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BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

AN ANALYSIS OF RELIGION VOCABULARY IN GRADE ONE

Submitted by

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In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

THE PROBLEM

<u>Statement of the Problem</u>. The purpose of this study is an attempt to investigate the religion vocabulary requirements presented in Grade One, for word meaning comprehension in Grade Two reading, as a contribution to the general prereading program.

<u>Scope of the Study</u>. The study is based upon a list of words that have a special significance in the field of primary catechetical teaching. The list was selected from a sampling of catechisms that are used throughout Catholic schools. Rinsland's Basic Vocabulary of Elementary School Children was the criterion used in evaluating the vocabulary content of these texts. From the vocabulary of the fourteen catechisms, two hundred thirty-five words were listed, and 23% of the one hundred selected words of the vocabulary were found in Rinsland's list.

The present study attempts to determine what meanings children associate with the words most frequently used in religion.

To discover such knowledge a testing program was planned by means of which eighty-eight children might be tested on

the meanings of one hundred of the most frequently used words in religion presented in the first grade.

The intelligence quotients were secured from the Otis Group Intelligence Tests, and then the children were divided according to sex and age. Words were arranged according to frequency and assumed difficulty of comprehension. Children were tested privately and all responses were tabulated.

A description of the tests, and the schools taking part in the testing program will be found in Chapter III.

CHAPTER II

JUSTIFICATION AND BACKGROUND

The fundamental objective of religious education is the development of Christ-like character.

Catechetical teaching, to be most productive of good, must be meaningful. The meaning of each word should be made clear.

The child in Grade Two must read constantly, his Catechism being used as a daily reader. The Catechism prepares a solid foundation of religious knowledge on which is built the presentation of concrete and vital doctrine. The child should be shown the way through thorough understanding and should be taught to value highly and to live what he learns.

Our Lord has made it clear that religion is a life to be lived rather than mere learning, parrot-fashion, the questions and answers in a Catechism.

As many ordinary words are difficult for the adult, they are more so for the child. Only too often no attempt whatsoever is made to give any meaning to them. After several appearances of the word throughout the text, it is taken for granted that the child understands its meaning.

The value of meaning in connection with reading is quite generally understood. Seegers¹ states that

I. Conrad Seegers, "Reading for Meaning," <u>The Elementary</u> <u>English Review</u>, Chicago, Illinois: Volume XXIII, October 1946, p. 261.

Reading is primarily a tool, meaning must be associated with it, and in this development of meaning we must help children organize their thinking. 4

This statement is confirmed by McKeel who says,

Any teaching of reading that does not lead the child to respond to printed symbols with meanings, concepts, and the like, fails in its fundamental purpose.

The development of a meaning vocabulary can be made more clear by Holmes² who declares,

Throughout the time devoted to building new meanings for words, the teacher will strive to accomplish two purposes. First, she will see to it that the meaning appearance, and pronunciation of the word are constantly associated with one another in the child's thinking. Second, she will endeavor constantly to relate the new meaning to the general topic of the study period. In so doing she will help the children to expand their vocabularies without allowing the learning situation to become stilted or artificial.

As Durrell³ has pointed out,

Learning and retention are enhanced by a rich experience with the meaning of each word.

Therefore, as the child develops, his experience becomes

more vast and his vocabulary and his growth in meanings in-

creases.

- Paul McKee, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1934, p. 94.
- ² Eleanor Holmes, "Vocabulary Instruction and Reading", The Elementary English Review, Detroit, Michigan: Volume XI, No. 4, April, 1934, p. 105.
- ³ Donald D. Durrell, <u>Improvement of Basic Reading Abilities</u>, World Book Company, <u>Yonkers-on-Hudson</u>, <u>New York</u>: 1940, p. 163.

The extent to which a child increases and develops his vocabulary is determined by several conditions. Three of these seem to be of great significance at the pre-reading stage.

Before all others is intelligence. It is evident that intelligence is a very important element in the acquisition of a meaning vocabulary.

