he went off to where the sun rises and from there he has continued to regulate the seasons, control the harvests and protect his people. In Huron-Wendat mythology, it is said that human beings have no earthly task other than that of currying the favour of good spirits and conciliating evil spirits to avoid harm. It is also believed that the soul survives the body after death, when it descends to the subterranean world and, from there, embarks upon the Milky Way which leads it finally to a calm and distant resting place.

Judeo-Christian Tradition

The Bible contains a number of accounts of the origin, evolution and end of the world. These narratives, which make use of the language of worship and the imagination, express various conceptions of the world, God and human beings. While they do not constitute a scientific understanding of the origins and development of the world, they do give human beings a framework for reflecting on the following existential questions : What is the meaning of creation and history? Are human beings passive spectators of their lives, or do they have an active role to play? Who are we before God? Who is God?

IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

The biblical accounts of creation

The Book of Genesis contains two independent accounts of the creation of the world. The first account, found in Gen. 1.1-2.4a, compiled during the exile of the Hebrew people in Babylon (587-538 B.C.E.), was intended to counter the influence of Babylonian polytheistic creation myths and to convey the supremacy of the God of the Covenant over all other gods. In this narrative, God overcomes the primordial chaos and brings order to the universe, making it into a harmonious and balanced creation filled with richness and beauty. As the Creator, God puts in place the context (i.e. matter, nature and the law) in which he calls human beings into existence. God's creative Word is a call which culminates in the creation of man and woman in his own image and likeness. God places the world in their hands and calls upon them to participate in its evolution.

The account of creation found in Gen. 2.4b-3.24 deals mainly with the creation of the first human couple and with the environment in which they are called upon to live and work. This account, originally handed down by word of mouth, presents us with a creative God who is close to man and woman, and on whom all life depends. It goes on to say that the breath of God is what makes the human being into a living creature, who is also the only one capable of entering into intimate communion with the Creator. God entrusts this creature with a unique mission, that of looking after the Earth and cultivating it, and of living happily on it.

Together these narratives introduce us to the history of salvation, which, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, is closely linked to the Creation.

Creation and God's plan

When biblical authors talk about the origin of the world, their purpose is not to give a scientific explanation of the origin of the universe but to reveal the point at which the history of salvation begins. The creation of the world is considered as a dynamic act of God, not as something that has been accomplished once and for all. Indeed, it is ongoing. God does not exhaust the creative capacity in this one act, but he continues to create and to draw closer to human beings down through the course of history. For example, God chooses a people (Isa. 43.1-7) and delivers them from the hands of the Egyptians (Exod. 14). Also, God intervenes on their behalf with hostile monarchs (Jer. 27.4-7; Isa. 45.12ff).

The Hebrew Scriptures state that there is an end and purpose to human history. Its beginning and end can be explained in the light of its ongoing evolution. Indeed, God's creative action is directed toward the conversion of hearts and minds that will lead people to their final and unending salvation (Jer. 31.35ff). God will restore the land to harmony by cleansing people of their sins (Ezek. 36.26-35) and create a new heaven and new Earth (Isa. 65.17; 66.22ff).

IN THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES

The concept of God the Creator holds an essential place in the Christian Scriptures.

When God created the universe by means of the Word (2 Cor.4.6), God called into being what did not exist (Rom. 4.17). God continued creation by giving life to its creatures (Acts 17.22-31). He created the world and everything in it (Rev. 10.6; Acts 14.15; 17.24), and everything exists by him and for him (1Cor. 8.6; Rom. 11.36; Col. 1.16ff). Thus all creatures are good and everything that comes from God is pure. It is for this reason that human beings must respect the natural order of things.

The Creator by whom all things exist (1Cor. 8.6), and in whom they subsist, is fully revealed in the person of Jesus Christ (Col. 1.16ff). The Word through whom all life and light came into being (John 1.3ff.), who became flesh to dwell among us, is realized in the resurrected Christ, who brings the doctrine of Creation to its fulfilment. The resurrection of Jesus bestows meaning on human life and constitutes a new way of being in the world. The resurrected Christ inaugurates the new creation announced in the Hebrew Scriptures (2 Cor. 5-17). History is henceforth oriented in this direction, until the coming of the heavenly Jerusalem, when God will create a new heaven and Earth (Rev. 21-22) and the entire universe will be transfigured. In their endeavours as creative individuals co-responsible for the future of the world, Christians turn for guidance to Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life (John. 14.6).

Action

Christians are not merely passive observers in this world, but active participants in their own destinies. They have an undeniable responsibility toward the physical and human environment. They cannot remain indifferent to the effects of human activity on nature, or to the catastrophes these may engender. The Christian moral code steers them toward action aimed at protecting the environment. They must, therefore, adopt practices that do not upset the balance of nature. The injunction (Gen. 1.28) to « fill the earth and subdue it » must be interpreted as fostering a wise and responsible use of resources, rather than as advocating an aggressive and devastating form of domination.

The Inner Life

The world has been giving us warning signs (cataclysms, changes of weather patterns, ecological disasters, misuse of resources) which have given rise to feelings of fear and outrage. The biblical concept of creation encourages us to go beyond such things. It calls upon believers to cultivate a sense of admiration, fascination and awareness before God's creative work (Ps. 19.1-7; 89.6-15; 104). It enjoins them to have confidence in the future of the world and in their own creative abilities, and

to live in joy (1 Pet. 4.13) because God, the same God who made the heavens and the earth, promises salvation (Ps. 121.2). It also invites them to participate in God's plan as co-creators, displaying boldness and courage and demonstrating in practical ways their sense of belonging to the cosmos.

TABLE 5 - MODULE 2

- **General competency** : To quest for meaning by studying how they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life while focusing particularly on the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- **Specific competency** : Students are able to distinguish, from among various perceptions of the world, the ones that best direct them in their quest for meaning.
- **Life experience** : 14- to 15-year-olds and their relationship with the world.
- **Judeo-Christian tradition** : The Judeo-Christian story of creation.
- **Diversity** : The origin of the world according to the « Big Bang » theory, and Babylonian and Huron-Wendat mythology.
- **The Inner Life** : God's creative project calls upon believers to go beyond the feelings of fear and outrage they experience when faced with the future of the world; it invites them to adopt feelings and attitudes of admiration, contemplation, awareness, confidence, courage, joy and hope.
- **Action** : God's creative project steers Christians toward involvement in environmental activities aimed at maintaining the balance of nature.
- **Moral values and attitudes** : respect, responsibility and a sense of belonging to the cosmos.
- **Approximate duration** : 10 hours

TOPIC	CONTENT	COMPETENCY INDICATORS
	Step 1 : Preparation	
	• The students' ideas and questions about the world • The definition of the concepts of world, universe and cosmos. • The types of language used to represent the world : scientific, imaginative, religious (similarities and differences).	• The students express their ideas and questions about the world. • The students give their definitions of the world, the universe and the cosmos. • The students distinguish three types of language used to convey their representations of the world.
	Step 2 : Activation	
	Diversity • The scientific theory of the «Big Bang» (scientific language : the cause, origin and future of the universe; the role of human beings, etc.). • The Babylonian and Huron-Wendat mythologies (the language of the imagination; the origin and future of the universe; presence of divinities; role of human beings, etc.). Judeo-Christian Tradition • The Judeo-Christian story of the creation of the world (creative and religious language, God the Creator and God's plan, accounts of the Creation and the world; role of human beings). (Old Testament :	• The students review the essential elements of the scientific theory and mythological accounts of the origin of the universe. • The students convey the essential elements of the Judeo-Christian story of the creation of the world.

I AM IN THE WORLD - Where did the world come from? - Where is it heading? - What am I doing here?	Gen. 1-3.24; Ps. 148.5; Isa. 43.1-7; Exod. 14; Jer. 27.4-7; Isa. 45.12ff; Jer. 31.55ff; Isa. 65.17; 66.22ff; Ezek. 36.26-35; etc.). (New Testament : 2 Cor. 4.6; Rom. 4.17; Acts 17.22-31; Rev. 10.6; Acts 14.15; 17.24; 1 Cor. 8.6; Col. 1.16ff; John. 1.3ff; 2 Cor. 5.17; Rev. 21-22; etc.). Action - Christians, inspired by Gen. 1.28, take environmental action which has an impact on the present and future of the world. The Inner life - Feelings experienced following natural disasters, ecological catastrophes or the misuse of resources (fear, outrage, etc.). - Feelings of Christians with respect to God’s creative plan (admiration, wonder, fascination, gratitude, courage, hope, a sense of belonging in the cosmos, etc.). (Ps 19,1-7; 89,6-15; 104; 1 Pet. 4,13; Ps 121,2; etc.).	- The students describe actions associated with a responsible approach to the environment. - The students list feelings which may be experienced following natural disasters, ecological catastrophes or the misuse of resources. - The students express the feelings experienced by Christians with respect to God’s creative plan.
	Step 3 : Integration	
		- The students reformulate the concept of the world that sheds the most light on their search for meaning in life. - The students explain how they could improve conditions in the world now and in the future. - The students express their feelings when experiencing the universe.
	Evaluation for this module	
	Formative evaluation for this module is based on measurement instruments and activities designed to take into account the competency indicators.	

Possible Applications of the Learning Process

Preparation (about 2 hours)

- The students prepare a brief text in which they convey what they know about the world (its origin and purpose and the role of human beings).
- There is a preliminary study based on initial discussion : definition of concepts of « world », « universe », « cosmos », and use of examples to further define the three types of languages that human beings use to represent the world : scientific, imaginary and religious language.
- The teacher states the competency to be acquired and clarifies its meaning and scope.
- A topic emerges from discussion of the following questions and reflections : I am in the world? Where did the world come from? Where is it going? What am I doing here?
- The teacher explains the group task to be carried out during the activation stage.
- The students relate their understanding of the task to be accomplished, as well as its ultimate purpose.

Activation (about 5 hours)

- The students review the competency to be acquired and the task to be accomplished.
- The teacher gives a step-by-step explanation of cognitive and metacognitive strategies to be used in performing the learning task.

