

Secondary School Curriculum

CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AND MORAL INSTRUCTION

SECONDARY FIVE

Translated from the French at the Direction de la production en langue anglaise, Services à la communauté anglophone.

Approved by the Comité catholique
of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation
September 22-23, 1994

© Gouvernement du Québec
Ministère de l'Éducation

ISBN: 2-550-09656-8

Legal Deposit:
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec, 1994

The Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program for Secondary V is issued in compliance with section 3 of the *Basic school regulation for secondary school education*. It has been approved by the Comité catholique 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). It has been authorized for teaching Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction in the schools as of July 1, 1994.

Jean Garon
Minister of Education

Acknowledgments

During the development of the Secondary V Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program, the MEQ personnel involved in the project benefited from the consideration, expertise and work of many individuals. Whether they provided ongoing assistance or helped with specific problems, all these individuals contributed to the advancement of the project and we would like to take this opportunity to express our most sincere thanks to each of them.

We would also like to acknowledge the support we received from teachers and Christian education consultants throughout Québec who helped field-test a draft version of the program during the 1992-93 school year. The comments received from these individuals by the regional representatives for Catholic education helped to clarify and improve the working document.

Lastly, we would like to thank the members of the advisory committees who gave a careful reading to a more advanced version of the program. These individuals, in turn, made valuable observations that helped bring about the completion of the project.

Introduction	1
1. Orientations of the Program	
1.1 Objectives of the Program	7
1.2 The Process of Discernment	9
1.3 Pedagogical Presuppositions	10
1.4 Teaching Approach	12
1.5 Learning	13
1.6 The Values Outlined in the Program	15
1.7 Structure of the Program	16
2. Description of the Program by Module	
2.1 Religious Diversity	21
2.2 The Church in the World	29
2.3 Social Challenges	37
2.3.1 Violence	41
2.3.2 Poverty	49
2.3.3 Work	55
2.4 Events in the News	63

3. Evaluation of Learning	
3.1 Evaluation of Competence	73
3.2 Formative and Summative Evaluation	73
4. The Program in Relation to Secondary School Studies as a Whole	
4.1 Links with the Other Programs	79
4.2 Links with Pastoral Animation	79
Bibliography	81

Young people today find themselves living in a complex society presenting a confusing array of forces, values and beliefs. They face a multitude of options and ethical choices, the consequences of which they are not always aware. Sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds have their own perception of the dominant values and currents of opinion in their community and are increasingly aware of the influences at work in society. Students in the upper years of secondary school feel the weight of family and community expectations with respect to the path they will take¹ and have questions about their identity and their future in society. They want to have the freedom to find themselves and to fulfil their dreams and ambitions.

There is no easy way of achieving this, however. It can be very difficult and young people know this.² Many expect the education they receive, especially in religion, to be applicable right away and "to help them to understand the things that happen, to help them to grow and to help them to come to terms with the sacred and profane world in which we live."³

In fact, what is at play in this fantastic transformation of mind and body that is adolescence, is the discovery of the power to think for oneself and the power to gradually take charge of one's life on all levels: intellectual, social, affective and spiritual.⁴

In order to take control of their lives, young people need to examine and express their points of view openly, within a framework that offers support and guidance. The use of checklists and criteria will help them to increase their understanding of the world around them by providing them with a means of supporting their judgments. They need to test their own problem-solving abilities. In short, young people must be equipped to take up the challenge of being autonomous, from all points of view, including that of faith.

1. Québec, Comité catholique, *Éthique, spiritualité et religion au cégep*, Research report, (Québec, 1992).

2. A number of recent studies discuss the difficulties and needs of young people today. See Québec, ministère de l'Éducation, Direction de l'enseignement catholique, *Beyond Outward Appearances: Survey on the Moral and Spiritual Experience of Young People in Secondary School*, Code 32-8004A (Québec: ministère de l'Éducation, 1993) and Jacques Grandmaison et al., *Le drame spirituel des adolescents. Profils sociaux et religieux* (Montréal: Éditions Fides, Cahier d'études pastorales, n° 10, 1992).

3. Québec, Comité catholique, recommendations to the Minister of Education, June 1991, *L'enseignement moral et religieux catholique au secondaire. Pour un enseignement mieux adapté aux jeunes et aux contextes actuels*, Code 50-1025 (Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation, 1991), p. 4. [Free translation]

4. See Philippe Merieu, "Mais comment peut-on être adolescent?" in *Pédagogie collégiale*, December 1992, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 29-32.

Adolescents are very pragmatic in matters of religion. They want to know now what faith has to say about life in general and the life on which they are embarking in an autonomous fashion. To believe, they need to experience the nourishing nature of the Word and of faith. Allergic to half measures, young people want faith, the Church and religious education to bring them something and to have meaning in today's world.

With these considerations in mind, the authors of this program set out to address the needs and concerns of students. The questions raised in the program have relevance for young people and the issues set before them are current ones.

Examples:

- Responding to the ever-increasing diversity of religious options in Québec society.
- Responding to the world's social problems, such as widespread violence, the undervaluing of work, increasing poverty.
- Determining the values on which to base collective solutions and policies in the face of these problems.
- Determining whether life's events (e.g. an achievement, an accident, a discovery, an encounter) have meaning.
- Determining whether the message of the Bible is meaningful in today's world.
- Determining the roles of the Church in contemporary society, which is dominated by individualism, the law of might, and the assertion of individual rights resulting from the attitude of "every man for himself."
- Determining whether the Church, as a community of believers, has something to offer, now and in the future, in response to the aspirations of individuals and of peoples.

In short, this program offers students an opportunity to consider openly some of the real questions regarding faith today.

The program is divided into four parts. Part one presents the orientations of the program, part two outlines the program's four modules, part three describes the evaluation process, and part four explains how the program fits into secondary education as a whole.

The Catholic Moral and Religious Instruction program for Secondary V is presented clearly and simply, in response to recommendations made by the Comité catholique in 1991 with a view to adapting religious education to the needs and concerns of young people and to contemporary

society.⁵ The six essential learning tasks set out by the Comité catholique and the expectations as to pedagogical renewal largely determined the choices made in this program. These choices are reflected in the organization, objectives, teaching approach and guidelines for carrying out activities.

With respect to the learning content, the program follows the bishops' pastoral guidelines in *Catholic Religious Instruction*, incorporating the elements suggested for Secondary V students: the mystery of the Church, the Christian's commitment in the Church and in the world, and the diversity of religions.⁶

Many consultations were held during the development of this program, which was field-tested in a number of Québec secondary schools in 1992-93. Thus, the program in its present form is truly the result of a major collaborative effort.

5. Québec, Comité catholique, *L'enseignement moral et religieux catholique au secondaire. Pour un enseignement mieux adapté aux jeunes et aux contextes actuels*.

6. Assemblée des évêques du Québec, *Catholic Religious Instruction: Pastoral Guidelines* (Montréal: L'Assemblée des évêques du Québec, May 1989).



1. ORIENTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

The general goal of the school, which is to help prepare young people for life, involves all subject areas. In keeping with this goal, the education given to students is aimed at enabling them to become accomplished, responsible individuals in society. To this end, it introduces them to learning tasks and skills that will open the way to a successful life, now and in the future.

The Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program fits in with this general goal. The aim is to encourage young people to start working responsibly for the future of all humanity,⁷ through an enlightened faith, keen hope and active charity. The program offers students in their final year of secondary school an opportunity to review their Christian education.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

The key word in the program is DISCERNMENT—moral discernment and discernment with respect to faith. The **general objective** is:

TO LEARN TO APPROACH LIFE SITUATIONS WITH CHRISTIAN DISCERNMENT

This means giving the students what they need to become mature men and women who are capable of distinguishing between good and evil in everyday life; capable of recognizing that which liberates, promotes growth in and gives meaning to faith in the Church; capable of understanding themselves and of understanding others from the perspective of faith.