The next important factor is experiential background. There is an assumption that by the time the child has reached school age, he possesses enough meaning vocabulary to attack primary reading. That is a mistaken idea, because some of these youthful minds cannot extend themselves that far. Children represent many experiential backgrounds.

Hilliard points out,

That children with rich backgrounds are more strongly equipped to attack the printed page than are pupils of meager backgrounds because of enriched meanings and thought which the former bring to this task. Research has discovered that one of the greatest difficulties encountered in learning to read is lack of understanding of words and ideas. Meanings grow through experiences and contacts.

Therefore, one can readily understand that these changes in experience and vocabulary present a definite problem in reading.

¹ George H. Hilliard, "Informational Background as a Factor in Reading Readiness and Reading Progress", <u>The Elementary</u> <u>School Journal</u>, Chicago, Illinois: Volume XXXVIII, No. 4, December, 1937, p. 263.

The third factor is the question of promoting valuable experiences in order to improve and broaden the experiential background of the pupils. Acquiring knowledge is a rational experience. No real learning, even in the small child, can take place without activity on the part of the pupil and teacher. According to Gray¹,

It is the function of the teacher to provide models and directions for simple applications until pupils become capable and show initiative in making them. Constant stimulus should then be provided for new and novel uses of what is required through reading.

He continues by saying that,

Reading serves its largest function in both child and adult life when it brings about desirable changes in the reader.

Further indication of the value of vocabulary training is presented by Horn² who says,

Simple words, although high in frequency in the vocabulary lists, are sometimes a source of serious difficulty because children, knowing one meaning of a word, are unaware that the meaning required by the special context in which the word occurs is unknown to them.

Due to the lack of understanding of words there is always a decrease in speed of comprehension, which hinders progress in reading.

William S. Gray, "The Teaching of Silent Reading During the Next Decade", The Elementary English Review, Detroit, Michigan: Volume XI, No. 4, April, 1934, p. 93.

² Ernest Horn, "Methods of Instruction in the Social Studies", Part XV of the Report of the Commission on the Social Studies. <u>Charles Scribner's Sons</u>, Boston, Massachusetts: c 1937, p. 164.

In summarizing, it would seem the most important factors in developing meaning vocabularies are:

- 1. Intelligence
- 2. Experiential Background
- 3. A definite plan for the specific vocabulary training.

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

With the thought of assembling as complete a vocabulary of religion which is presented in Grade One, an effort was made to select a group of currently used catechisms which could be utilized as representative source material. Teachers of religion in the primary grades suggested the following catechisms, which were accordingly used as the source of the vocabulary:

- 1. Catholic Faith -- Book I
- 2. Sister Annunziata's First Communion Catechism
- 3. A Catechism of Christian Doctrine--Prepared and Enjoined by Order of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore
- First Communion Catechism--Reverend P. Henry Sullivan
- 5. Our Heavenly Father -- Primer (A Basic New Catechism Text in the "Living My Religion Series")
- 6. Baltimore Catechism -- Revised -- Number I Illustrated Study Lessons by Ellamay Horan, Ph.D.
- 7. Living in God's Love--Revised--First Communion Catechism--Book I
- 8. A Catechism of Christian Doctrine--Number I--Supplemented by Reverend Thomas L. Kinkead

9. My First Communion Catechism--Illustrated Edition Ellamay Horan, Ph. D. 9

- 10. The New Baltimore Catechism--Number I--Reverend Michael A. McGuire
- 11. Illustrated Catechism for Little Children--Reverend Alphonse Sausen, O. S. B.
- My First Communion Catechism--Most Reverend Louis
 L. Morrow, D. D.
- 13. A Catechism of Christian Doctrine--Revised Edition of the Baltimore Catechism
- 14. The Illustrated Catechism--Part I--Reverend Aloysius J. Heeg, S. J.

<u>Method of Tabulation</u>. As a preliminary step in the assembling of the vocabulary, the diocesan syllabus was examined very carefully for the lessons which are to be explained and taught in the first grade. Every line of the pages of the lessons in the fourteen catechisms was carefully examined. Every word that was judged to be significant in a vocabulary of religion was underlined.