Essential elements of the learning task

- 1- Reading and analysis of documentation on the four sources of information, using a grid for recording results.
 - 2- Preparation of texts and posters on the students' discoveries, which will be presented in class during a simulated planetary summit.
- The students work as a team to perform the task, using the teaching and technical resources (team support, verification of achievements, etc.) available in the classroom.

Integration (about 2 hours)

- The students present the discoveries they made while working as a team.
- In light of their discoveries, the students review the questions prompted by the original issue, as well as those that helped make it a topic for discussion. At this point, the teacher clarifies any aspects of the compulsory content that may not have been sufficiently covered.

- Working individually, the students reformulate their ideas of the world in light of the discoveries and the group presentation. They also determine what they can do to improve the world in the present and future.
- Working individually, the students explain how the competency they have learned will be useful in their daily lives.

Evaluation (about 1 hour)

This involves verification of the competency using a questionnaire or a new grid for this purpose.

MODULE 3 : EVIL AND SUFFERING

EVIL AND SUFFERING

How 14- and 15-Year Olds Relate to Evil and Suffering

By the time they reach the ages of 14 and 15, young people have become more aware of the evil and suffering in the world. They perceive its existence through various factors such as the illness or death of someone dear to them, the separation or divorce of their parents, the depression of a friend, unjust situations, violent words or behaviour, vandalism or the lack of understanding they feel from those around them. And this awareness of evil and suffering does not stop with their own environment, but extends to the world they live in. They know from newspapers, radio and television that wars, murder, numerous social injustices, torture, the spread of diseases and widespread famine have a painful effect on the lives of many people around the globe. Also, they realize that they, too, can cause evil and suffering. Deep-seated feelings of hatred and rejection may lead them to hurt others by aggressive behaviour or hurtful comments: vandalism, hitting and harassment are only a few examples. Sometimes deep within themselves, they feel the pain that comes from profound disappointment and rejection.

Adolescents are not indifferent to the problem of evil and suffering. On the contrary, the latter may give rise to feelings of fear, despair or fatalism. And these feelings, in turn, may lead them to reject reality, to become hopeless and deeply depressed. Faced with evil, they may, out of spite, demand an eye for an eye and become « tough as nails », thereby contributing to the evil and suffering around them. While they remain inwardly hurt or outwardly rebellious, their different reactions are often a manifestation of their inability to fight in a responsible manner against the evils assailing them.

Some young people, however, readily take up causes or join support groups, spurred on by the conviction that they can make a difference and fight against human misfortune. These young people want to have a better life free from all traces of evil and suffering. They are ready to give themselves to causes which are likely to make their environment more pleasant and agreeable. This desire often manifests itself in the music they listen to and in the diaries they keep.

Faced with the reality of evil and suffering, young people are often prompted to ask questions : Why does evil exist? Where does it come from? Can we do anything to fight against it? Will the world ever be free from the troubles afflicting it? All of these questions are closely linked to young people's search for meaning in life and, to them, represent a real challenge to growth.

This section of the program takes into consideration young people's relationship to evil and suffering. By looking at the questions raised by such realities, the program enables students to examine the origins of evil and suffering and the responsibility that human beings have for dealing with them. By drawing upon psychological, medical and religious discourse, it allows young people to discern paths to freedom and salvation in their search for meaning in life. Through this section, they will learn the richness of the Christian message with respect to God's plan for their liberation and salvation, a plan in which they are all invited to take part in a spirit of hope.

The Specific Competency

The specific competency of this module, which should lead toward the general competency, is stated as follows :

To discern, in the experience of evil and suffering, paths to liberation and salvation that direct them in their quest for meaning.

In the process of acquiring this competency, students are called upon to give brief definitions of « evil » and « suffering », and to distinguish various ways in which they are expressed. They are then invited to share any perceptions, reactions and questions they may have vis-à-vis these concepts. Next, the students use the format of questions to formulate the issues raised in this context : Where does evil come from? How does it affect people? Does it have a meaning? How can we live with evil? Can we escape it, or free ourselves from it?

Using the four complementary sources of information (diversity, the Judeo-Christian tradition, the inner life, and action) students are invited to seek answers to the questions raised. They explore the avenues of salvation and liberation from evil and suffering proposed by Buddhism, psychology and modern medicine. They also explore the essentials of the message of liberation and salvation proposed by the Judeo-Christian tradition. Finally, they determine the various sorts of action they can take to deal responsibly and in a spirit of hope with the forms of evil and suffering that exist in and around them. Little by little, their search helps them to grasp the meaning of evil and suffering and to discern what they are called upon to do.

At the end of this section, the students share what they have learned by looking at the questions they started out with. They then select those aspects of their study that are most likely to give them the courage to be and to determine what they can do to deal with evil and suffering in a responsible manner.

The competency indicators are defined in Table 6, Module 3.

The Development of Moral Judgment

Throughout each step of the teaching process, the teachers must foster the acquisition of the various skills associated with the students' exercise of their moral judgment.

In the preparation stage, the teacher invites the students to look at realities or situations that reflect different forms of evil and suffering. The teacher helps the students to understand what is involved in the search for solutions to the issues that consider the freedom and well-being of individuals and humanity as a whole.

During the activation stage, the teachers call upon the students to discern positive attitudes and values that human beings can adopt in their search for solutions to the problem of evil and suffering. Individual commitment to the struggle against them, along with respect for life and the love, compassion and hope shown in the face of these realities are just a few examples. While this discernment is taking place, the teacher can also invite the students to name negative attitudes and values (e.g., indifference, apathy, escapism, blind obedience, feelings of rebelliousness) likely to prolong or aggravate the problem of evil and suffering. In the latter case, the teacher asks the students to apply a process of discernment to these negative values and attitudes.

During the integration stage, the teacher encourages the students to envisage things they can do to show that they have the courage it takes to be and to act responsibly in situations where evil and suffering affect them personally.

Preliminary Remarks

Defining Concepts

Evil and suffering are two separate yet related realities. *Evil* refers to every aspect of human life that is harmful or painful for someone. *Suffering* is the effect of being subjected to evil, whether or not human agency is responsible for it.

The Five Types of Evil

There are five major types of evil : physical, psychological, moral, spiritual and social. None of these types excludes the others. They are interrelated and, in combination, may give rise to different manifestations of suffering.

Physical evil

This type of evil affects material aspects of the world (objects, places). It can lead to outrage, rebelliousness, anger, a feeling of social injustice or an acute sense of powerlessness.

Physical evil also affects human beings afflicted by illness, injury or physical impairment. It can lead to suffering that is expressed through pain, cries, tears, fatigue, depression and even suicide.

Psychological evil

This type of evil attacks the heart and the mind. The painful feelings and emotions that result from it undermine the possibility of ever being happy. The suffering produced by this form of evil can be seen in profound sadness, insecurity, regret, lack of self-confidence, doubt, rejection, anguish or depression.

Moral evil

This evil results from actions that are contrary to the laws of love and justice which ensure balance and harmony in individuals and groups. The suffering it causes is often composed, on the one hand,

of guilt and remorse and, on the other, of frustration, anger, hatred, isolation and feelings of betrayal and rejection.

Spiritual evil

This evil emerges when human beings come up against events and situations over which they have no control, and which profoundly undermine their personal or religious convictions. It can also come from an inner emptiness fed by an insatiable pursuit of material things. The suffering that results from this evil may take the form of world weariness, a desire to escape into ephemeral pleasures, deep-seated moroseness and an acute feeling of isolation or abandonment which persists even in the presence of society's safety nets.

Social evil

This type of evil is intimately connected with social systems and structures. It encompasses manifold types of evil either experienced or caused by groups of people. Examples include rampant unemployment and poverty, racism, sexual discrimination, the exploitation and oppression of various minority groups, dictatorial rule, widespread torture, the loss of basic human values (honesty, justice, respect for life, love, etc.), egocentrism, the lack of responsibility or impartiality of certain media, and the denial of the very existence of evil in our society. These various forms of social evil lead to suffering on the physical, psychological, moral and spiritual levels.

Sources of Information Useful for Acquiring the Competency

Diversity

This source of information enables students to explore paths of liberation and salvation that modern medicine, psychoanalysis, psychiatry and Buddhism offer when dealing with evil and suffering.

Modern medicine

Modern medicine deals mainly with physical and psychological ailments. This science, with its many facets, aims at the maintenance and restoration of health and quality of life. It attempts to prevent and cure the physical and psychological illnesses that afflict human beings.

Recent medical studies have resulted in spectacular discoveries with respect to the functioning of the human body. Advanced medical technology has made it possible to prolong life and, in many cases, to improve the quality of human existence. However, despite these marvels, modern medicine is still faced with the problem of death. And since medicine cannot eliminate it, people often see this as representing a form of failure.

Judeo-Christian tradition acknowledges that, in many respects, medicine offers means of alleviating physical pain and the suffering that comes from it. As we know, however, medicine cannot solve the problem of evil in all its forms. It does not bring complete liberation from the ravages of evil.

Psychoanalysis and psychiatry

These therapeutic practices are designed to combat the psychological and moral evils which manifest themselves as irrational passions, destructiveness, jealousy, low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence, and so on. Although their therapeutic means often differ widely, therapists help their patients to talk about, and become aware of, those past events in their lives that may have harmful consequences for their immediate emotional well-being. The ultimate aim of these therapeutic practices is to help human beings understand themselves and become more independent and liberated from their psychological « baggage ».

Judeo-Christian tradition acknowledges that psychotherapy, when properly directed, can help people cope with certain psychological ills and difficulties. The message they convey is therapeutic : they heal—or at least comfort—the suffering individual. These therapies can also enable people to find an aim or meaning in life, and can even help to deepen their experience of faith. However, they cannot counter all the varieties of evil in our world. Although it does not immediately or thoroughly alleviate all suffering or offer a resolution to the mystery of evil, the salvation offered through the person of Jesus Christ gives Christians the hope of complete freedom and the certainty that evil is already in the process of being vanquished.

