

AMDG
History and Religion Handbook
Teacher: Ms. Kotrba
School year: 2026-2027

Classroom Materials

- Students are required to have their own Bible (NABRE)
- Bring to class every day: (Label your name on all of your personal items)
 - ☐ Bible (for religion class)
 - ☐ Agenda
 - ☐ Workbook (religion class)
 - ☐ Religion notebook (religion class)
 - ☐ Textbook (history class)
 - ☐ History notebook (history class)
 - ☐ Pencil bag
 - ☐ Pencils (at least three, sharpened *before* class, mechanical pencils are fine)
 - ☐ Red pens
 - ☐ Black or blue ink pens
 - ☐ Pencil sharpener (preferred)
 - ☐ Eraser
 - ☐ Colored pencils
 - ☐ History/Religion Folder
 - ☐ Homework folder
 - ☐ Glue sticks
 - ☐ Highlighters
- What to have in your locker, and bring to class when instructed:
 - ☐ Ruler
 - ☐ Index cards for flashcards
 - ☐ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
 - ☐ Markers
 - ☐ Scissors
- What not to bring to class:
 - Fidgets
 - Fidgets
 - Oh, and I almost forgot...fidgets

Classroom Structure:

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
- Memory work - Key terms and timelines - Class readings	- Class Readings - Notes - Saint story - (religion class) - Biography - (history class)	Memory work Visio Divina - (religion class) Primary source - (history class) Notes	- Narrations - Adoration (religion class) - Review or work day	- Memory work - Socratic conversation OR quiz/test

* This is just a general structure, subject to change as needed

Classroom Expectations:

- Be virtuous:
 - Charity: Love God and neighbor.
 - Respect: This includes everyone you meet in and out of the classroom and the building you have the gift of going to school in.
 - Diligence: studying and practicing God's commandments. In other words, do the work the Lord has entrusted you with.
 - Foresight: Come prepared for class and fill out the agenda.
 - Reverence: Demonstrate attentiveness and honor for what is sacred.
 - Humility: Recognize your belovedness. All good things are from the Lord. All failures are from us. Entrust your failures to the Lord's mercy and try again in love.
 - Justice: give others what is owed to them and respect their God-given dignity.
 - Forgiveness: Ask for it when needed. Give it when wrongs are done to you.
 - Courtesy and Etiquette: Stop and give eye contact when speaking to someone, speak clearly, greet others when you see them, be aware of the people around you!
 - Temperance: Demonstrate possession of self.
 - Modesty: Carry yourself with the dignity given to you by God. This is reflected in your actions, speech, and how you dress.
 - Fortitude: Endure in times of difficulty.
 - Stewardship: Give generously of your time and talents. Take care of the school building and provide for the needs of others.
- Late work
 - 20% off for each school day it is late.
 - Homework is collected at the *beginning* of class, and is considered late if not turned in at the beginning of the class it was due in.
- Absent work
 - *Students are responsible for asking to make up for absent work.* Students who do not speak with me after an absence will not be able to receive the work they missed, resulting in a *zero* in the gradebook.
 - Students have as many days as they were absent to complete and turn in assignments.
 - Students may ask for homework in advance of a planned absence, but please note that if it is not possible for me to give the student the work prior to the absence, they will be given the absent work upon their return.
- Birthdays (sixth grade homeroom only)
 - Students may bring in treats to celebrate during homeroom study hall at the end of the day.

- Seventh grade Social Studies Assessment:
 - This is a project-based assessment and is not a typical standardized state assessment.
 - Students will be given a project where they must make a claim, defend the claim by providing documents that support their claim (primary and secondary sources), and demonstrate reasonings for their claim.
 - This assessment is only for 7th grade students.
 - More information to come on the assessment soon.
- Demerits: see middle school policy handbook. In general, failing to observe classroom expectations warrants a demerit. Students who show up repeatedly to class unprepared will receive demerits (this includes not bringing Bible, agenda, pencils, the correct books, and so on. They will receive one warning in the first week of school. Certain behaviors towards classmates or teachers may not warrant any warning prior to issuing a demerit.
- PowerSchool:
 - Check PowerSchool for communication of grades.
 - Orange flag denotes missing assignments: the student has not turned in assignments. I will put a zero on the missing assignment until it is turned in (and it will receive a late grade.
 - Red flag denotes late assignments (see comments for how much has been deducted due to it being late.
 - Green flag denotes that the student was absent (“late” deductions will not be put on the grade for absences).
 - Blue flag denotes assignment was turned in incomplete.
 - Tests below a 75% or assignments completed without effort will be marked with a comment that says “correct and return.” Students may correct and return the test the next school day for an opportunity to receive a 75%.
- Bathrooms and water bottles:
 - Students may use the bathroom and fill up water bottles in between passing periods. Students may NOT use the bathroom during instruction time or while working with partners. If there is work time after instruction during class, students may ask to go to the bathroom during that time.
 - Water bottles should be clear.
- Pencil sharpening:
 - Students should bring at least three sharpened pencils to class. Pencils should be sharpened prior to the first day of school.
 - Mechanical pencils are allowed.
 - Students may bring their own handheld sharpener (this is preferred), but they may NOT lend it to classmates during instruction time (after instruction is fine).
 - Students may only use an electric sharpener before the bell and after instruction time.