Names of persons and places were excluded. Expressions like Holy Eucharist were considered as two distinct words and were tabulated accordingly. Ordinary words whose meanings present no special difficulty to the child were eliminated. After the determined words had been underlined, the tabulation of the words was begun. A separate record of the underlined words and their frequencies was made for each of the fourteen catechisms.

The next step was to transfer the words with their total frequencies to sheets of paper 9" x 12" size. These sheets were provided with sixteen columns. With a code number (1 to 14) assigned to each of the catechisms, the first fourteen columns served for the tabulation of the frequencies of the words according to the catechisms in which they were found. Column fifteen was reserved for the total frequency of the word and column sixteen for the total number of catechisms in which each word occurred.

As a result of this word count, a list of three hundred different words was obtained. After a careful examination of this word-list, there was doubt as to the appropriateness of including some of these words in a wocabulary of religion.

After studying the situation a little further, there came about a solution to the problem of just including four major classes of words in the final list:

- 1. Technical words, i.e., words that have a specialized meaning in religion, e.g., sin, Mass
- 2. Words which constitute the elements of technical expression, e.g., venial, mortal
- 3. Words that are used to convey technical religious expressions, e.g., commit

 Words that are used in religion and in other subjects but which are considered important in the teaching of religion, e.g., obey

Eventually sixty-five of the words were discarded, thereby reducing the list to two hundred thirty-five words.

TABLE I

235 WORDS OF THE VOCABULARY OF RELIGION

PRESENTED IN GRADE ONE

Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
3od	550	14
sin	395	14
noly	224	14
neaven	150	14
grace	103	14
lord	102	14
Amen	100	14
blessed	85	14
angel	78	14
person	73	14
communion	70	13
priest	69	13
soul	68	14
sacrament	64	10
man	54	13
Mass	51	14
baptism	49	12
commit	49	13

Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
forgive	48	14
mortal	46	12
almighty	45	14
offer	42	14
original	40	11
penance	40	15
virgin	40	13
church	38	12
catholic	37	13
prayer	37	14
believe	35	11
apostle	34	12
mercy	33	14
actual	32	8
eucharist	32	10
hell	32	13
trespass	32	14
cross	30	14
pray	30	14
trinity	30	10
venial	30	11
offend	29	9
bless	26	14

Word	Total	Frequency	Catechisms
aet		23	14
confess		23	8
divine		23	8
saint		23	12
baptize		22	6
creator		22	11
fruit		22	11
guardian		22	10
hail		22	14
sign		22	13
confession		21	11
forgiveness		21	11
immaculate		21	14
appearance		20	8
contrition		20	11
creed		20	11
everlasting		20	11
faithful		19	12
kingdom		19	14
sacrifice		19	8
crucify		18	11
temptation		18	14
ascend		17	11

Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
evil	17	14
sinner	17	14
descend	16	11
hallow	16	14
Resurrection	16	11
deliver	15	13
savior	15	7
offense	14	6
spirit	14	10
bounty	13	13
Christmas	12	11
creature	12	6
departed	12	12
institute	12	8
nature	12	6
paradise	12	6
peace	12	12
Easter	11	10
right	11	11
satisfy	11	5
fast	10	6
obey	10	8
order	10	9

Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
commandment	9	5
confirmation	.9	8
consecration	9	4
detest	9	9
devil	9	5
heartily	9	9
resolve	9	9
sanctifying	9	5
worthily	9	6
extreme	8	8
hope	8	3
just	8	8
matrimony	8	8
unction	8	8
adore	7	5
altar	7	3
conception	7	7
desire	7	6
omission	7	7
sacred	7	7
sacrilege	7	6
supreme	7	6