Buddhism

The doctrine of Buddhism maintains that all life holds the possibility of evil and suffering, and that this has one and the same source : craving for material gain, attachment to life, and a thirst for power, fame, etc. Such craving, which permeates the being of individuals and of society as a whole, is empty and vain, and is the source of all the pain and suffering that we undergo or impose on others.

To eliminate this craving is to put an end to suffering. This elimination of craving, the cessation of attachment to material things, is possible for all human beings. Deliverance from suffering is a path that all can follow, through meditation, wisdom, a life free of egoism, and compassion for all suffering creatures. At the end of this path is happiness, which Buddhism calls « nirvana ». Of course, human beings have a long way to go before they can successfully purge themselves of all craving. Concealed behind ignorance and ambition, many obstacles stand in the way of attaining nirvana, the only permanence. Human beings are impermanent and, in the Buddhist view, undergo « rebirths » rather than « reincarnation » or « transmigration ». By leading a pure life, by learning self-control and mastering desire, one can, it is said, reach nirvana. In Buddhism, there is a conviction that human life has an ultimate aim : the illumination and awakening that lead to nirvana.

The Judeo-Christian tradition acknowledges that suffering is part of the human condition. It also recognizes that human beings possess within themselves physical and mental resources that enable them to alleviate pain, and that compassion for others is one of the most important attitudes one can have. And here, too, meditation is seen as an effective path to understanding situations of suffering with a view to alleviating them and making happiness synonymous with an end to pain. Although it may have some similarities with Buddhism, Judeo-Christian tradition is different insofar as it considers that human beings are not alone in their suffering, but have the help of God in the form of Jesus Christ. Also, this tradition differs from Buddhism in that it sees the end of suffering and the attainment of perfect happiness as the gift of a Saviour who shares his love with human beings.

Judeo-Christian Tradition

The theme of evil and suffering is central to the Judeo-Christian tradition. The Christian concept of liberation and human salvation promises a final end to all evil and suffering in the afterlife.

The origin of evil

Although the origin of evil is a highly complex subject, evil itself is too pervasive to be ignored. It is an integral part of creation and the human condition. Human beings encounter evil in the form of obstacles to their desires and their quest for happiness. It is a malady that runs counter to both the mind and heart. Evil is scandalous and senseless, and human beings come up against it in their search for justice and love. The ultimate origin of evil is a mystery, that is, something which human beings may never fully understand no matter how much they study it. This said, it is possible, however, to outline a number of avenues for reflecting on this reality.

First of all, God is good, as is the whole of creation (Gen. 1.31). Although not the cause of evil, God permits the existence of evil and suffering (Job 1 and 2; 29 and 30; 38-40). God's glory is to make men and women perfect in freedom, life and happiness.

God's creation is constantly evolving. This is why it is meaningful. As it develops, the universe responds to cosmic laws that ensure its existence and prevent it from coming apart. As the understanding of these laws develops, they are seen as beneficial to human beings. Still, anything in flux involves risks. Thus natural catastrophes and imbalances must be taken into account when seeking to understand the cosmos. Aware of the evil and suffering inherent in God's plan, God gives human beings an opportunity to perfect creation and to cultivate love and self-sacrifice through compassion for all those who suffer.

While evil can be linked to nature, it is often aggravated by the sins of human beings. Furthermore, it is through human beings that moral evil is most often manifested. Due to the weakness of human beings and the nature of their freedom, not yet fully rooted in goodness, people sometimes transgress God's law (Gen. 2.15-3.24).

Since the origins of evil and suffering remain a mystery, their presence in the world calls upon mankind, whose mission is to perfect creation, to use its good will and creative capacity to counter them, and attempt to eradicate them as much as possible.

Evil and the God

Is God a good God? The Bible provides abundant examples of God intervening on behalf of the people of God. God is not, for example, insensitive to the sufferings of the Hebrews when they are sold into slavery in Egypt. Rather, seeing their distress, God delivers them from the hands of their oppressors and promises to lead them into an earthly paradise (Exod. 3.7-12). Finally, God does not act alone to achieve this purpose, but calls upon Moses to help him.

The greatest proof of God's goodness lies in the Incarnation of Jesus, the New Adam and the New Moses. This is what constitutes the essence of Christianity. By venturing to share in human existence, Jesus, like all men and women, endures misunderstanding and hostility, the death of a loved one, and abandonment by those close to him. He also makes himself present in the history and future of humanity. Throughout his life on Earth, Jesus speaks and acts on behalf of those who are weighed down by heavy burdens. Thus, through Jesus, God manifests tenderness and compassion to the sick, the disabled, the hungry and the distressed. As the prophets say, God constitutes a revolt against those who would crush his children. God wants justice, forgiveness and harmony among individuals and nations. In his fight against sin, evil and death, Jesus incarnates God, who is merciful and helpful, and a source of new life.

The path that Jesus adopts and accepts to the very end leads to the experience of death and involves the feeling that God the Father has abandoned him. By his death, Jesus takes upon himself the human condition in its most tragic aspect. Thus, by being resurrected by God the Father, Jesus becomes the extraordinary sign of God's salvation : the victory of love over death, of life over all our earthly troubles.

The Inner Life

Sooner or later, all of us are confronted with the problem of evil and suffering in our personal lives. The way we think about this problem may give rise to various attitudes, the most common being denial, escapism, resignation, rebelliousness. Often, the experience of evil and suffering may result in an individual's questing for meaning in life.

The rejection of suffering and the desire to escape pain are constants in human experience. Human beings often want to escape suffering at any cost. To do so, they do not hesitate to use drugs, whether legal or not. Of course, this may create new problems, drawing abusers into a vicious circle. Denial and escapism in the face of evil and suffering prevent people from obtaining a clear picture of their situation. It then becomes difficult for them to solve their problems or to discover that evil and suffering often result from a rift, an inability to live in harmony with oneself.

Resignation in the face of evil and suffering is an attitude we should reject. When human beings adopt a fatalistic attitude to these realities, they give up all hope and make no attempt to find a way to deal

with their situation. Thus life becomes impossible to live, which leads to feelings of hopelessness or constant frustration. Resignation can lead to despair, which may, in turn, lead to suicide²⁰.

Rebelliousness and indignation are two attitudes that human beings may adopt in the face of evil and suffering. These may cause people to begin struggling in a responsible manner. However, they may also lead nowhere and do nothing to help people cope or deal with the effects of evil and suffering. With other people, they may also lead to indifference and a hardening of the heart.

Human beings can also decide to search for meaning through the experience of the effects of evil and suffering. In effect, these realities bear the seeds of meaning that can help suffering men and women to accept the situations they are in and to go on with their lives. The quest for meaning in life represents one of the most human and promising attitudes one can adopt. Although it is difficult, it enables human beings to go beyond themselves.

For Christians, the quest for meaning in situations involving evil and suffering sheds light on the Passion of Jesus Christ. Jesus saves not because he suffers, but because he remains truly faithful to his mission to reveal the love of the Father. Like Jesus, Christians try to find meaning in their suffering, to go beyond their trials and tribulations by participating in the saving work that God calls them to with love and faithfulness.

Action

The problem of evil and suffering spurs some men and women into action. For them, it represents a call to go beyond fatalistic and pessimistic visions of life and the world. It encourages them to participate in God's creative yet uncompleted work, and to come to grips, in a responsible and hopeful manner, with the forms of evil and suffering that proliferate both in and around themselves. For these men and women, evil and suffering provide an occasion for surpassing human limitations.

To fight against the evil and suffering they feel deep within themselves, men and women committed to spiritual growth sometimes join humanist and religious support groups and maintain a number of deep friendships. Such activities enable them to express themselves more freely and to become aware of what they can and cannot change and what makes them suffer. Moreover, the desire to grapple with the problem of evil and suffering prompts many men and women to become involved in groups or organizations that work to obtain a better quality of life for people everywhere. Such groups include World Youth, Development and Peace, the Red Cross, the United Nations, Amnesty International, UNICEF, Doctors Without Borders, Homes International and Greenpeace. Other individuals work as professionals or volunteers in their communities, where they help those who are suffering from natural disasters, physical, moral, psychological and spiritual ailments.

20. The question of suicide must be approached with sensitivity and caution. Teachers should call upon the services of properly trained resource people, or at least inform the students about all the services available to them in school and in the community.

TABLE 6 - MODULE 3

- **General competency** : To quest for meaning by studying how they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life while focusing particularly on the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- **Specific competency** : To discern, in the experience of evil and suffering, paths to liberation and salvation that direct them in their quest for meaning.
- **The life experience** : 14- and 15-year-olds and their relationship to evil and suffering.
- **Judeo-Christian tradition** : The Judeo-Christian concept of evil, liberation and salvation.
- **Diversity** : The paths to liberation proposed in modern medicine, psychology and psychiatry and Buddhism.
- **The Inner Life** : Attitudes associated with evil and suffering : refusal, submission, rebelliousness and indignation, the quest for meaning in life.
- **Action** : A responsible way of dealing with evil and suffering.
- **Moral values and attitudes** : Respect for life, responsibility, love, compassion and hope
- **Approximate duration** : 10 hours

TOPIC	CONTENT	COMPETENCY INDICATORS
	Step 1 : Preparation	
	• The students' ideas and questions about evil and suffering. • The definition of evil. • The different forms of evil (physical, psychological, moral, spiritual and social) and their effects.	• The students express their ideas, reactions and questions about evil and suffering. • The students define evil. • The students distinguish different forms of evil and their effects.
	Step 2 : Activation	
	Diversity • Modern medicine and its contribution to the struggle against physical evil (strengths and limitations of modern medicine). • Psychological and psychiatric therapies and their contribution to the struggle against psychological and moral evil (strengths and limitations of psychology and psychiatry). • Buddhism and its contribution to the struggle against evil (comparison with Christianity). The Judeo-Christian tradition • The origins of evil (Gen. 2.15-3.14, etc.) The God of Christians in relation to evil and suffering (a God who is present, who is good and compassionate; a God who, to vanquish evil, became incarnate in Jesus Christ).	• The students describe paths to liberation or salvation offered by modern medicine, psychological and psychiatric therapies, and Buddhism. • The students convey the essential elements of the Judeo-Christian concept of the origin of evil, of freedom and salvation in God.