Memory Work

- Students will memorize a number of things throughout the school year, and will recite some of the memory work. Items marked with an asterisk are recitations. Other memory work will be either recorded by hand or included on tests.

6th Grade Religion:

10 Commandments
Psalm 51*
Come, Holy Spirit *
Gloria Patri
Books of the Old Testament*

7th Grade Religion:

Beatitudes *
Psalm 139 *
Books of the New Testament
Mysteries of the Rosary
Ave Maria
Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit
The Greatest Commandments *

8th Grade Religion:

Nicene Creed *
Psalm 22 *
Magnificat
PreceptsoftheChurch
Pater Noster *

6th Grade History:

Key Dates
Excerpts from historical poems *

7th Grade History:

Kansas' birthday
The Continents and Oceans
50 States - Review
Western Hemisphere

8th Grade History

Key Dates
Gettysburg Address *
Preamble to theConstitution *
O Captain, My Captain

All Students:

- Stewardship is the grateful response of a Christian Disciple who recognizes and receives God's gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor. *
- The Angelus
- Marian hymns in accordance with the liturgical season (Salve Regina, Regina Caeli, Alma Redemptoris Mater, Ave Regina Caelorum)

Narrations

- Each week, students will be chosen to "narrate" the notes we have done to their classmates. Practicing speaking in front of others will help build communication skills, and helps students to grow in freedom of speaking well.

Socratic Conversations:

- Students will also practice speaking in class with Socratic conversations. This practice has its roots in ancient Greece, named after the philosopher Socrates who taught by asking a series of questions to his students, to which he would reply after hearing the thoughts of his students. At the middle school level, Socratic conversation will look like helping students begin to think about these for themselves, and by doing so, help them to make the learning their own. Through Socratic conversation, students will be encouraged to add their voice to the good conversations about meaningful topics and how we are to think, and perhaps what we are not to think of them.

Parent Resources:

“Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators” (Gravissimum Educationis, 3).

Holy Days of Obligation *

- **Every Sunday**
- **Saturday, August 15, 2026:** Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (not obligatory this year because it falls on a Saturday this year)
- **Sunday, November 1, 2026:** Solemnity of All Saints (Observed as a regular Sunday obligation)
- **Tuesday, December 8, 2026:** Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
- **Friday, December 25, 2026:** Nativity of the Lord / Christmas
- **Friday, January 1, 2027:** Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

** Canon 1247: “On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass. Moreover, they are to abstain from those works and affairs which hinder the worship to be rendered to God, the joy proper to the Lord’s day, or the suitable relaxation of mind and body.”*

Practical advice to live the faith at home:

- ☐ Read the Scriptures as a family. Not sure where to begin? Read the readings from Mass for the day (easy to find online).
- ☐ Pray the Rosary together at least weekly. Meditate on the life of Christ during each mystery.
- ☐ Limit screens. Live for what’s real! Whatever screen time you discern for your family, consider what kind of content is being consumed. This does not mean you have to exclusively watch explicitly Christian things or listen exclusively to Christian music. But consider the messages and values that are being communicated in these things. Ask yourself the question: Does this movie, song, YouTube short, etc., align with the values you wish to instill in your children? Do they support your mission in getting your family to heaven?
- ☐ Read with and to your children every night. What you read matters. Fill their imaginations with good stories and not just graphic novels or stories that blur good and evil.
- ☐ Order your life around the Eucharist and not the other way around.

- ☐ Memorize the Shema (Hebrew for “hear,” the first word of the verse)

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone! Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength. Take to heart these words which I command you today. Keep repeating them to your children. Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them on your arm as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

- ☐ Read the writings of the saints (first for yourselves as parents, and then share different things you learn with your children). *Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence is a great place to begin. It’s short and one of my favorites to return to time and time again.
- ☐ Rest on Sundays after Mass. And I mean, really rest on Sundays. Not entertainment, not binging, not scrolling, not online shopping, and not getting to all the things we couldn’t get to during the week. Rest. Make and eat good food together, look at birds, enjoy the outdoors, write, draw, paint, sew, play cards, learn some Greek and Latin, play pickleball, write plays and act them out, study something that interests you, restore a sense of childlike wonder...restore your body and soul.
- ☐ Get a liturgical calendar and live with the seasons of the Church. Celebrate feast days of patron saints and baptism days. Fast leading up to major Solemnities (fun fact, fasting is not just for Lent and it actually helps the body to heal and revitalizes the mind).
- ☐ Listen to Fr. Mike’s *Catechism in a Year* and *Bible in a Year*.
- ☐ Have no fear about talking to your kids about the faith! Have faith that the good Lord desires your child’s holiness and your own holiness more than we can ever desire it for ourselves. The desire in us will only grow if we give the Lord the permission to do His will in our lives. Begin with small things and entrust the rest to Him. Continue learning about the faith.