-

-	

Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
being	6	5
compose	6	6
create	6	6
disobedience	6	5
glorious	6	6
grievous	6	6
image	6	6
immortal	6	6
merit	6	3
redeemer	6	3
salvation	6	2
wilful	6	6
disobey	5	4
divinity	5	4
hatred	5	5
host	5	2
minister	5	5
occasion	5	5
offering	5	4
pure	5	4
unbloody	5	5
commemoration	4	3

Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
conscience	4	4
faith	4	4
infinite	4	2
matter	4	2
pain	4	4
adoration	3	2
amend	3	3
anger	3	3
christian	3	3
confessional	3	2
external	3	2
grief	3	3
holyday	3	1
lie	3	2
mankind	3	2
obligation	3	1
perfect	3	3
preach	3	ı
privilege	3	3
secret	3	3
supernatural	3	2
worthy	3	3

Word	Total	Frequency	Catechisms
adorable		2	1
angelical		2	2
angry		2	1
Ascension		2	2
bestow		2	2
bodiless		2	2
capital		2	2
chalice		2	2
charity		2	2
consent		2	2
covetousness		2	2
devotion		2	2
distinct		2	2
duly		2	2
envy		2	2
eternal		2	2
figure		2	2
gluttony		2	2
guilt		2	2
heir		2	2
holiness		2	2
humility		2	2





Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
inherit	2	2
interior	2	2
lust	2	2
mark	2	2
marry	2	2
merciful	2	2
misery	2	2
pardon	2	2
piety	2	2
pride	2	2
recollection	2	2
reflection	2	2
resolution	2	2
respect	2	2
salutation	2	2
senctify	2	2
SAVC	2	2
senses	2	2
sloth	2	2
steal	2	2
tabernacle	2	2
worship	2	2

Word	Total Frequency	Catechisms
Annunciation	1	1
bishop	1	l
bodily	1	l
celebrate	l	l
conceal	1	l
confidence	1	l
conscious	1	1
consecrate	1	1
curse	1	1
deliberate	1	1
disciple	1	1
fault	1	1
feast	1	1
form	1	1
foster-father	1	1
glory	l	1
hate	1	1
immolate	1	1
impure	1	1
incarnation	1	1
innocence	1	1
innocent	1	1
invoke	1	1

Word	Total	Frequency	Catechisms
meek		ı	1
mission		1	1
mystery		1	l
persevere		1	1
petition		1	1
pope		1	1
praise		1	1
purgatory		1	1
sanctity		1	1
satan		1	1
scourge		1	1
temple		1	1
temporal		1	1
tempt		1	1
unworthy		1	1

Table I contains the list of two hundred thirty-five words arranged according to their total frequency. (Appendix A lists these same words alphabetically). The first number after each word indicates the total frequency of the word, the second, the number of Catechisms in which the word appears. For example, the first word of the list, God, appeared five hundred fifty times in fourteen catechisms; the word, sacrament, occurred sixty-four times in ten catechisms.

A study of Table I reveals a wide variety of frequencies. A number of the words appear in only one catechism, while others appear in all the catechisms. Some words have a frequency of one, while others have frequencies of more than one hundred.

Description of Testing Program. As was stated previously, the present study is concerned with the question of how well children comprehend the meaning of these words. As a means of carrying out this objective a testing program was planned. To test children on all the words of the vocabulary was an impossibility. It was decided to confine the testing to one hundred of the most frequently used words. These one hundred words were selected from the group of two hundred thirty-five words.

Table II gives the location of the one hundred words in Rinsland's list of 25,632 words. The list is based upon the actual writings of elementary school children.