I EXPLORE EVIL - Where does evil come from? - What causes evil? - Does it have a purpose? - How can we live with evil? - Can we free ourselves from its effects?	Gen. 1-3.31; Exod 3.7-12; The Book of Job; John 9.6-38; Mark 1.40-45; Matt. 9.27-31; Mark 7.31-37; Luke 5.17-26; John 11.1-44; Matt. 14.13-21; Matt. 4.23-25; Luke 10.29-37; Matt. 25.31-46; Matt. 27-28.8; etc.). The Inner life - Attitudes when faced with evil and suffering : denial and escapism, resignation, rebelliousness or indignation, the quest for meaning; possible consequences of these attitudes. Action - Action associated with a responsible and hopeful way of dealing with effects of evil and suffering : recognizing, denouncing, combating, comforting, etc.	- The students describe attitudes when faced with evil and suffering. They also describe possible consequences of these attitudes. - The students describe actions connected with a responsible and hopeful way of dealing with effects of evil and suffering.
	Step 3 : Integration	
		- The students select aspects of their discoveries with respect to paths to liberation and salvation that give them the courage to be and to act. - The students determine which actions enable people to deal with the effects of evil and suffering in a responsible way and give meaning to their lives. - The students express their feelings when experiencing the universe.
	Evaluation for this section	
	Formative evaluation for this section is based on measurement instruments and activities designed to take account of competency indicators.	

Possible Applications of the Learning Process

Preparation (about 2 hours)

- On the basis of televised reports and newspaper articles, the students write a brief text outlining their knowledge, ideas, reactions and questions with respect to evil and suffering.
- Through a preliminary study based on initial discussion, the students define the concepts of evil and suffering, and distinguish five forms of evil : physical, psychological, moral, spiritual and social.
- The teacher states the competency to be acquired and clarifies its meaning and scope.
- A topic emerges from discussion of the ideas covered so far : I explore evil. Where does evil come from? What causes it? Does it have a purpose? How can we live with evil? Can we free ourselves from its effects?
- The teacher explains the group task to be carried out during the Activation stage.
- The students relate their understanding of the task to be accomplished, and of its ultimate purpose.

Activation (about 5 hours)

- The students review the competency to be acquired and the task to be accomplished.
- The teacher gives a step-by-step explanation of cognitive and metacognitive strategies to be used in performing the learning task.

Essential elements of the learning task

- 1- Reading and analysis of articles, and use of audio-visual reports and personal accounts that will enable the students to familiarize themselves with the content of the four sources of information on the section.
 - 2- An audio-visual group presentation or an article telling the class about the discoveries made so far.
- The students work as a team to perform the task, using the teaching and technical resources (team support, verification of sources, etc.) available in the classroom.

Step 3 : Integration (about 2 hours)

- The students present the discoveries they made while working as a team.

- In light of their discoveries, the students review the questions prompted by the original issue, as well as those that helped make it a topic for discussion. At this point, the teacher clarifies any aspects of the compulsory content that may not have been sufficiently covered.
- Working individually, the students reformulate their concept of evil and suffering in light of their research and the group presentations. They select those features of their discoveries that will give them the courage to be and to act, and determine responsible ways of coping with the effects of evil and suffering.
- Working individually, the students explain how the competency they have learned will be useful in their daily lives.

Evaluation (about 1 hour)

This involves verification of the competency using a learning context or a reading on evil and suffering.

MODULE 4 : SYMBOLS

SYMBOLS

How 14- and 15-Year Olds Relate to Symbols

Fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds are in contact with a wealth of symbols. They see them in their environment and use them in certain school activities, sometimes to express or communicate their experiences.

By the time they reach adolescence, young people are already familiar with many mathematical symbols. For example, they know that, in an equation, the abstract symbol x represents a variable. In Physical Science class they learn to use other symbols that refer to more concrete situations. For example, « kW/h » represents a measurable quantity of electricity, while « H₂O » stands for the elements of water. Young people know that these symbols are part of a universally recognized language and that they enable human beings to communicate with one another, regardless of their language.

Young people also know the meaning of certain emblems, such as flags. They have learned, for example, that the colours and designs of these emblems represent specific countries (Canada, the United States, Japan, France, etc.), national or international organizations (International Olympic Committee, the United Nations, the Red Cross, the United Way, etc.), and towns and villages.

By the time they are 14 or 15, young people begin to see more and more meaning in symbols that express deeper spiritual realities. Most of them know that the dove stands for peace, that a red heart represents love and that a skull and crossbones alludes to ideas of danger, violence and destruction. They often resort to these symbols and invent others to communicate their life experiences and the values and feelings that motivate them. Moreover, this recourse to symbols may be a way for them to interpret these experiences or to relate them to the history of the world, or even of God. When young people draw upon the world of symbols, they implicitly communicate their search for meaning in life and the value they attribute to the individual or collective realities they experience.

In the cultural and religious world of Québec, the students encounter other symbols originating in the Judeo-Christian tradition. These include roadside crosses and those seen atop mountains and church spires, as well as sacramental signs such as water and the bread of which young people occasionally partake. They may not grasp the meaning or point of this symbolic language if they have not been given an opportunity to make sense of it in terms of their own experiences, or of those of others in a Christian community. Facilitating their questioning of the meaning of symbols can enhance their quest for meaning in life.

This section looks at how young people relate to symbols. They are introduced to spiritual and religious symbolism, particularly as it relates to the Judeo-Christian tradition. They learn that these symbols have a history, that they make up Québec's cultural and religious heritage, and that they open the way to a meeting with God, who is present and active among human beings. The students are also provided with a way of understanding that clarifies their moral and religious experience in light of the world of Christian symbols.

The Specific Competency

The specific competency of this section is stated as follows :

To interpret symbols from the world of religion in order to direct themselves in their quest for meaning.

In the process of acquiring this competency, the students define the concept of « symbol », which they distinguish from the concept of « sign ». They also learn about characteristics and specific functions of symbols. They are asked to name some of the religious or secular symbols found in their environment, to say what they represent and to ask themselves questions about them. They are then called upon to formulate questions on the issues that emerge from the preceding discussion. They could, for example, ask themselves whether all of the symbols surrounding them are of equal importance, or whether they could be useful in the quest for meaning in life. Other questions might deal with the actual meaning and message of the symbols themselves.

Through the additional sources of information constituted by the inner life, the Judeo-Christian tradition, diversity and action, the students discover guideposts that shed light on the issues raised. Through these sources, they recognize the ways of the inner life and the attitudes of openness and respect that make it possible to understand the meaning of some religious symbols, particularly those of the Judeo-Christian tradition. They learn that these symbols can be meaningful; that they enable humans to ally themselves with God who is present and active throughout history; that they suggest appropriate attitudes and promote commitment. Gradually, using certain keys to interpretation, students begin to grasp the value of religious symbols insofar as they express and clarify human and religious experience.

At the end of this section, the students are asked to explain the Christian symbols that best relate to their moral, religious, personal and community experience.

The competency indicators are set out in Table 7, Module 4.

The Development of Moral Judgment

Throughout this module and at each stage of the learning process, the teacher helps the students acquire competencies related to the exercise of their moral judgment.

During the preparation stage, when students are framing their questions and perceptions about symbolic language, the teacher fosters an awareness of the negative and positive attitudes (love/hate, support/antagonism, equality/discrimination, etc.) associated with the ways in which symbolic language is used by individuals and groups. The teacher asks the students questions that help them grasp the issues raised by these attitudes.

During the activation stage the teacher, drawing upon different sources of information, invites the students to discern other positive attitudes and values behind the use of symbolic language. Examples could include the feeling of belonging to a group, ways of relating to and interpreting invisible realities, and ways of expressing their faith and hope in life and in God. In the course of this process of discernment, the teachers ask the students to examine and assess the range of negative attitudes and values that human beings may incorporate into their use of symbolic language. Examples could include contempt, rejection, hatred, violence, undue aggression, foul language, lack of respect and provocative gestures.

During the integration phase, the teacher encourages the students to imagine and defend morally good actions suggested by symbolic language.

Conditions for Success

This section takes up the important issue of young people's emotional, spiritual and religious development. Particular attention is drawn to this development. Teaching could deteriorate into meaningless lecturing if the teacher, in presenting the prescribed content, does not continually draw parallels with the needs and experiences of young people.

In their teaching strategies, the teacher makes a concerted attempt to validate the students' imagination, intuition and artistic expression. These are ideal ways to help students grasp some of the realities behind symbols. Through them, young people can realize that knowledge of life can be acquired by means other than technological and scientific determinism.

Preliminary Remarks

The world of symbols is vast and complex. The concept of symbol is often confused with other related concepts such as metaphor, allegory, parable, signal, image and sign. This section, which introduces students to the world of symbols, will deal with the distinction between « symbol » and « sign ».

Defining Concepts

Signs

A sign is an observable reality which makes it possible to define another observable reality. The meaning of a sign is clear and precise, appealing to reason. For example, smoke is a clear sign of fire, and stop signs at street corners tell drivers that they must stop. Also, a scar is a sign of an old wound, or the trace of a surgical operation. Likewise, tracks in sand or snow tell us that a person or animal has recently passed by.

Symbols

A symbol is an observable reality that alludes to another reality which cannot be observed or grasped. The meaning of a symbol is general and inexhaustible, and calls upon people to use their intuition. For example, the element fire, an observable reality, can suggest the idea of the spiritual and

mysterious fire that animates human life. The element water, another observable reality, enables us to apprehend God, an unobservable reality, as a vital source of life.

Characteristics of the Symbol

This section covers five characteristics of the symbol :

- 1- It is an observable reality and can be directly known.
- 2- It is a reality that can be described easily in everyday language.
- 3- It is an adequate expression of the unobservable reality to which it alludes.
- 4- It can be recognized by more than one person.
- 5- It is connected to cultural, personal and collective experience.