Discernment can be defined, in a broad sense, as the ability to judge things clearly and soundly. In other words, a person who is discerning is able to perceive, appreciate and recognize the true value of a given reality. In this sense, religious education is not the only subject that can help the students learn to use discernment. Other subjects contribute as well. The Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program considers discernment from a Christian perspective, drawing on ethical criteria specific to Christianity.

That is why our consideration of discernment must be in a context that takes into account the spiritual dimension of the human experience, the search for the meaning of life and the necessary reflection on what one's relationship with God, with others and with oneself might be. The ethical criteria used in reaching moral judgments are mainly drawn from the Gospel and the Church's tradition of faith, together with criteria inspired by human wisdom.

7. Québec, Comité catholique, *L'enseignement moral et religieux catholique au secondaire. Pour un enseignement mieux adapté aux jeunes et aux contextes actuels*, p. 5.

Thus, in the context of this program, to discern means to analyze concrete situations from life with the help of criteria recognized by the Christian faith and tradition, in order to judge reality from the perspective of faith, find meaning, and recognize attitudes in harmony with the message of Jesus Christ.

The **general objective** reflects the **basic educational aim** underlying the program: to foster in the students the ability to approach life with Christian discernment. This **global competence** determines the orientation of each of the terminal objectives, the approach to the learning content covered and the type of interaction favoured between student and teacher.

The **terminal objectives** are, in a manner of speaking, subsets of the general objective. There are terminal objectives for all four modules in the program. Each one identifies **specific areas of competence** and calls for the **acquisition of complementary knowledge, skills and attitudes**. Here, theoretical knowledge must contribute to the students' comprehension if they are to gain deeper understanding through reflection. Thus, this program goes beyond the accumulation of facts to emphasize the assimilation of knowledge. The cognitive and affective dimensions of learning are inextricably linked and the skills targeted by the terminal objectives encourage the students' growth in all dimensions: cognitive, affective, social, moral and spiritual.

Students who attain the terminal objectives will be able:

To respond to religious diversity from the standpoint of Christian identity.

To appreciate the Church's contribution in view of the challenges facing today's world.

To consider alternatives to violent behaviour in the name of the Gospel and of human ideals.

To respond to situations of poverty from a Christian perspective.

To look for meaning in their work experiences from a Christian perspective.

To interpret events in the news from a Christian perspective.

In pursuing these objectives, the students learn to reflect on life, to perceive its complexity and the issues it gives rise to, and to find meaning in it. Throughout the school year, the program fosters the development of two habits: using criteria to support a judgment and drawing on

human and Christian wisdom to discover reasons for living. It provides the students with keys to understanding reality that enable them to make an initial summary of their beliefs and hopes.

1.2 THE PROCESS OF DISCERNMENT

To convey the program's educational aim most effectively, the process of discernment is centred around three related focuses: awareness, understanding and personalization.

Focusing on AWARENESS involves the collection and organization of information. It is a matter of gathering all the information that the students know or discover or that the teacher provides them with. This information makes it easier to understand a given situation and should help the students to use discernment. Awareness implies objectivity. The students are called upon to step outside themselves, to put aside their own emotions and perceptions in order to look at things from the outside, to observe the facts. Awareness leads to seeing.

Focusing on UNDERSTANDING provides an opportunity to shed light, to cast a critical eye on reality, to seek recourse in human wisdom, in the Word of God, in the teachings of the Church and in dialogue with others in order to weigh the issues of the human experience treated as information. It is the very heart of discernment for moral conduct and a life of faith. In all situations, questions are put to the human and Christian conscience: What is the meaning of experience? What is the right thing to do? What behaviours or attitudes should be adopted as a result? At this time, the students attempt, with the teacher, to respond in part to these questions by applying the criteria for discernment based on human wisdom and the wisdom of God. Understanding leads to judging.

Focusing on PERSONALIZATION provides the students with an opportunity to review their ways of thinking and acting and their attitudes to certain realities, as individuals and as believers. The purpose of this questioning is not to induce the students to make a specific commitment, nor is it to get them to make quick decisions. The purpose is both modest and realistic: to lay out the options for the students. Personalization leads to Christian action.

The relationship among these focuses is best viewed in terms of a **circular movement** which, in its progression, combines the external apprehension of a reality (the focus on awareness), examination of the spiritual and moral issues that it raises (the focus on understanding), and the fundamental and personal satisfaction that the students derive from arriving at the meanings identified (the focus on personalization). These three focuses are intimately and inextricably bound, like so many aspects of the same process of discernment, like a movement from the outside to the inside, from the surface to the depths, to reach the essential.

1.3 PEDAGOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS

The orientation of this program presupposes that the teacher will:

- **take a comprehensive, competence-based approach;**
- **help the students to channel their experience and knowledge;**
- **act as a catalyst and guide to the students.**

Taking a Comprehensive, Competence-based Approach

The teacher's role is to help the students to acquire a level of competence that will enable them to distinguish, from a Christian point of view, between good and evil. This presupposes the development of a set of intellectual, affective and spiritual skills that are not all specific to religious education. To be sure, some of these skills do stem from religious education, but they are also part of the basic education to which all subjects contribute.

The intellectual skills in question include the ability to gather and classify information, to make connections and comparisons between different pieces of information, to perceive different points of view, to analyze a situation using criteria for discernment, and to develop an argument.

The affective skills include the ability to recognize their own feelings and to perceive the feelings of others, to become aware of and to tolerate the ambiguity of certain situations, to be sensitive to people's aspirations and desires, and to be open to the ideal of having values.

The spiritual skills include the ability to perceive the larger questions of existence, to be silent and introspective, to turn to the Word of God, and to recognize the appeals contained in the Gospel.

These skills are based on the knowledge set out in the program and tie in with specific knowledge and attitudes.

Helping the Students to Channel Their Experience and Knowledge

The students have already accumulated a sizable and diverse body of knowledge and experienced a variety of situations that influence their perception of reality. This **knowledge based on**

experience is made up of mental images, memories, emotions and knowledge of all kinds. In working through the program modules the teacher should allow **considerable room for this experience**, which forms an integral part of the "knowledge" necessary for discernment. Here, learning draws on all levels of the students' experience: what they know, believe, think and feel about a given reality.

It is the intention of the program that **the students take an active part in the learning process**: asking questions, looking for the necessary information, observing, making connections, analyzing, discovering, expressing their points of view, challenging themselves, deciding what is important in their lives and what their plans are. The teacher should allow the students to find their own way and help them to recognize the progress they have made. Indeed, the general process of discernment suggested throughout the program is intended to allow each student to "progress" at a pace that is in keeping with his or her personal characteristics and level of maturity. In this way, the classroom becomes a social microcosm in which each student can contribute.

Acting as a Catalyst and Guide to the Students

In this program, the teacher serves as a **catalyst** and a **guide**: he or she gets the students to think critically and prepares them for life, as individuals and as believers. To do this, the teacher must place a great deal of importance on the students' questions and help them to find appropriate answers. Without claiming to have all the answers, the teacher has a responsibility to help the students learn to think in an organized fashion and to support the judgments they make. As a fellow seeker of God, the teacher contributes to what the students draw from the wells of human and Christian wisdom in search of the answers to their questions. Thus, the teacher plays several roles:

- encouraging the students to express themselves and to engage in discussion;
- helping the students, through explanations and feedback, to become aware of the way they think;
- summarizing information gathered and, together with the students, reviewing ground already covered before pursuing a given question further;
- acting as a catalyst to help the students discover the knowledge they hold inside themselves and their ability to think critically;
- acting as a mirror, reflecting the students' own images back to them so that they can assess their ways of being and of acting.

