

# First Day Curriculum: Called to Be Catholic

Based on Joe Paprocki's Catechetical Resource

## Opening Prayer

*Heavenly Father, we thank You for bringing us together at the start of this journey of faith. Send Your Holy Spirit upon us, that we may grow in wisdom, love, and understanding. Help us to open our hearts to Your Word and to walk together as one family in Christ. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Parable for Reflection

*St. Thomas Aquinas once explained that faith and reason are like two wings of a bird: both are needed to lift us to the truth. Imagine a bird trying to fly with only one wing. It struggles, going in circles, never reaching the sky. But when both wings move together in harmony, the bird soars. In the same way, when we use both faith and reason, our hearts and minds rise toward God, who is the fullness of truth.*

### Who was St. Thomas Aquinas?

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) was a Dominican friar, philosopher, and theologian. He is known as the “Angelic Doctor” and is one of the greatest minds in the Catholic tradition. Aquinas taught that faith and reason work together in harmony to lead us to truth. He is the patron saint of students and Catholic schools.

## Scripture for the Day

*“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37)*

## Goals for Session 1

- Introduce the purpose and structure of *Called to Be Catholic*.

- Help students reflect on what it means to be Catholic.
- Begin exploring the first Pillar of Faith: **The Creed (Belief)**.
- Build community and establish a welcoming learning environment.

## Schedule (90 Minutes)

1. **Welcome & Icebreaker (0–10 min)** Introductions, share one thing you hope to learn this year.
2. **Opening Prayer & Overview (10–20 min)** Pray together the Opening Prayer. Explain the structure of *Called to Be Catholic*.
3. **Discussion: What Does Being Catholic Mean? (20–35 min)** Read introductory section. Share ideas: How does faith shape your life? *Scripture: Matthew 28:19–20; 1 Peter 2:9*
4. **First Pillar: The Creed (35–55 min)** Introduce Catholic beliefs. Read together from the book. Key idea: Belief is the foundation of faith and life.
5. **Activity: My Faith Statement (55–65 min)** In small groups, write one or two sentences starting with: *“I believe that...”* Share with the group.
6. **Application: Living Our Faith (65–80 min)** Brainstorm ways to practice belief (prayer, sacraments, service).
7. **Closing Reflection & Prayer (80–90 min)** Reflection question: What surprised you today? What do you want to learn this year?  
Closing prayer together:

*Lord Jesus, we thank You for being with us today. Help us to grow in faith, hope, and love as we continue this journey together. Give us courage to live our beliefs and to be witnesses of Your love in the world. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Materials Needed

- Copies of *Called to Be Catholic*
- Bibles

- Paper and pens
- Optional: music or projector

## Takeaway

**Key Truth:** Faith and reason, like two wings, lift us to God. **Challenge:** This week, ask both with your heart and your mind: “How is God present in my life today?”