The Specific Functions of the Symbol

The symbol performs specific functions that distinguish it from the sign :

- 1- It connects a reality to something invisible.
- 2- It is capable of relating what is known by the senses to what is beyond.
- 3- It alludes to an inexhaustible reality.
- 4- It is deeply rooted in the universal human quest for meaning.

The following table summarizes the features that distinguish symbols from signs.

SYMBOL	SIGN
Observable reality; can be apprehended by the senses	Observable reality; can be apprehended by the senses.
Alludes to another reality that cannot be observed.	Makes it possible to define another observable reality.
Its meaning is general and inexhaustible.	Its meaning is clear and precise.
It calls upon intuition.	It calls upon reason.

Sources of Information Useful for Acquiring the Competency

The Inner Life

Religious symbols belong to the world of the sacred, and we must be open to this world if we are to recognize their value and richness. Symbols can reveal aspects of the invisible world to those who listen to what they have to say. To grasp the meaning of symbols, one must take the time to examine them in a careful and respectful manner. This also means letting ourselves be affected by what they suggest and admitting that the invisible reality they represent is also inexhaustible.

Judeo-Christian Tradition

Judeo-Christian tradition abounds with a wide variety of symbols that have emerged over a long time. Natural realities, events under the Jewish Covenant and in the life and work of Jesus have acquired symbolic meaning.

Drawing upon these sources of information, emphasis in this program is placed on three Christian symbols : water, light and the cross. The study of these symbols focuses on their characteristic aspects and on Biblical passages, which are placed within the appropriate cultural context. This approach enables the students to grasp the meaning which the Judeo-Christian tradition gives these symbols—without, however, exhausting their expressive potential. It introduces young people to the mystery of Christ, who is active and present in humanity. It also enables them to relate their personal lives to that of the past and present community of believers, and to be open to God's intervention in their lives.

Water as Symbol

Characteristics of the symbol

Water is an easily observable element of nature. It is essential for all life, from birth onward. Water contains the seeds of existence. It refreshes us, quenches our thirst and revitalizes, washes and purifies us. In the absence of water, the Earth becomes an arid desert, a land of hunger where human beings and animals can expect nothing but death. But it can also be a threatening force when unleashed, flooding and destroying everything in its path. This indispensable element of nature can be perceived, in the proper circumstances, as life-giving or menacing. Water has always been at the heart of individual and collective human experience.

Water in Biblical narratives

Water is intimately bound up with the history of the People of the Covenant. During the Creation, God divided the waters and retained control over them (Ps. 104). In Jewish cosmology, God separates the water into two distinct masses. One remains above the heavens (Gen. 1.7; Ps. 148.4; Dan. 3.60) while the rain and dew escape through floodgates (Gen. 7.11; 8.2; Isa. 24.18; Exod. 16.13). The water for springs and rivers emerges from an immense underground reservoir on which the Earth rests. This constitutes the « subterranean waters », those of the abyss (Deut. 8.7; 33.13).

Again in the Jewish cosmology, the water that God gives is a manifestation of grace toward those who serve him and do God's will (Gen. 27.28; Ps. 133.3). However, when God does not bring the waters, the ensuing aridity is perceived as a punishment directed at those who do not listen to or do God's bidding (Isa. 5.13; 19.5ff; Ezek. 4.16ff; 31.15).

In the Bible, water is not only a life-giving power, but can also be a terrible force in people's lives. The heaving water of the oceans evokes the presence of demons, while sudden droughts signify misfortune (Job 12.15; 40.23).

On many occasions, water appears as a backdrop for God's saving and purifying action with respect to humanity. The waters of the Deluge eventually recede, leaving the just Noah standing on the Earth (Wis. 10.4). Later, the Red Sea parts to free Moses and his people from the hand of the Egyptian oppressor, who is then swallowed up by the waters while attempting pursuit (Exod. 14).

Water cleanses and purifies, washing away stains. In ancient Hebrew rites, physical purification alludes to the inner purification required for us to approach God.

Jesus goes to see John the Baptist, who baptizes in the waters of the Jordan. Jesus' baptism by water prefigures his baptism in death (Luke 12.50; Mark 10.38).

Jesus brought humanity the life-giving waters. He is the rock that was cleft and that let flow the waters capable of quenching the thirst of those who seek God (John 19 :34). Furthermore, he is the life-giving Word, and those who drink from him will never know thirst again (John 4.10-14).

Water as a Christian symbol

Among Christians, the rite of blessing often draws upon the symbolism of water. Thus blessing with holy water is a gift from God who restores us to life, who brings birth and renewal, life and fruitfulness.

The meaning of water emerges most particularly in the Sacrament of Baptism. Immersion in the baptismal waters symbolizes the purification made possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus. This basic symbolism is supplemented by another form. The actions of immersion and emersion allude to the immersion of the neophyte in the waters of death and his/her spiritual resurrection following the victory of Christ, and to God's triumph over the waters of the Red Sea (Rom. 6.3-11; 1 Cor. 10.1ff). Immersion also becomes a symbol of renewal in the Holy Spirit (Titus 3.5).

Water as symbol enables Christians to connect their own life experiences with those of the people in the Biblical narratives. It also reminds them that Jesus, who came to give life, renews and augments humanity and frees it from everything that imperils it or threatens to overwhelm or destroy it. In addition, for those who are attentive to it, water as symbol can bring home the idea that their lives will never be an arid desert as long as they agree to quench their thirst in the Word of the Lord (John 7.37-39). Christians realize that their thirst is quenched in the inexhaustible love of God.

Light as Symbol

Characteristics of the symbol

Light is an observable element of nature. Like water, it is essential for life : for it enables life to come into being, to be maintained and to thrive. It also contains the seeds of existence. It bestows warmth and energy, and sets the pace of daily life. The absence of light results in shadows, and in them life wears thin and is extinguished. On the other hand, in too great concentrations, light can be a destructive element, bringing aridity and potentially devastating fires. An indispensable element of nature, light can be perceived, depending on the circumstances, as dynamic or destructive. Since time immemorial it has been at the heart of individual and collective experience.

Light in Biblical narratives

The Hebrews saw light as a creation of God, both the light of day (Gen. 1.1-5) and that of the stars (Gen. 1.14-19). God created both the light and the darkness (Isa. 45.7).

In the Bible, God is cloaked in light, as in a garment (Ps 104.2). Light revealed the presence of God, was the reflection of God's glory. When God was manifested, « the brightness was like the sun, rays came forth from his hand » (Hab. 3.4). Sometimes God was manifested through fire (Exod. 19.18). All of this symbolism alludes to the link between the divine presence and the overwhelming impression it makes on human beings.

Light is also a gift from God. « Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun » (Eccles. 11.7) In making man to be born, God showed him the light of the day.

Sometimes the symbolism of light underscores the majesty of God as revealed to mankind, while sometimes it brings out God's awe-inspiring aspect (Hab. 3.3ff). Moreover, God's illuminated face reassures us of God's intentions with regard to us. Light symbolism can also allude to the fact that God lights our way, is the lamp that guides us (Job 29.3; Ps. 18.29), that illuminates our eyes and removes us from harm's way (Ps. 13.4). God appears, therefore, as our light and salvation (Ps. 27-1).

Jesus is the light that came into this world. He is « the dawn from on high [which] will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace » (Luke 1.78-79; Acts 26.23).

Jesus is also revealed as light, and a number of his words and actions attest to this fact. The healing of the blind (Mark 8.22-26; John 9) inspired the evangelist to say « I am the light of the world » (John 9.5); that « everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness » (John 12.46). The event of his transfiguration (Mark 9.1-8) attests that « he is himself light and in him there is no darkness » (John 1.1-5). His resurrection reveals that he is the Light of the world and that all the light in the world originates in him (John 1.4).

Jesus, the Light who came into the world, calls upon all men and women to follow him and become « sons and daughters of light ». « You are the light of the world. [...] Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father in Heaven » (Matt. 5.14-

16). Men and women who do evil flee from the light; they hide from it to prevent their evil deeds from being disclosed. On the other hand, those who are just and act in the truth come into the light (John 3.19ff).

Light as a Christian symbol

Light is an omnipresent symbol in Christian liturgy. The sanctuary lamp in Catholic churches recalls the presence of God and the risen Christ in the tabernacle. And the lighted candles on the altar during religious ceremonies evoke the same mysteries. The Pascal candle, lit from the surging flame of the new fire, symbolizes the new life brought to us by the risen Christ on Easter morning. In the liturgy of baptism the candle, which is lit from the flame of the Pascal candle, signifies that Christ, the Light of the world, has illuminated the novice. Those baptized in Christ participate in the « light of the world ». During funeral services, the light of the Pascal candle recalls the Christian meaning of death, as revealed in the death and resurrection of Christ. For believers, this light is a symbol of life and hope.

The Cross as Symbol

Characteristics of the symbol

The figure of the cross is known throughout the world. And it can readily be observed in many features of the world : a human figure with outstretched arms, a soaring bird, a mast on a ship, the horizontal and vertical axes of a landscape, and of architectural constructions created by human beings.

The structure of the cross goes back to remote antiquity. It also functioned as a symbol expressing human beings' relationship with the cosmos and with the divine. Ancient traces of the cross have been found in Crete, Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, Mexico, Peru and Africa.

The shape of the cross also helps us to orient ourselves in the world and the cosmos. The axes of the cross are also those of the world, and its four poles correspond to the cardinal points. Its horizontal bar is like two arms holding the entire globe in their embrace. Its vertical bar connects the Earth and the heavens. The point of intersection of the two axes symbolizes the centre of the world. This centre is a synthesis of the four cardinal points and the entire cosmos. The four segments that constitute it represent the entire cosmos. In addition to representing the world's four cardinal points, they evoke the four elements of nature (air, water, earth and fire) and the qualities traditionally assigned to them (hot, cold, wet and dry).

The idea of the cross naturally evokes that of wood, the element of nature most often used in construction.