The program is organized in a way that allows the teacher a great deal of freedom in carrying out these roles.⁸

1.4 TEACHING APPROACH

As mentioned earlier, the three focuses of the discernment process—awareness, understanding and personalization—interact. They are neither fragmented, nor are they necessarily arranged in linear fashion. For example, in class, the teacher and students may go back to a focus already covered, or the focuses may overlap, depending on the students' pace or their level of awareness. It could also happen that when the focus is on awareness, the students try to recognize the fundamental issues at stake (focus on understanding). When focusing on personalization, it may be necessary to review criteria that were used in discernment. Thus, the **dynamic nature of the process of discernment calls for a specific teaching approach.**

In this program, teachers need to have a firm grasp of the process of discernment and must employ the teaching strategies that will be most effective with their students, depending on the subjects raised. Here, discussion will be limited to reminding teachers of the purpose of the activities to be organized for each focus in the process of discernment and to providing examples of appropriate activities.

When the focus is on AWARENESS, the teacher should organize activities that encourage the exploration and organization of information: having the students tell (with or without guidance) what they know about a given subject; supervised surveys and research (carried out individually or in groups); the use of charts for classifying and organizing information; talks, reading, presentations of group work in class.

When the focus is on UNDERSTANDING, the teacher should organize activities that question conventional wisdom and outward appearances. The activities should go beyond the facts to highlight the human and Christian issues in a given experience with a view to promoting the students' ability to think critically: the use of charts, witnesses and counter-witnesses, arguing and "expertise," and emphasis on the repeated application in various situations of criteria for discernment arising from human and Christian wisdom.

When the focus is on PERSONALIZATION, the teacher should organize activities that allow the students to reflect on their ways of being and of acting and to look for personal meaning in what they have learned. A variety of activities are possible, including writing or art (e.g. poems,

8. See section 1.7.

songs, prayers, posters); keeping a journal; setting aside moments for silence, relaxation or meditation; creating self-portraits; and daydreaming.

The **curriculum guide** suggests teaching strategies that follow a particular sequence of operations: summarizing the information that is available on a given human experience; evaluating the issues particular to the experience, using criteria drawn from human and Christian wisdom; taking a position on these issues. The logic of the order of presentation should not be allowed to detract from the dynamic nature of the learning task and the interaction between students and teacher. The teaching method used should promote critical thinking and help the students to learn how to live.

The goal here is not to show what it means to lead a human and Christian life, but rather to DISCOVER A MEANING to one's life, as an individual and as a believer. The teaching approach that is adopted should therefore unfold like an **open process** for all concerned, students and teacher, who, together, are searching for meaning.

1.5 LEARNING

The students' learning tasks in this program are to:

- **become open to gathering and processing information;**
- **grapple with the ethical and spiritual issues identified;**
- **be willing to question their own views and attitudes.**

Becoming Open to Gathering and Processing Information

The focus on AWARENESS fosters interest in a particular issue on which to exercise discernment. Before they can start gathering and processing information pertaining to the issue, the students need to have some sense of the object of study, to be aware of what they are expected to learn and to grasp how the targeted learning can be useful to them. This is part of the preparation essential to any learning.

In doing the activities organized by the teacher, the students will become more familiar with the subject at hand by learning how to look for, gather, organize and process the relevant information that is available.

At the assimilation stage, the students will assess what they have learned and their work methods, most likely discovering in the process that organizing information in this way is an essential step in the exercise of discernment. It calls for curiosity and intellectual honesty along with effort and objectivity.

Grappling with the Ethical and Spiritual Issues Identified

The students will have little interest in seeking UNDERSTANDING of a given topic if they have no unresolved questions in mind, if no meaningful issues have been set before them, if they do not perceive certain "enigmas"⁹ to be solved, or if they do not see any moral or spiritual choices to be made. That is why it is important when preparing the students to reflect on the subject at hand to give them an opportunity to consider questions that stimulate their interest in looking for answers to the ethical and spiritual problems raised. In the course of the learning process the students will have an opportunity to find the elements of an answer by applying criteria for human and Christian discernment to various situations.

Through these repeated exercises and the quest for enlightenment and answers emerges a skill at recognizing life-affirming guidelines in human and Christian wisdom. Students may draw on these guidelines in making ethical and spiritual judgments. It is in this sense that one can speak of assimilation of knowledge.

Being Willing to Question Their Own Views and Attitudes

It is possible for the students to be very skilled at recognizing criteria for discernment and applying them in a given situation, thereby demonstrating intellectual ability, without, however, feeling personally involved in the subject at hand. But the students want to have an immediate sense of how this process of reflection will affect them.¹⁰ The focus on PERSONALIZATION allows the students to reflect on a more personal and vital level by giving them the time and the means to do so. In order to prepare themselves, the students must distance themselves somewhat from what has been debated and discussed in class.

The learning activities organized for them should enable the students to ask themselves the extent to which they have been affected by the discussion and how they feel, as individuals and as

9. In the words of Philippe Merieu.

10. Students' expectations of the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction course are discussed in *Beyond Outward Appearances*, p. 125-126.

Christians, about the proposed values and attitudes: What should they do? Can they remain indifferent, going on just as before? What do they feel called upon to do from now on?

By the end of the learning process, the students should be aware of the benefits in comprehension, self-assurance, daring and conviction that this exercise in discernment is bringing them with regard to the subject at hand, and be able to comment on the personal and spiritual progress they have made.

The students, as individuals and as Christians, should feel richer on a spiritual level and intellectually better prepared to deal with life. The students will not necessarily have this feeling in each module, but at least some students will experience it occasionally or, in a general sense, for the year as a whole.

1.6 THE VALUES OUTLINED IN THE PROGRAM

The Word of God, manifested in Jesus Christ and in the teachings of the Church, bears values for Christians. These values are not exclusive to believers, for they are human values. Nevertheless, faith highlights the values, making some of them all but inescapable for anyone who calls on the spirit of Jesus Christ. This program aims at promoting the following values:

- respect for the dignity of each human being, created, according to the Scriptures, in "the image of God";
- respect for the rights of the individual, as inspired by the Good News of Salvation and stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- respect for the religious experience of the individual, called for by Vatican II; this respect is one of tolerance, of openness to the faith of others, of collaboration with other believers in the building of a more humane world, and one that applies equally to Christianity, which must be proclaimed in the common search for truth;
- respect for the golden rule of human wisdom, taken up by Jesus himself: "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." (Mt 7:12);
- a sense of justice and human solidarity, strongly emphasized by the prophets of the Old Testament, by Jesus himself, and in the social teachings of the Church, especially in the twentieth century;
- a sense of one's innermost self and of spiritual questioning about the presence and action of God in one's life and in the lives of men and women today;
- a sense of community and of hope in view of the challenges facing our world today and in the future of humanity.

These values, which are taken up in one form or another in each of the program modules, form the core of the program. They are central to a sense of Christian identity, which the program aims to consolidate in the students. They are also part of a dynamic current of openness to what is other, to other human beings and to the world, thereby promoting the active, efficient integration of young people into society. The program tends to promote balance between identity and otherness by making the students aware that today it is important that moral attitudes be developed in light of the teachings of the Church and through dialogue and in solidarity with others by feeling our way along the path to humanization.

1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The program consists of four modules: Religious Diversity, The Church in the World, Social Challenges (Violence, Poverty, Work) and Events in the News.