Wood in Biblical narratives

The Jewish scriptures do not refer to the image of the cross. Yet the wood of which it is made offers a field of study and meaning that makes it possible to establish links with the cross of Golgotha. The image of the tree from which the wood is taken is often associated with a divine revelation, an intimate meeting between God and man. The tree of life in the garden of Eden (Gen. 2.8), the oak of Mam're (Gen. 18. 1-2) and the burning bush (Exod. 3.2-5) are just some examples. The image of the tree is also associated with notions of malediction and death (Gen. 40.19; Deut. 21. 22-23; Josh. 8.29; 10.26).

The image of the wooden rod, particularly that of Moses, is associated with God's beneficial intervention on behalf of his people (Exod. 4.2-4.17; 7.8-20; 8.1-2.12-13; 9.23-25; 10.13).

The tree that Zacchaeus climbs becomes the site of a meeting with Jesus, a meeting that will transform his life (Luke 19.1-10).

The tree of the cross is generally associated with a form of torture which the Romans imposed upon criminals. More specifically, it is associated with the passion and death of Jesus (Phil. 2.8). The tree of the cross is the path that Jesus voluntarily took, and which he holds up as a way for all men and women who would follow him (Matt. 16.24). He bore the sins of humanity on the wood of the cross (1 Pet. 2.24). Since that time, the wood of the cross has become « the wood that saves » (Wis. 14.7). Considered « a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles » (1 Cor. 1.23), the cross becomes, with Jesus, a symbol of God's wisdom (1 Cor. 2.2), the site of a fully accomplished encounter between God and all of humanity. Revelation sees the « wood of life » in this « wood », and the « tree of life » in the « tree of the cross » (Rev. 22.2.14.19).

The wood of the cross as a Christian symbol

The cross has become the universal symbol of Christianity. This symbol expresses the most unique and basic mystery of this religion : a God who became incarnate to the point of knowing the deepest sufferings of humanity, experiencing death and resurrection. On the cross, Jesus represented the totality of the world, fully accepting the reality of death. Having vanquished death, the cross evokes the salvation offered by God.

The symbol of the cross reminds us that we must lose our life in order to save it (Matt. 10.38-39). And it serves to mark the boundary between the visible world of mortals and the invisible world of the Spirit. These are the meanings to which the sign of the cross alludes : marked by the cross of Jesus, Christians are destined to share in his resurrection. The same holds for the crosses carried by those who have been baptized in Christ, and for the crosses erected on a wide range of sites.

Diversity

The universal character of spiritual and religious symbolism is such that it can be found in all world religions. Sometimes the same symbol may have a similar meaning for different religions. There is a certain degree of overlap between Christian symbols and those of Judaism, the tradition from which Jesus came. Symbols often express particular ways of living a relationship with the world and God.

For Muslims and Hindus, water is used in the ablutions performed before prayer and entering the temple. In both cases it is a symbol of purity. Among Hindus, water is also a symbol of the presence of God. That is why they use a water cup in their daily rituals. For Muslims, the light shining from the minaret symbolizes the presence of God, who is both a beacon and a guide. Among Hindus light is a symbol of purity. That is why they cremate their dead. For Jews, the candles burning on the *menorah* symbolize perfection. The Egyptians, for their part, worshipped Ra, the sun god who was also a symbol of life.

Action

The meanings of religious symbols suggest attitudes and actions. Through symbolic language, men and women questing for meaning have regained confidence, hope, daring and courage—attitudes that are essential for life. And through this quest for meaning, these people, seeing that God walks with them, have decided to speak and act in such a way that they are akin to springs of living water, reassuring beacons, life-giving oils and the true bread of life. Others, fortified by the meaning they have found in the cross, have shown that, despite the suffering and violence to which they have been subjected, hope and the gift of one's life are still possible.

TABLE 7 - MODULE 4

- **General competency** : To quest for meaning by studying how they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life while focusing particularly on the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- **Specific competency** : To interpret symbols from the world of religion in order to direct them in their quest for meaning.
- **Life experience** : 14- to 15-year-olds and how they relate to symbols
- **Judeo-Christian tradition** : Symbols in the Judeo-Christian tradition
- **Diversity** : Symbols in the Jewish, Islamic and Hindu traditions
- **The Inner Life** : Paths for grasping the meaning and richness of Christian symbols
- **Action** : Symbols that suggest attitudes and actions
- **Moral values and attitudes** : Openness, respect, a feeling of belonging, hope
- **Approximate duration** : 10 hours

TOPIC	CONTENT	COMPETENCY INDICATORS
	Step 1 : Preparation	
	• The students' perceptions and questions with regard to symbols. • The definition of symbol and sign (characteristics and functions). • Symbols in the students' environment.	• The students express their ideas and their questions with regard to symbols. • The students define « symbol » in relation to « sign », naming a number of their characteristics and functions. • The students name some symbols in their environment.
	Step 2 : Activation	
	The Inner Life • Paths for reflecting on the meaning and richness of Christian symbols (openness, meditation, silence, respect, etc.). Judeo-Christian tradition • The functions of symbolic language among Christians (interpretation of life experiences, expressions of faith, etc.). • Christian symbols (characteristics of symbols, references in Biblical texts and their meaning in Christian liturgy). Water • Ps. 104; Gen. 1.7; Ps. 148.4; Dan. 3.60; Gen. 7.11; 8.2; Isa. 24.18; Exod. 16.13; Deut 8.7; 33.13; Gen. 27.28; Ps. 13.3; Isa 5.13; 19.5ff; Ezek 4.16ff; 31.15; Job 12.15; 40.23; Sg. 10.14; Exod. 14. Luke 12.50; Mark 10.38; John 19.34; 4.10-14; Rom. 6.3-11; 1 Cor. 10.1ff; Titus 3.5; etc.*	• The students explain the paths they can take to reflect on the meaning and richness of Christian symbols. • The students describe certain Christian symbols in terms of their specific characteristics, their use in the Bible and the meanings attributed to them within Christianity.

I AM SURROUNDED BY A MULTITUDE OF SYMBOLS - Are they all equally important? - Can they be useful to me in my quest for meaning in life? - How can I grasp their meaning and message?	Light . Gen. 1.15; 1.14-19; Isa. 45.7; Ps. 104.2; Hab. 3.4; Exod. 19.18; Eccles. 11.7; Job 29.3; Ps. 18.29; Ps. 13.4; Ps. 27.1; Luke 1.78-79; Acts. 26.23; Mark 8.22-26; John 9; 12.46; 1 John 1.5; John 1.4; Matt. 5.14-16; John 3.19ff; etc.* The wood of the cross . Gen. 2.8; 18.1-2; Exod. 3.2-5; Gen. 40.19; Exod. 4.2-4.17; 7. 8-20; 8.1-2.12-13; 9.23-25; 10.13; Deut. 21.22-23; Josh.8.29; 10.26; Luke 19.1-10; Phil. 2.8; Matt. 16.24; 1 Pet. 2.24; Wis. 14.7; 1 Cor. 1.23; 2.2; Rev. 22.2.14.19. etc.* Diversity . The meaning of water, light, etc. in Jewish, Islamic and Hindu symbolism. Action . Christian symbolism suggests attitudes (confidence, hope, daring, courage, a feeling of belonging, etc.) required for action (sharing, offering consolation, comfort, support, forgiveness, solidarity, etc.).	
	Step 3 : Integration	
		. The students explain the meaning of certain symbols found in other religious traditions. . The students name attitudes and describe actions suggested by symbolic language.
	Evaluation for this section	
	Formative evaluation for this section is based on measurement instruments and activities designed to take account of competency indicators.	

* To ensure that students acquire the specific competency, at least half of the above biblical references must be covered in class.

Possible Applications of the Learning Process

Preparation (about 2 hours)

- The students write a brief text outlining what they know about signs and symbols. Give five examples.
- A preliminary study of signs and symbols, their characteristics and functions. Review of initial discussion to confirm or modify the original ideas.
- The teacher states the competency to be acquired and clarifies its meaning and scope.
- Following the preliminary study, the students recognize the new symbols in their environment.
- The teacher announces the competency to be acquired, clarifying its scope and meaning (vocabulary).
- The previous discussion gives rise to a series of issues : I am surrounded by a multitude of symbols. Are they all equally important? Can they be useful to me in my quest for meaning? How can I grasp their meaning and message?
- The teacher explains the group task to be carried out in the Activation stage.
- The students explain how they understand the task to be carried out, as well as how it may eventually be useful to them.

Activation (about 5 hours)

- The students understand what's required to grasp the meaning of a symbol.
- The students go over the competency to be acquired and the task to be accomplished.
- The teacher gives a step-by-step explanation of the cognitive and metacognitive strategies to be used when doing the learning task.

Essential elements of the learning task

- 1- Gathering information that can be used to analyze a religious symbol (water, light, the cross, etc.) and that draws upon the student's creative abilities.
- 2- Studying and understanding of a symbol in terms of its specific qualities, Biblical references, Christian meaning and the meaning attributed to it by other religions.
- 3- Recognition of attitudes and description of actions suggested by the symbol.

- 4- Preparation of an exhibition made up of an original collection of the discoveries that have been made. For example, murals, dance, choreography, poems, posters, etc.
- The students work as a team to perform the task using the resources available in the classroom (team support, verification of achievements, etc.).

Integration (about 2 hours)

- The students present the results of their team work.
- In light of their discoveries, the students review the questions prompted by the original issue, as well as those that helped make it a topic for discussion. At this point, the teacher clarifies any aspects of the compulsory content that may not have been sufficiently covered.
- Working individually, the students explain those Christian symbols that relate most closely to their experience.
- Working individually, the students explain how the competency they have acquired will be useful in their daily lives.

Evaluation (about 1 hour)

This involves verification of the competency (see the competency indicators associated with the compulsory content of the section) based on one other religious symbol : oil, wine, yeast, names, the community, rainbows, ladders, fish, the desert, etc.