Teachers may decide the order in which they wish to introduce the first three modules, depending on the students' needs and other relevant factors. It is not necessary to follow the sequence in which the four modules are presented here.¹¹

It should be noted, however, that the **Social Challenges module** includes three terminal objectives. Teachers should choose two social challenges, to ensure that the recommended number of periods is spent on this module. Teachers may wish to cover two of the topics suggested in the program, or cover one topic from the program and a second topic of their choice.¹²

The fourth module, Events in the News, does not lend itself to being scheduled into a particular time slot. Here again, teachers should use their professional judgment. As the name suggests, this module deals with events that occur in the course of the school year and that affect the students. To ensure that the students have the necessary skills to interpret the events from a Christian perspective, the teacher should take advantage of opportunities during the year to go over this process.

The structure of the program is simple and not confining, allowing teachers considerable freedom to use their initiative and encouraging the students to draw on their creativity.

11. The relative importance of each module is indicated by the number of hours that teachers are recommended to spend on it.

12. Further details are provided in the curriculum guide.

The next section of the document describes each module in terms of the five essential components that form the skeleton, as it were, of the program. In addition to background information, which shows how the subject at hand is relevant to students in Secondary V, each module contains:

1. a **terminal objective** and **indicators of competence** that describe the various aspects of the competence targeted by the objective;
2. **content components** related to the AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING and PERSONALIZATION focuses that make up the process of discernment;
3. **remarks**, or guidelines for carrying out activities in class, depending on the subject;
4. the **focuses of evaluation** selected for verifying attainment of the competence.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM BY MODULE

2.1 RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Approximate class time: 15 hours

BACKGROUND

Over the last few decades, Québec has become host to a profusion of religious groups of many different origins. The Catholic and Protestant churches familiar to Québec communities have been joined by houses of worship of various other groups. The large urban centres are home to increasing numbers of synagogues, mosques and pagodas. A number of different churches and religious groups now use television to reach the public and preach their path to salvation. In recent years, the New Age movement has appeared with force in the media and in bookstores.

Of course, one of the main factors in this increase in religious diversity is immigration, which year in, year out brings us some 45 000 new citizens from around the world. Another reason is the spiritual evolution of Quebecers.

Today, anyone can experience other cultures and religions. This is especially the case in the cosmopolitan city of Montréal, but even in villages with homogeneous populations, religious diversity makes itself felt through television and other media.

Religious diversity arouses a range of reactions, including indifference, anxiety, curiosity, openness and intolerance. It is possible to go through life without really being affected by it. Until the day, that is, that a parent, brother, or perhaps a neighbour announces that he or she is a member of a sect or a new religion, or a colleague or a friend tells you about his or her particular religious choice and the rigorous principles that go along with it. One day, at school, on the street or in your home, you may be invited to join a religious group. Certain questions may arise: What is the purpose of religion? Are all religions valid? What of my Catholic faith?

Young people growing up in our pluralistic society, which is becoming increasingly diversified in terms of religion, need to be made aware of interdenominational and interreligious reality. They may also be enriched by the diverse cultures of origin of their peers and by accepting the existence of many different cultural communities.

Here, religious education finds the perfect opportunity for demonstrating its universal character, openness to others, and contribution to the understanding and friendship so indispensable in the Québec of today and tomorrow.

The goal of this module is not to introduce the students to the entire complicated array of religions and religious trends. Indeed, that would be an inappropriate challenge to their abilities and interest. The objective is more modest and practical in nature.

The aim is to help the students to respond to religious diversity, in other words, to refine their initial reactions and develop attitudes of openness and discernment regarding the various religions in their community.

In teaching this module, teachers may choose to draw on the students' familiarity with their own community and with the Christian tradition. This is, in effect, the point of departure from which the students will gradually take a personal position vis-à-vis the inherent values of the various religions.

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE

To respond to religious diversity from the standpoint of Christian identity.

INDICATORS OF COMPETENCE

The students demonstrate attainment of the terminal objective by being able to:

- recognize characteristics of religious groups other than Catholics;
- understand what religion means to people;
- draw on criteria that will allow them to take a critical look at different religious groups;
- draw on criteria that promote good relations among followers of different religions;
- review their personal situations with respect to Catholic values and beliefs;
- become aware that better interreligious understanding enriches the lives of individuals and groups.

RELATED CONTENT

AWARENESS COMPONENTS

- Questions, feelings and judgments inspired by religious diversity
- Characteristics of contemporary religious groups: practices, beliefs, lifestyle, places of worship, significant dates and places
- Characteristics of different religions, religious groups, churches, sects, the New Age movement, etc.

- Role of religion in people's lives

UNDERSTANDING COMPONENTS

- Criteria for taking a critical look at different religious groups with respect to:
 - their concept of the individual
 - the role of religion
 - Christianity
- Criteria for promoting good relations among members of different religious groups:
 - respect for freedom of conscience and religion
 - fidelity to one's own convictions
 - love, as the essential requirement of the Gospel, and willingness to collaborate in humanitarian projects and causes

PERSONALIZATION COMPONENTS

- Examination of personal convictions and religious behaviours in light of what they have learned
- Awareness of the personal and collective enrichment that results from interreligious understanding

REMARKS

- Allow the students to exercise critical judgment by having them distinguish what is valid from what is less valid in different acts of religious expression.
- Encourage the students to express themselves in a climate of freedom and mutual respect.
- Give the students an opportunity to examine their religious convictions.
- Engage the students in a research project to discover the beliefs and inner experience of the members of a particular religious group, rather than guiding them toward an encyclopedic knowledge of several different groups.

- Ensure the availability of sufficient relevant documentation.

FOCUSES OF EVALUATION

KNOWLEDGE

- Distinctions essential to an understanding of various religious concepts: religions, religious groups, churches, sects, the New Age movement, etc.
- Characteristics of a religious group: practices, beliefs, lifestyle, places of worship, significant dates and places
- Role of religion

SKILLS

- Taking a critical look at different religious groups, using criteria for discernment
- Determining the behaviours to adopt in interreligious relations, using criteria for discernment

ATTITUDES

- Are the students open to examining their personal religious convictions and behaviours?
- Are the students open to understanding the religious experience of others?
- Are the students open to improving their present or future relations with others?

2.2 THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

Approximate class time: 15 hours

BACKGROUND

There is no denying that by the time they are 16 or 17 years of age, most young people have already started moving away from the Church. Nevertheless, it would be impossible to undertake an examination of faith such as that outlined in the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program without making reference to the Church.

Is this a subject to be treated with kid gloves? Is it better to proceed with caution than to plunge right in? In this program, a choice was made to take a frank and direct approach to the Roman Catholic Church, beginning with its most controversial and visible aspect: the Church as an institution.

The students will come to discover that the Church has a spiritual mission guided by the Holy Spirit. It is within this institution that the movement of liberation and hope begun by Jesus and his first disciples has been carried forward for the last 2000 years. From its beginnings in Palestine, the movement spread to new communities, experiencing successes and failures over the centuries. It is a movement that, even in the darkest hours of its history, has constantly found new strength by renewing itself in the spirit of the Gospel. A number of figures have marked its course in one way or another: Francis of Assisi, Martin Luther, Marie de l'Incarnation, Marguerite Bourgeois, Vincent de Paul, John XXIII and so many more of the faithful.

Presented as a movement that initiates, brings solidarity, transforms the order of things and heralds the liberation of humanity, the Church can be perceived as an ally by young people seeking a more humane world. It can become meaningful to the students, given the need for community and solidarity in the world, provided that they learn about Christians active in our own time and that they hear the message of hope that the Church has borne for 2000 years and that today argues against a society marked by individualism, materialism, competition favouring the strong, and the marginalization of the weak.

As we approach the twenty-first century, young people need to become aware that the future of humanity lies in the rediscovery of solidarity within families, between generations, between peoples, and between human beings and the cosmos. The Church can initiate this discourse and propose a plan for society that inspires young people. It can offer a comprehensive and promising vision of the future.

This module offers the students an opportunity to take a serious look at their religious heritage and what it can represent and contribute in today's world.

THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE

To appreciate the Church's contribution in view of the challenges facing today's world.

INDICATORS OF COMPETENCE

The students demonstrate attainment of the terminal objective by being able to:

- perceive different dimensions of the Church: the Church as an institution, the Church as a community of the faithful;
- become aware of the Church's mission as a movement of liberation and hope started by Jesus;
- discover how Christians, at different points in history, have been part of the movement started by Jesus;
- recognize how the Church can be a source of liberation and hope in today's world;
- become aware of their place and their role in the Church.

RELATED CONTENT

AWARENESS COMPONENTS

- Questions, feelings and judgments inspired by the Church today
- The Church as an institution:
 - the local Church (dioceses, parishes, movements, etc.) and the universal Church
 - the different roles performed by Christians
 - the Catholic Church and the other Christian churches

- The Church as a community of the faithful:
 - united by the Gospel and under the action of the risen Christ (images of the Church: people, city, family, body, temple)
 - with a mission: to be a movement of liberation and hope in the world through
 - the affirmation of life and the proclamation of the Word
 - the promotion of human community
 - commitment to serving the world
 - common prayer and celebration

UNDERSTANDING COMPONENTS

- Characteristics of the movement started by Jesus and his first disciples:
 - movement of liberation
 - movement of hope
- Ways in which the Church can be a movement of liberation and hope in the world:
 - the lessons of history
 - Throughout time, individuals and groups have expressed the profound mission of the Church:
 - * the martyrs, in the first three centuries
 - * Francis of Assisi, in the thirteenth century
 - * the reformers of the sixteenth century
 - * John XXIII, in the twentieth century (Vatican II)
 - * the leaders of the Church in Québec
 - the contribution of the Church today
 - list of challenges facing the world today with respect to relations between people, generations, nations, humanity and the environment, humanity and God
 - the Church's contribution in the face of these challenges: the promotion of a new type of relationship between human beings (service, forgiveness, sharing, equality), of justice and charity, of an inner spirit and of communion

PERSONALIZATION COMPONENTS

- Expression of desire by the students to help make society more humane
- Reflection by the students on their interest in taking their rightful places in the Church

REMARKS

- Allow the students to express their perceptions of the Church.
- Show the students that all institutions become weighed down with time, lose their dynamic quality, and may stray from their initial missions. Hence the importance of having believers faithful to the Gospel within the Church.
- Handle the subject in a balanced way; point out the strengths of the Church, and especially its contribution to Québec society in the past, present and future, but also mention its weaknesses.
- Allow the students to imagine a church that meets their expectations and the expectations of the world, and that lives up to the promises of liberation and hope in the Gospel.

FOCUSES OF EVALUATION

KNOWLEDGE

- Different dimensions of the Church as an institution
- The Church's profound mission

SKILLS

- Illustrating how individuals and groups have expressed the Church's profound mission at a given point in history
- Identifying examples of contributions the Church has made with respect to the challenges facing today's world

ATTITUDES

- Are the students interested in creating a more humane world?
- Are the students prepared to question their place in the Church?

2.3 SOCIAL CHALLENGES

- VIOLENCE

- POVERTY

- WORK

Approximate class time: 12 hours

Social Challenges

By the age of 16 or 17, young people are beginning to take an interest in societal issues: social inequalities, relations between ethnic groups, interactions among peoples, population migrations, and underdevelopment, with all of its consequences. They are gradually becoming aware of the fact that the world's problems are manifestly collective problems that call for collective, or political, solutions.

In the final year of secondary school, it is important that religious education encourage students to take an interest in these larger questions that affect the very future of humanity. The secret of the human condition can be found in this human solidarity in good times and in bad. This collective concern is an integral part of Christianity and cannot be reduced to individual virtues or private charity. To be sure, the responsibility must be shared.

In reality, 16- and 17-year-olds have little influence over these problems and they should not be made to feel personally responsible for them. Nevertheless, even though they did not create the problems they will have to deal with them and so it is important that they become aware of the issues.

The Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program looks at three social challenges: violence, poverty and work. These topics have been chosen because of their tremendous social importance.

Violence: *Physical, verbal and psychological violence is widespread: in the family, between groups, in society, between nations. Examining this topic provides an opportunity to establish moral guidelines that are indispensable to personal equilibrium and to living together in a rapidly changing society.*

Poverty: *Poverty is an ever-growing phenomenon in our world. Current economic and political upheavals are causing deep cracks in our societies and are responsible for new forms of poverty. Studying this phenomenon will make young people more aware of the ethical issues, the complexity of the problems, and the importance of working toward solutions.*

Work: *For 16- and 17-year-olds, getting their first job is often their first real experience of adult society. Entering the job market is becoming increasingly difficult, however, in view of the uncertainty surrounding their career choices, lack of job security and the threat of unemployment. By discussing this topic they will have an opportunity to discover the meaning that work has in our changing society.*

Teachers should cover two social challenges over the course of the year. They might wish to select both from the topics presented in the program or cover one from the program and a second topic of their choice.

Thus, teachers have the freedom to include a topic not developed in the program but that they feel is relevant to their students. In order to respect the intentions of the program, however, teachers should follow the procedure outlined at the beginning of the third module in the curriculum guide, under the heading "Other Social Challenges."

In addition, teachers who select a topic other than those in the program should make sure that:

1. the topic is socially relevant with respect to the major ethical challenges facing society, as described earlier;
2. they avoid introducing a topic already covered in Secondary IV religious education or in other programs (e.g. drugs, abortion, suicide, love, sexuality).

2.3.1 VIOLENCE

BACKGROUND

Physical, verbal and psychological violence is widespread. Violence in the street, in the home, at school, in the headlines, on the evening news, in commercials, in hit films.

Visible violence arouses indignation and horror. Those who have suffered indignities and whose most basic rights have been violated are pitied. People or nations who are guilty of aggression are denounced. Powerless to react, we feel uncomfortable.

Violence also has the power to captivate. Those who prevail are seen as heroes. The strategy or ingenuity to beat another person or group gets attention. There are any number of explanations or justifications for violent actions. Aggression is presented as natural, desirable, and even inevitable.

Then there is the violence we carry inside, a violence that is not always apparent, but that is nonetheless keenly felt, that gives rise to thoughtless words or deeds, or eats away at and contradicts the most noble ideals. The paradoxes and contradictions are just as present in ourselves as in others.

Is there any justification for violence between individuals or groups? Is it possible to escape the cycle of violence or a culture of violence? How should we react to violence? Why should we react to violence? Is non-violence really a solution? Is forgiveness possible? There are no easy answers. Many points of view and many explanations are given. A true search for meaning is called for. Secondary V students carry the dilemma inside. They have put the squabbles of childhood behind them, but are close to the conflicts of adulthood, on both an interpersonal and a collective level. Young people are not immune to violence. What should they think? How should they act and react with respect to violence?

The aim of moral and religious education is to help the students set human and Christian guidelines for themselves in order to find answers to these questions. Such guidelines are indispensable to personal equilibrium and to living with others in an often chaotic and unpredictable world.

By giving the students the opportunity to discuss the incidence of violence in a conflict between individuals or groups, they will learn to take a position, individually and collectively, on this difficult issue. They will have a chance to look for and to find reasonable alternatives to violence—just and realistic solutions that do not merely cover up tensions. By having the students reflect on violence, teachers will develop in them and with them a desire to side with humanity through greater understanding of the Gospel message.

VIOLENCE

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE

To consider alternatives to violent behaviour in the name of the Gospel and of human ideals.

INDICATORS OF COMPETENCE

The students demonstrate attainment of the terminal objective by being able to:

- identify aspects of the phenomenon of violence: forms, where it occurs, causes and consequences;
- distinguish between aggressiveness, force and violence;
- recognize the possibility of adopting behaviours other than violence;
- understand that Christianity encourages the search for alternatives to violence, in accordance with the law of love taught by Jesus;
- show an inclination to adopt behaviours that are not violent.