MODULE 5 : LIFE

LIFE

How 14- and 15-Year Olds Relate to Life

By the time they reach the ages of 14 and 15, young people have begun to explore life as it is manifested in themselves and in their physical and human environment. Their perception of it depends on the feelings they experience, how they perceive others and their physical environment, the things they have to face and the risks they take. Life in their eyes is still something precious and fragile that needs to be protected and defended.

Young people demand more and more autonomy in life situations, and want to manage *their* present life as they understand it. Increasingly social and energetic, they like to participate in community projects that promote human values and idealism. They want the world to be a better place. Aware of their responsibilities, they know that they not only have rights but duties as well, particularly where their families are concerned. In the pursuit of identity they compare their identities with those of others. Their quest for personal happiness takes on a new urgency, while their tastes and interests become more clear and pronounced.

At the age of 14 and 15, young people see life in a more realistic manner. Their experience teaches them that, while life offers them many happy moments, it also comes with its share of problems. A diminished quality of family life, high divorce rates, repeated failures in school, disappointments in romance, difficult interpersonal relations, the incomprehension of adults, the death of friends or relatives, poor job prospects, the work demanded of them and the problems associated with their search for identity—these are just some of the realities that young people are likely to come up against. Insecurity, anxiety, suspicion, disillusionment and even the hopelessness and helplessness of despair are feelings that can, in these circumstances, significantly mark the lives of young people.

Young people generally want to express their vision of life and to quest for the meaning of life which emerges from their experiences, whether these are happy or unhappy. Their way of talking (which may be blunt, forceful or timid), the kinds of clothes they wear, the way they manage their relationships with adults and their peers, the type of young people they are friends with, and the life styles they adopt—these are all ways of expressing how they experience life.

As the students continue to explore and learn, a number of key questions emerge : What is the point of living? I didn't ask to be born, so why am I here? Is it worth staying alive? Why do we have to die? Is there life after death? Or even before death? Why is life so complicated and painful?

All of these questions, formulated with more or less clarity, show that 14- and 15-year-olds are truly seeking meaning in life. Whether they are happy or unhappy, the experiences that give rise to these questions represent a real challenge to growth.

As they come into contact with the wide range of values, ideologies and concepts of life which are transmitted to them daily in the home and school and via the media, adolescents sometimes feel overwhelmed and confused. They need secure reference points and models, people who have taken life seriously, who have gone beyond an instinctual way of living and broken with passive and facile ways of doing things. Although they do not always say so openly, adolescents are waiting for

someone to show them ways that will enlighten them, as well as paths they can take to give meaning to their lives, take charge of their future and to become aware that what they do today will have a determining impact on their future. This type of learning experience could, depending on the circumstances, make it possible for them to help their peers in their own quest for meaning in life.

The Specific Competency

With the development of the general competency of this program in mind, the specific competency of this section can be formulated as follows :

To recognize, in human and religious experience, guideposts that direct them in their quest for meaning in life.

In the process of acquiring this competency, the students are asked to describe their life experiences, both happy and unhappy, the feelings associated with these experiences, and their questions about life. They are called upon to give their reasons for living and to frame the resulting issues in the form of questions. For example : I am alive, but do I feel wanted, accepted and loved? Does my life have meaning? What is the point of living? What attitudes should I adopt to deal with life?

Using the four complementary sources of information represented by the Judeo-Christian tradition, religious diversity, the inner life, and action, students are asked to discover beacons that will shed light on the problem raised. While exploring these beacons, the students familiarize themselves with new ways of looking at life and the meaning attributed to it in various human and religious experiences. The attitudes of confidence, hope, love and courage associated with these experiences assume great importance for them. Little by little, they begin to see ways that shed light on their own quest for meaning in life, and become aware of the moral attitudes they may adopt in dealing with it.

At the end of this section, the students are asked to select, from among the discoveries they have made, those that help them the most in their quest for meaning in life.

The competency indicators are defined in Table 8 - Module 5.

The Development of Moral Judgment

In this section the teachers endeavour, through each step of the learning process, to help the students acquire the various skills associated with the exercise of moral judgment.

During the Preparation stage, while the students are explaining their questions and ideas about their own lives and life in general, the teacher helps them to see realities or situations that describe various ways of living life that are associated with positive and negative attitudes. At this point, the teacher asks them questions to help them grasp these issues.

During the Activation stage the teacher, drawing upon the different sources of information, asks the students to pick out the positive attitudes and values that human beings can adopt in dealing with life. These attitudes and values will help them take control of their lives in a clear and enthusiastic manner. Confidence in the present, hope in the future, respect for oneself and others and the courage to deal with life's most difficult moments are just a few examples of positive values. While moral discernment is taking place, the teacher asks the students to name and evaluate negative attitudes that will diminish the quality of life for themselves and others. Examples could include lack of confidence in oneself and others, hatred, pessimism, discouragement in difficult situations, indifference, rejection and a feeling of being unwanted.

During the integration stage, the teachers encourage the students to suggest solutions to the problems that arise and to act in ways that help them to assume responsibility for their lives in a manner that is truly free, creative and responsible.

Sources of Information Useful for Acquiring the Competency

Judeo-Christian Tradition

The Judeo-Christian tradition offers guideposts which indicate that life has meaning, and which may help students in their quest for meaning. Three such guideposts are emphasized in this program.

Life is invincible : Christ's victory is proof of this

The hallmark event of Christian faith—the death and resurrection of Jesus— was proclaimed by the disciples following their experience on the evening of Pentecost : « And we bring you the good news that what God promised to our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising Jesus » (Acts 13.32-33). The accounts of Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, Thomas, the disciples of Emmaus and a number of the apostles are spiritual experiences that relate Jesus' triumph over death, and the shock produced by these experiences. These texts describe the transformations which the disciples had to accept in order to incorporate the resurrection of Jesus into their lives. They had to undergo these transformations if they were to believe that Jesus' victory over death was not simply a return to life on Earth, but a transition to a new state of being : a life without end or limitations (John 20.1-31; John 20.24-29; John 21.1-14; Luke 24.13-35).

The resurrection of Jesus gives new meaning to everything that he said and taught. It attests to the authority and divinity of Christ : « I am the way, the truth and the life » (John 14.6) who came so that human beings might « have life and have it more abundantly » (John 10.10).

Jesus' great desire was to make men and women experience life more fully. He wanted to reintegrate within the circle of life those who placed their confidence in him. Through the resurrection, Christ freed human beings from the effects of evil and sin and opened the way toward a new life (1 Cor. 15.20-22). With the resurrection of Jesus, « Death has been swallowed up in victory » (1 Cor. 15.54).

It is through their spiritual experience, in their encounter and spiritual relationship with the risen Jesus, that Christians come to believe life is invincible, that neither evil, suffering nor death will prevail against it. Their experience of the resurrection of Jesus, and the promise that they will one day

participate in it, gives meaning to their lives. It is from these assurances that Christians derive their confidence, love and hope.

Life is giving of oneself

Throughout his life, Jesus gave himself to others. He loved others unconditionally, regardless of the circumstances of their lives. His words, actions and resurrection show us that the path to giving and unconditional love is assured for all men and women who aspire to live life fully. This is, moreover, the meaning of his teaching : « Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life » (John 12. 24-25).

Because of the unavoidable difficulties with personal relationships, and the tragic or unfortunate events of human history, to love unconditionally is an exacting challenge but one well worth taking up. Life is an ongoing attempt at learning how to love; likewise, loving is the constant giving of oneself. It is both questing for meaning in life, and making life more meaningful by one's actions. It means freeing life from that which shackles it, e.g. aggression, human conflict, selfishness, thereby making the world a better place to live. To love unconditionally is to experience the reign of God and to contribute to its growth.

The Christian paradox resides in unconditional love. Men and women have long understood this, and have chosen to take up the challenge of love. They have agreed to build a more human and just world, and, in doing so, their life assumes its full meaning.

Life is a partnership between God and human beings

Because God is love, God could not be God without loving human beings, any more than human beings could attain to fullness of life without God. The relationship of God and human beings is that of a common project in which each partner has complete confidence in the other. Human beings were created in God's image and likeness, making them partners in creation. God gave them the responsibility of managing the world, in order to nourish and preserve life. The awareness of this responsibility as well as the awareness of God's constant loving care are solid bases that contribute to the quest for meaning in life.

Through their confidence in life, their innovative nature, creative freedom, hope, and the love they have for one another, human beings show that they are full partners in God's plan.

Diversity

Reincarnation

Believers in reincarnation claim that human beings assume different bodies through successive existences. Buddhist and Hindu thinkers view life as an infernal cycle of successive existences from which they must free themselves at all costs. Rebirth, therefore, is not sufficient for liberation. The idea of reincarnation, which is important to 25 to 30 percent of people in the West, developed mainly in the 19th century from late strains of Greek thought combined with the typically Western idea of ongoing progress toward a goal. This typically « Western » model of reincarnation is the one we will be looking at here.

The Western idea of reincarnation can be found within esoteric and occult circles, as well as in some New Age religions. A wide range of publications, TV and radio shows and symposia have promoted a new spirituality dubbed *New Age*, which focuses on the individual's need for self-actualization. As a result, a highly fluid concept of reincarnation has gained popularity throughout our society. This concept is not based on the specific teachings of any one teacher, but on personal accounts from various sources, personal experiences and a sincere desire to move forward. In these various strains of spirituality, it is generally thought that reincarnation is a long process spread over numerous existences, one that enables the human soul to discover its true divine nature. Western reincarnationists see successive rebirths as new chances to accomplish good works, to assume responsibility for oneself and one's personal progress, to become more and more inventive, free and responsible. These rebirths are considered necessary if the soul is to achieve divine fullness and dispense with the need for corruptible bodies.

The belief in reincarnation can give rise to an authentic inner search, and spark a desire for growth. For this reason, it merits our attention and respect. It remains true, however, that the concept of salvation as liberation of the soul by itself cannot be reconciled with the Christian notion of the resurrection of the body and soul as promised by God.

The Christian faith considers the body and soul together as an integral unit constitutive of the human person. According to the Christian view, it is unnecessary to talk about assuming « another body » in « another life ». Each person is a unity composed of a « mind », « soul » and « body », each part having its own importance.