RELATED CONTENT

AWARENESS COMPONENTS

- Various feelings and judgments aroused by manifestations of violence
- Aspects of violence:
 - forms, where it occurs, causes
 - consequences for the victim, the aggressor and society
- Difference between aggressiveness, force and violence

UNDERSTANDING COMPONENTS

- Criteria Christians draw on to reject violence:
 - human dignity
 - the law of love taught by Jesus (Mt 5: 38-48); the attitudes of conciliation, openness to dialogue and forgiveness that stem from it and that are valued by the Church in its concern for justice and peace

PERSONALIZATION COMPONENTS

- Awareness of their interest in adopting attitudes of:
 - conciliation
 - openness to dialogue
 - forgiveness

REMARKS

- Use concrete examples drawn from daily events in the community and events reported by the media.
- Show discretion and sensitivity with respect to the individuals involved.
- Encourage the students to challenge prejudices such as:
 - "Violence is only a problem when it's physical."
 - "Violence doesn't concern me."
 - "Violence is no big deal!"
- Stress that violence threatens human dignity and that students need to know basic values in order to resist the pull of a culture of violence.
- Develop this topic without overemphasizing the sociological aspect as the students are often saturated with information.
- Ensure that the students feel comfortable expressing themselves.

- Be realistic when dealing with the Gospel values of loving your enemy and showing forgiveness. Explain that these ideals and Gospel requirements support a gradually developing Christian maturity.

FOCUSES OF EVALUATION

KNOWLEDGE

- Aspects of the phenomenon of violence
- Distinction between aggressiveness, force and violence

SKILLS

- Identifying the forms of violence in a given situation
- Identifying the values that inspire a search for alternative solutions to violence

ATTITUDES

- Do the students show an inclination to adopt attitudes of openness to dialogue, conciliation and forgiveness?

2.3.2 POVERTY

BACKGROUND

Facts and statistics give a startling picture of poverty. The West accounts for 20 percent of the world's population and consumes 80 percent of all goods produced. Top professional athletes and entertainers earn millions a year. The gap is constantly widening between rich and poor. One third of the world's population goes hungry and, here in Québec, increasing numbers of people are asking for food at food banks and shelters.

The ranks of the poor are growing: children, women who are heads of single-parent households, and the handicapped account for many of the "new poor" in society today. Young people face a particular struggle, for if school dropouts, street kids, young heads of families, and the thousands of children already living in poverty have a disadvantaged present, what can the future hold for them?

In order to cover such a difficult and complex topic in a short period of time (approximately six hours), it is necessary to make choices. Accordingly, this program places emphasis on material poverty, which is easier to perceive and which is both the consequence and cause of other forms of poverty. The program also suggests attitudes to develop in the students regarding certain situations of poverty. Here, the object is to encourage the students to overcome their indifference, fatalism and prejudices against poor people; to get them to understand that Christianity challenges the individual to go beyond his or her private life and to express faith through acts of sensitivity or social commitment. The message of the Church regarding sociopolitical questions is in line with that of the prophets in the Old Testament, for whom the exercise of justice (Isa 1:10-17) is the true worship of God, the first form of religious practice. It is also in line with the Gospel values of love and justice. In telling the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus shows that the call to love is answered in the sense of responsibility toward our neighbour in destitution or need (Lk 10:25-37).

POVERTY

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE

To respond to situations of poverty from a Christian perspective.

INDICATORS OF COMPETENCE

The students demonstrate attainment of the terminal objective by being able to:

- distinguish between forms of poverty and groups of people affected by poverty;
- identify different causes and consequences of certain situations of poverty;
- perceive the importance of seeking justice in socioeconomic issues, in the name of human and Christian idealism;
- determine the attitudes consistent with the "preferential option for the poor";
- become aware of their personal progress with respect to material possessions and money.

RELATED CONTENT

AWARENESS COMPONENTS

- Feelings and judgments inspired by the reality of poverty
- Characteristics of poverty: traditional forms, new forms, categories of people affected
- Causes and consequences of certain situations of poverty
- Possible attitudes toward poverty: apathy, fatalism, self-centredness, rebellion, commitment

UNDERSTANDING COMPONENTS

- References providing the basis of Christian discernment, in questions of social justice:
 - the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: sections 1, 2, 22, 23, 25
 - the Word of God, as proclaimed by the prophets (Isaiah, Amos, Micah) and by Jesus: the exercise of justice, as worship that is pleasing to God
 - the teachings of the Church, centred on human dignity and the "preferential option for the poor"

- Consequences of the "preferential option for the poor" on our ways of being and of acting:
 - respect for people affected by poverty
 - solidarity, sharing and service
 - support for organizations that offer relief and fight poverty
 - volunteer work

PERSONALIZATION COMPONENTS

- Challenging their personal opinions and convictions regarding material possessions and money

- Expression of interest by the students in doing something concrete to increase social justice

REMARKS

- Understand the delicate nature of the subject at hand, given that some students are from economically disadvantaged areas; for this reason, use respectful language and create a climate in which all the students will feel comfortable expressing themselves.

- Make the students understand that, with this issue, apathy is unacceptable. Awareness of the problem brings responsibility for trying to find a solution.

- Organize a variety of learning situations that will allow the students to understand that certain attitudes to poverty are not in keeping with the Christian spirit.

FOCUSES OF EVALUATION

KNOWLEDGE

- Certain characteristics of poverty: traditional forms, new forms, social strata affected, causes, consequences
- Certain attitudes regarding poverty

SKILLS

- Using the references essential to Christian discernment in order to judge certain attitudes regarding poverty
- Discovering solutions to certain situations of poverty, with a view to ensuring social justice

ATTITUDES

- Are the students open to showing solidarity with the poor?



2.3.3 WORK

BACKGROUND

Increasing numbers of secondary-level students work part time during the school year. In Québec, up to 40 percent of students from 12 to 18 work from two to twenty hours or more a week.¹³ It appears that the more highly urbanized an area is, the higher the number of students who have jobs.¹⁴ Young people are attracted by a salary and the freedom it represents.

The long-term goal for the majority of teens is to enter the job market. Some acquire work experience during the school year or during their summer vacation. Most already have some idea of the workplace through their parents or people they know. They see advantages and disadvantages. They may feel confident of their chances of success or discouraged about their prospects. In their eyes, the working world may seem filled with promises, but also with injustices and exploitation.

Many young people do not make a clear connection between school and career. Some think that they will get along fine in life, whatever their education. Others believe that they will be able to get an interesting job only by going to university, even if the labour market is crying out for specialized workers to work in technical jobs and different trades.

Being employed is highly valued by society. If you have a job, "you've got it made." The working world is attractive and threatening at the same time. None of us wants to be manipulated or exploited.

To sum up, the issue of work is one of the main preoccupations of Secondary V students. Besides choosing career paths based on aptitudes and interests, there is the search for meaning in one's work to ensure fulfilment in life. Young people are looking for happiness. What is their motivation for working? How should they work? What should their attitude to work be?

The Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program for Secondary V addresses these questions. It provides criteria for evaluating a work situation that could make it a humanizing experience. Starting with the students' own experience, the program introduces the students to work-related values, has them discover certain attitudes, and proposes a meaning to work, all from the perspective of God's plan. Thus the students benefit from values, attitudes and meaning that are immediately applicable to their work as students, but that can also be applied to any work, remunerated or not, that they will have to do in their lifetime.

13. Québec, ministère de l'Éducation, Direction de la recherche, *Les habitudes de vie des élèves du secondaire*, Research report, 1991, p. 23.

14. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Le travail rémunéré des jeunes : vigilance et accompagnement éducatif*, 1992, p. 5.

WORK

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE

To look for meaning in their work experiences from a Christian perspective.

INDICATORS OF COMPETENCE

The students demonstrate attainment of the terminal objective by being able to:

- understand the basic elements of a work situation;
- distinguish between the humanizing and dehumanizing factors in a work situation;
- recognize what the Church says about the meaning of work;
- identify the values, attitudes and actions that contribute to giving meaning to any paid or unpaid work;
- question their attitudes and behaviours in different work situations, including that of being a student.

RELATED CONTENT

AWARENESS COMPONENTS

- Feelings and judgments inspired by paid or unpaid work experience in adolescence: motivations, goals, consequences
- Basic elements of any work situation (including school) with respect to the individual and the organization of work
- Socioeconomic aspects of work

UNDERSTANDING COMPONENTS

- Examination of the Church's statements about the meaning of work:
 - accomplishment of the individual
 - service to the collectivity
 - development and completion of the work
- Search for personal and collective solutions with a view to humanizing difficult work situations

PERSONALIZATION COMPONENTS

- Examination of personal motivation and values in relation to work, and especially to school
- Awareness of responsible attitudes and behaviours to adopt with respect to any work

REMARKS

- Approach the issue of work in its broad sense, so that the students will perceive their studies to be meaningful work.
- Be aware of how the students spend their time outside the classroom so that you can approach this theme in a way that will enable them to make a connection with their own experience.
- Make the students aware of the importance of a balanced life to their physical and psychological well-being.
- Be conscious of the interaction of personal and organizational factors in any work situation, including that of being at school.
- Encourage the students to observe work as it is experienced by those around them.
- Allow full rein to discussion and the voicing of opposing views, especially with respect to the meaning of work advanced by the Church.

FOCUSES OF EVALUATION

KNOWLEDGE

- Basic elements of a work situation
- Statements made by the Church on the meaning of work
- Responsible values, attitudes and behaviours to adopt in order to give meaning to work

SKILLS

- Recognizing the humanizing and dehumanizing factors in a work situation
- Finding personal and collective solutions in order to improve a work situation from a Christian perspective

ATTITUDES

- Do the students show interest in understanding what goes on in a paid or unpaid work situation, or in discovering a meaning in any work?
- Are the students critical with respect to their own work experience, especially where their studies are concerned?

2.4 EVENTS IN THE NEWS

Approximate class time: 8 hours

BACKGROUND

Students are often surprised by the events going on in the world. They react to them and find themselves asking questions, but rarely from a consciously Christian perspective. In this module the students will have an opportunity to analyze events with a view to identifying the underlying values and to draw on Christian thought, with particular reference to the Bible, in order to gain new insight.

In the final year of secondary school it is important that religious education encourage the students to observe events in the news from a Christian perspective. This program can offer the students an opportunity to have a relevant and enlightening experience with respect to contemporary issues. The teacher provides learning situations that will help the students to become attuned to the meaningful events that mark their lives and the life of the school and that call for moments of reflection.

Because events in the news cannot be anticipated and consequently cannot be set out in the program in advance, it is best to discuss them when they come to the students' attention. These events might be in the form of an achievement, an accident, a discovery, a meeting, a controversial film, or a dramatic situation.

By examining current events, the teacher and students try to discover the calls of their conscience and possible signs of God's presence. It is very important to carry out a serious and thorough reading of the events, making sure not to get mired in detail or superficial moralism. The students are encouraged to look beyond appearances with the help of Bible verses or reflections from Christian tradition. This exercise in discernment will offer them an opportunity to react to events and adopt attitudes inspired by Christianity.

Religious education makes a special contribution to the basic education of today's young people by offering students the opportunity to reflect critically on the abundance of information in daily life.

EVENTS IN THE NEWS

A special approach is called for in this module. It is based on current events as they happen and is therefore not planned for a particular time in the school year. It also suggests much of the same approach used in studying current events: gathering information, reading and rereading the facts, reflecting on the event and analyzing it.

If the students are to benefit from this exercise of interpreting events in the news, it should be carried out at least three times during the year, according to the outlined procedure. Generally, two class periods should be scheduled for each news event. This would allow time for the students to become familiar with the information and time to read it through again.

It is a good idea to tell the students about this module at the beginning of the school year. The teacher may wish to give an overview of the module, drawing the students' attention to its distinctive features, and pointing out how it fits into the program as a whole.

This module is organized in a fashion related to the other three modules. The pedagogical latitude of the program allows the teacher to make choices here. All items listed under Related Content need not be considered in each case. What matters most is that the students learn to read and interpret current events, carefully searching out the meaning with the assistance of their faith.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE

To interpret events in the news from a Christian perspective.

INDICATORS OF COMPETENCE

The students demonstrate attainment of the terminal objective by being able to:

- organize the information that will enable them to understand an event;
- express their personal reactions to the event;
- identify the main elements that have an emotional, affective or rational impact on them;

- draw on Christian thought, especially the Bible, to take a second look at the event;
- recognize certain attitudes that faith in Jesus Christ could inspire at the centre of the events;
- be willing to go beyond initial reactions, by examining them and expanding on them.

RELATED CONTENT

AWARENESS COMPONENTS

- Reactions, feelings and comments inspired by the event
- Information that contributes to gaining an understanding of the event: the facts and different perceptions of them
- The various interpretations of the event arising from the ideas, prejudices, convictions, questions about the human condition and faith

UNDERSTANDING COMPONENTS

- Guidelines for Christian thought that could elucidate the event. (Depending on the event being studied, it is possible to reflect on or encourage change in ways of seeing or understanding):
 - the fragility of the human condition, the meaning of creation, freedom, the presence of a Saviour in the midst of human trials, the assurance of everlasting life, or confidence in God.
- Values that may contribute to the adoption of Christian attitudes to events (these values will vary with the event being studied):
 - authenticity, pursuit of excellence, pursuit of ideals, concern for others, justice, human community, hope, confidence in people and in life, compassion, or self-possession.

PERSONALIZATION COMPONENTS

- Questioning their own attitudes to events
- Awareness of the fact that referring to the Bible and the experience of belief can help them to discover new meaning in the events

REMARKS

- Allow the students to spontaneously express their initial reactions to the event, whether they are negative or positive.
- Help the students to consider the situation objectively by encouraging them to gather and organize information about the event.
- Help the students to consider the complexity of the feelings aroused by an event and of the possible perceptions of it.
- Allow the students freedom to examine their Christian experience in order to nourish their reflection on the meaning of the event by recalling:
 - words they have heard;
 - people who have made an impression on them;
 - significant points in their religious experiences;
 - Christian places or symbols that are significant to them;
 - **certain Bible passages.**

FOCUSES OF EVALUATION

KNOWLEDGE

- Evaluation of knowledge is at the teacher's discretion, based on the topics covered.

SKILLS

- Stating their personal points of view clearly
- Identifying in the event an important question linked to an aspect of human life, or to the values being examined in the event
- Referring to various elements of Christian thought, particularly the Bible, in order to take a new look at the event

ATTITUDES

- Are the students open to asking themselves questions? Do they go beyond their initial reactions to events?
- Are the students open to considering the meaning of the events suggested by Christian thought?



3. EVALUATION OF LEARNING

Evaluation is as necessary in Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction as it is in other courses. It is an integral part of teaching. Evaluation is as much aimed at informing the students of their progress as it is at allowing teachers to make adjustments to their methods. It is an opportunity for taking stock of what has been learned.

In Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, the learning tasks are particularly complex because they engage the whole person. Certainly, as with any other course, the learning tasks include theoretical knowledge and a command of intellectual skills such as organizing information, analyzing and communicating. Here, however, the tasks are essentially concerned with values that serve as criteria for discernment and call for particular attitudes toward life. The learning tasks involve realities that are not easily grasped. Aspects of these tasks may be difficult to measure, creating special problems for evaluation. What, then, should be evaluated and what can be evaluated in religious education?

3.1 EVALUATION OF COMPETENCE

To avoid the risk of carrying out an evaluation restricted to acquired knowledge, the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program for Secondary V makes a firm commitment to evaluating competence. This means looking at the acquisition of knowledge and of the intellectual skills necessary to understand given situations and at recognition and assimilation of attitudes consistent with the learning accomplished.

More specifically, evaluation in this program focuses on:

- the knowledge particular to each topic that is the basis for discernment;
- general skill at discernment and the specific skills in each module;
- the attitudes to be valued, on the basis of the learning that has been achieved.

3.2 FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

There are two forms of evaluation: formative evaluation and summative evaluation. The purpose of formative evaluation is to promote learning, while the purpose of summative evaluation is to judge the competence acquired with respect to the objectives of the program.

3.2.1 Formative Evaluation

Given the nature of the learning tasks in Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, the emphasis is on formative evaluation, that is, on evaluation carried out during the course of learning. This makes it possible for the students to receive feedback on their progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes with a view to immediate pedagogical assistance in acquiring competence in a particular area. The indicators of competence, enumerated in each module, provide guidelines for this type of evaluation.

The process provides for pauses so that teachers can verify the acquisition of ideas and concepts necessary for discernment and the development of certain skills and attitudes. At the end of the awareness stage, it is important to verify whether the students are able to recognize, describe and explain the related content components necessary for discernment. At the end of the understanding stage, the teacher observes whether the students are able to use criteria for discernment and whether they can apply them to concrete situations and arrive at a judgment. At the end of the personalization stage, the teacher ascertains how the students relate as individuals and as believers to the issues at hand.

No marks are assigned in formative evaluation. This makes it possible to evaluate all aspects of the targeted area of competence, especially attitudes, which are not quantifiable. For teachers, formative evaluation offers a means of guiding the students, since it provides them with feedback on the personal learning progress of each student. This information can be gathered by such means as direct observation, questionnaires, debates, self-evaluation by the students, evaluation charts, or journals.

This form of evaluation, which is recommended for Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, allows teachers great latitude in the selection of measurement instruments and relies greatly on their professional judgment.

3.2.2 Summative Evaluation

Summative evaluation takes place at the final stage of learning, as a means of certification. It responds to the need for synthesis and to administrative requirements for **letter or number grades**.

In summative evaluation, the questionnaire is recommended as a measurement instrument. In accordance with the orientations of the program, free-response questions are favoured because they allow the students room to reflect, to judge and to express themselves in relation to the

skills developed. Alternate-response or multiple-choice items may also be used, as may matching questions to verify the acquisition of certain concepts that are helpful in the discernment exercise.

The curriculum guide contains suggestions for summative evaluation at the end of each module, excluding Events in the News. This summative evaluation will be limited to the discernment skills developed and the particular knowledge required (see table below).

EVALUATION OF THE ABILITY TO DISCERN	
Focuses	Evaluation Operations
In the focus on AWARENESS, the knowledge necessary for discernment is evaluated by means of the following operations:	<u>recognizing</u> , <u>describing</u> , <u>explaining</u> the related content components useful for an understanding of the realities studied, as well as the issues at stake
In the focus on UNDERSTANDING, the ability to discern is evaluated by means of the following operations:	<u>drawing on</u> the human and Christian criteria for discernment appropriate to the realities studied <u>applying</u> the criteria for discernment to the various components of a given situation <u>judging from a Christian perspective</u> the ideas, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours found in a given situation
In the focus on PERSONALIZATION, no knowledge or abilities are evaluated.	_____

**4. THE PROGRAM IN RELATION TO
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDIES AS A WHOLE**

4.1 LINKS WITH THE OTHER PROGRAMS

Moral and religious education is one part of the students' overall education. It complements other programs aimed at the development of the whole person. These include Personal and Social Education, Career Choice Education and the social studies programs.

Moral and religious education makes a specific contribution in this area. It develops the students' spiritual, moral and religious dimensions by having them examine their experience in the light of the call of the Word of God, as manifested in Jesus Christ.

Moreover, this Secondary V program is in line with the other secondary-level Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction programs, and particularly with the Secondary IV program, which introduces a systematic study of Christian morality. Indeed, an entire module of the Secondary IV program is devoted to the various dimensions of morality. Throughout the other modules, the students are encouraged to exercise their judgment or their moral discernment on particular problems drawn from life.

While the questions of morality raised in Secondary IV tend to pertain to the individual (e.g. young people living together, suicide, abortion, honesty), the questions raised in Secondary V concern sociopolitical issues (e.g. poverty, violence, work, religious diversity, events in the news). Thus, the Secondary IV and V programs complement each other, allowing the students to learn about Christian morality as it applies to the individual and to society.

4.2 LINKS WITH PASTORAL ANIMATION

Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction and pastoral animation, each with its own methodology, objectives and specialized personnel, constitute two separate but complementary approaches to moral and religious education at the secondary level.

Taking into account the objectives pursued in pastoral animation, the Secondary V Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program clarifies the attitudes to be developed in the students to help them to act on their faith in Jesus Christ and the Gospel values that this faith entails.

From this perspective, the curriculum guide suggests activities and projects that lend themselves to collaboration between pastoral animation personnel and Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction personnel that will help the students to reinforce and integrate their learning.

Assemblée des évêques du Québec. *Catholic Religious Instruction: Pastoral Guidelines*. Montréal: L'Assemblée des évêques du Québec, May 1989.

Grandmaison, Jacques, et al. *Le drame spirituel des adolescents. Profils sociaux et religieux*. Cahier d'études pastorales, n° 10. Montréal: Éditions Fides, 1992.

Québec. Comité catholique. *L'enseignement moral et religieux catholique au secondaire. Pour un enseignement mieux adapté aux jeunes et aux contextes actuels* (Code 50-1025). Recommendations to the Minister of Education. Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation, 1991.

Québec. Comité catholique. *Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction at the Secondary Level. Towards Developing Favourable Working Conditions: For Good Quality Teaching* (Code 50-1027A). Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation, 1992.

Québec. Comité catholique. *Éthique, spiritualité et religion au cégep*. Research report. Québec, 1992.

Québec. Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. *La formation fondamentale et la qualité de l'éducation*. 1983-84 report on the state and needs of education. Québec, 1984.

Québec. Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. *Developing Ethical Competence for Today's World: An Essential Educational Task*. 1989-90 report on the state and needs of education. Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation, 1991.

Québec. Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. *L'intégration des savoirs au secondaire : au coeur de la réussite éducative*. Recommendations to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Higher Education and Science. Québec, 1991.

Québec. Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. *Pour une école secondaire qui développe l'autonomie et la responsabilité*. Québec, 1993.

Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. Direction de l'enseignement catholique. *Spiritual, Religious, and Moral Development in Teenagers* (Code 32-3125A). Québec: ministère de l'éducation, 1985.

Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. Direction de l'enseignement catholique. *Beyond Outward Appearances: Survey on the Moral and Spiritual Experience of Young People in Secondary School* (Code 32-8004A). Québec: ministère de l'Éducation, 1993.

Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. Direction de la formation générale des jeunes. *Learning... Teaching... and the New Programs* (Code 16-0000-08A). Québec: ministère de l'éducation, 1984.

Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. Direction de la formation professionnelle. *Cadre technique d'élaboration des programmes de formation professionnelle*. Working document. Québec, November 1988.

Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. Direction générale de l'éducation des adultes. *Cadre d'élaboration des programmes d'études de formation générale*. Working document. Québec, June 1990.