In Christianity salvation is not synonymous with the attainment of divinity. The human ego is not God. Human beings are, in every respect, God's creatures, beings different from God. Throughout their lives they must accept the gift of life which God has freely bestowed on them.

God knows all people and promises to resurrect each and every one of them, leading them to a new form of life in which the body will be permanently transformed (1 Cor 15). Physical death will be vanquished once and for all, and human beings will have to endure it only once. This is the lesson of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, whose life on Earth, a life profoundly marked by love, was authenticated by God. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees the promise made to all men and women. Belief in the resurrection makes reincarnation an unnecessary means of transforming the human

person. Both views are based on differing concepts of the nature of God, human beings and the relationships that unite them.

The Inner Life

The quest for meaning in life requires that we take the time to consider our past experiences and our present situation, as well as our aspirations for the future. This is similar to what travellers do when they stop part way through their journey to take stock of the distance they have travelled and consider the distance they must still cover to reach their destination.

The ways of inner life are manifold. Silence enables us to listen to the life that is inside us. It opens the way to an infinitely rich inner world. It is often in silence that human beings find answers and solutions to the questions and problems confronting them—or, at least, the confidence, courage, hope and peace they need to pursue their goals. Viewed in this light, silence may help young people to break out of the isolation in which they often find themselves, as it contributes to a life rich in perceptions, feelings, ideas, dreams and projects.

Individual prayer is another path to inner life, one that helps us quest for a meaning in life. For Jesus, it was a daily necessity (Matt. 14.23; Luke 9.18; Mark 1.35). Through prayer, Jesus found the strength and courage required to carry out his mission. Prayer, for him, was an opportunity to share an intimate moment with God the Father, to be thankful for the gift of life and express his fears. Prayer can serve the same purpose for young people in their quest for meaning in life.

Contact with nature through hikes, seaside vacations, solitary walks and fireside chats afford other opportunities for us to take stock of our lives, to see where we are going and to decide where we want to go.

Keeping a diary is also an effective way for human beings to take stock of their experiences, express what bothers them and find solutions to their problems. A stay in a monastery or other retreat environment can also be a way for us to reflect, meditate and seek advice on how to live better, particularly since this approach is deeply rooted in Québec culture.

By adopting one or another of the pathways of inner life, human beings continue their quest for meaning in life and become more acutely aware that they are largely responsible for their own well-being and that of others. Cultivation of inner life facilitates a better understanding of oneself. It provides us with an opportunity to exist in harmony with ourselves and others, and with God and nature. It also enables us to make informed decisions about the ways we conduct our lives.

Action

Life is relationships in action. It presupposes interdependence and mutual responsibility, as well as an ongoing search for justice. In order to assume full responsibility for their lives, men and women have always opted for active involvement in society. Many of them have done so with the awareness that they are participating in God's plan. Strengthened by the meaning they see in their lives, they have ventured to convey to others the confidence, love, hope, boldness and sense of justice that motivates them. This is true of Mother Teresa, Father Emmett Johns (Pops), Albert Jacquard, Jean Vanier, Louise

Brisset, the Abbé Pierre and Lucille Teasdale. Their example is instructive for today's men and women, who are looking for meaning in their lives. It inspires commitment and community action, calls upon people to go beyond themselves and give of themselves to others. It also shows that we can overcome obstacles in our lives. Convinced that life has meaning, men and women also take the time to celebrate it. That is why they get together with friends, family, and colleagues, or with other members of the Christian community, to mark key steps and events such as birth, baptism, graduation, birthdays, marriage, promotion, death, etc.

TABLE 8 - MODULE 5

- **General competency** : To quest for meaning by studying how they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life while focusing particularly on the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- **Specific competency** : To recognize, in human and religious experience, guideposts that direct them in their quest for meaning.
- **The life experience** : 14- to 15-year-olds and how they relate to life
- **Judeo-Christian tradition** : Judeo-Christian tradition and the meaning of life
- **Diversity** : Reincarnation
- **The Inner Life** : The need to take stock during the quest for meaning in life
- **Action** : Actions which show that life has meaning
- **Moral values and attitudes** : Confidence, hope, love and courage
- **Approximate duration** : 10 hours

TOPIC	CONTENT	COMPETENCY INDICATORS
	Step 1 : Preparation	
	• The students' ideas and questions about life (attitudes, feelings, reasons for living, etc.) • The students' life experiences, both happy and unhappy.	• The students express their ideas and questions about life. • The students describe their life experiences, both happy and unhappy.
	Step 2 : Implementation	
	Judeo-Christian tradition Life, for Christians, is : • Invincible : Jesus' victory over death attests to this (Acts 13.32-33; John 20.1-31; John 21.1-14; Luke 24.13-35; etc.). • The gift of oneself (John 12.20-26); etc.). • Partnership between God and human beings (Gen. 2.8-15, etc.). Diversity • Reincarnation in Western thought (multiple lives, New Age concepts of body and soul, the liberation of the soul, differences between reincarnation and the resurrection (1 Cor. 15, etc.).	• The students name characteristics of life inspired by the Judeo-Christian tradition. • The students describe the main elements of reincarnation in Western thought. • The students explain the nature, role and need of silence, prayer and contact with nature.

I AM ALIVE - Does my life have meaning? - What is it good for? - What attitudes should I adopt towards life?	The Inner Life . The quest for meaning in life requires that we take time to meditate; silence, prayer (Matt. 14.23; Luke 9.18; Mark 1 :35 , etc.) and contact with nature are among a number of options (nature, role, necessity). Action . A meaningful life requires : - Active involvement (work, study, volunteer activities, festivities and community celebrations); - Attitudes of confidence, hope, love and courage.	. The students account for the various actions and attitudes through which human beings show that life has meaning.
	Step 3 : Integration	
		. The students select, from among the sources of information dealt with so far, the paths and attitudes that shed the most light on their quest for meaning in life.
	Evaluation for this section	
	Formative evaluation for this section is based on measurement instruments and activities designed to take account of competency indicators.	

POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

Preparation (about 2 hours)

- The students write down what they know about the theme of life as associated with the competency. The following are examples of questions that could stimulate discussion : What does life mean to you? Is it always pleasant? Is it worth living? Does it hold any surprises or disappointments in store for us? Do we have full control over our own lives? Do we need others in order to live? What are your reasons for living? What purpose does life have for you? Where does it lead? Are you always enthusiastic about life? Can you name any guideposts or beliefs that you rely on, that give meaning to your life and motivate you to live it?
- The teacher states the competency to be acquired and clarifies its meaning and scope.
- The teacher helps the students to define certain issues based on the original discussion : Does my life have a meaning for me? What is its purpose? What attitudes should I adopt in dealing with it?
- The teacher explains the group exercise to be completed during the Activation stage.
- The students explain how they understand the task to be carried out and how it may be useful to them.

Activation (about 5 hours)

- The students go over the competency to be acquired and the exercise to be completed.
- The teacher gives a step by step explanation of the cognitive and metacognitive strategies to be used when doing the learning task.

Essential elements of the learning task

- 1- Production of a personal study file.
 - 2- Reading and analysis of texts, and presentation of videos that help the students to draw upon the above-mentioned sources of information in exploring possible answers to the issues that have been defined.
 - 3- Preparation of an original group presentation before the class dealing with what has been learned.
- The students work as a team to perform the task, using the resources available in the classroom (team support, verification of achievements, etc.).

Integration (about 2 hours)

- The students, working as a team, present what they have learned in exploring the four sources of information.
- In the light of their discoveries, the students review the questions prompted by the original issue, as well as those that helped make it a topic for discussion. At this point, the teacher clarifies any aspects of the compulsory content that may not have been sufficiently covered.
- The students select, from the sources of information they have drawn upon, content that sheds light on their quest for meaning in life and that may help them illuminate the quest of others.
- The students explain how the competency they have learned will be useful in their daily lives.

Evaluation (about 1 hour)

This involves verification of the competency (see the competency indicators associated with the compulsory content of the section) based on a situation from daily life : specific forms of injustice and the reduction in the quality of family life, suicide, mourning, break-ups, failure in school, dropping out.

MODULE 6 : CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

GOALS

This module concludes the Secondary III program in Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction. It has two goals, the first of which is :

**To enable students to evaluate their progress during the school year,
particularly in terms of how they relate to
the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life.**

Module I enabled the students to familiarize themselves with the four themes of the program. It also provided them with an opportunity to express what they know or think about the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life in general. In subsequent sections they were able to deepen their knowledge of these realities. They are now invited to review their initial ideas and questions in the light of the skills acquired during the school year. In this way, they will be able to evaluate their own progress.

The second goal of this module is :

**To enable the students to identify the learning
that will be particularly useful to them
in their quest for meaning.**

Secondary III marks the end of Cycle One of secondary school. For a number of students, it may also be their last year in Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction. At this point, the teacher suggests that the students take time out to assess everything they have learned in this and preceding years, and to express how this learning may be useful in their lives and their quest for meaning. A rigorous and well-documented writing project will help students to clarify and integrate what they have learned. The discoveries to be covered could include the learning content as well as more external aspects of the studies carried out by the students throughout the year (peer contributions, work methods, analytical skills, critical thinking, problem solving, intellectual discipline, etc.)

Table 9 - MODULE 6

Conclusion

Duration : Approximately 3 hours

Goals	Learning Content	Indicators of Expected Behaviour
To enable students to evaluate their progress during the school year, particularly in terms of how they relate to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life.	Review of the students' initial questions with respect to the world, evil and suffering, symbols and life. The learning achieved in relation to these four themes.	The students : • take the time to reexamine their initial ideas and questions; • take note of the ways in which their initial ideas have changed, as well as the answers they have found.
To enable the students to identify the learning that will be particularly useful to them in their quest for meaning.	The learning achieved in the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program, and how it is likely to help the students in their quest for meaning (content, work method, cooperation, team spirit, intellectual discipline, critical thinking, problem solving, etc.).	The students express what they have learned during the year, and how it may be useful to them in their quest for meaning.

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