TABLE II

LOCATION OF THE 100 WORDS IN RINSLAND'S LIST

GRADES										
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Not	on List
act	*	* *	*	*	*	*	*	*		
actual							*	*		
almighty			*		*					
altar			*		*	*	*			
Amen	*		*		*	*				
amend						*		*		
angel	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
apostle										*
appearance			*	*	*	*	*	*		
baptism										*
baptize										*
being	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
believe	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
blessed				*	*		*	*		
bounty										*
catholic				*	*	*	*	*		
Christmas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
church	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
commandment										*
commit							*	*		

GRADES									
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Not on List
communion				*	*	*	*		
conception									*
confess							*	*	
confession									*
consecration	n								*
contrition									*
creator								*	
creature	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
creed						*			
ross	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
crucify									*
ieliver	¥	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
leparted			*		*		*	*	
letest									*
ie vil	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	
lisobedience	э					*		*	
livine					*		*	*	
Easter	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
oucharist									*
verlasting						*	*		
vil		*		*		*	*	*	
extreme					*	*	*	*	

GRADES									
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Not on List
faithful			*	*	*	*	*	*	
fault	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
forgive			*	*	*	*	*	*	
forgiveness									*
glorious			*	*	*	*	¥	*	
fod	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
grace		*	*			*	*	*	
grievous									*
guardian					*	*	*	*	
nail	*	*	×	*	*	냪	*	*	
nallow							*	*	
natred							*	*	
neartily				*	*		*	*	
neaven	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
n oly		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
nost			*	*		*		*	
Immaculate									*
Infinite									*
Institute								#	
Lord						*		*	
nan	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Mass									*

Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Not on List
merit								*	
mercy			*			*	*	*	
mortal						*	*	*	
obey		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
offend									*
offense							*	*	
offer				*	*	*	*	*	
original	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	
paradise				*	*	*	*		
peace			*	*	*	*	*	*	
penance									*
person	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
prayer	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
priest	*			*	*	*	*	*	
redeemer									*
Resurrectio	n		*					*	
sacrament								*	
sacrifice						*	*	*	
sacrilege									*
saints			*	*		*	*	*	
salvation									*
satisfy				*		*	*	*	

GRADES

GRADES											
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Not	on List	;
savior				*	*	*	*	*			
sign	*	*	*	*	*	*	¥	*			
sin	*	*	*	*	*	*	¥	*			
sinner								*			
soul		*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
spirit		*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
temptation										*	
trespass										*	
trinity										*	
unction										*	
venial										*	
virgin					*		*	*			
wilful										*	
worthily										*	

Following is the list of the one hundred words exactly as found in the Rinsland Test

	GRADES											
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 F	Total requencie			
act	27 2a	5 3a	41 2a	37 2a	16 3a	17 3b	72 2a	159 1b3	374			
actual							5 7	8 6	13			
almighty			15 3b		1				16			
altar			3 5b		8 4a	4 6	5 7		20			
Amen	13 2b		3 5b		36	1			20			
amend						29 3a		7 7	36			
angel	13 2b	2 4a	17 3a	11 3b	20 3a	19 3b	5 7	15 5a	102			
apostle			No	t on	List							
appearance			5 5a	4 5b	3 6	7 50	19 3b	49 2b	87			
baptism			No	t on	List							
baptize			No	t on	List							
being	39 164	12 2b	43 2 a	96 163		185 151	373 1a3	595 1a3	1498			
believe	60 162	13 2b	18 3a	87 164		68 2a	132 163	214 161	715			
blessed				3 6			5 7	7 7	17			

Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Fr	Total equencies
bounty			No	ot on	List				
catholic				4 5b	8 4a	10 4b	2	1	25
Christmas	650 1a1	1795 lal			1356- 1a2	902 1a2	2111 1a1	2201 1a1	12966
church	72 151	100 1a5	141 162	183 1a5		211 1a5			1276
commandment			No	ot on	List				
commit							6 6	7 7	13
communion				3 6	2	3 7	1		9
conception			No	ot on	List				
confess							3 8	3 9	6
confession			No	ot on	List				
consecration			No	ot on	List				
contrition			No	ot on	List				
creator								3 9	3
creature	1	1	26	5 5a		7 5b			56
creed						4			4

		GRADES							
Word	rd 1 2 3		3	4 5		6	7	Total 8 Frequencies	
cross	33 165	75 161	125 152	92 164	62 2a	74 2a	104 164	108 165	673
crucify			No	t on	List				
deliver	7 3a	16 2a	4 5a	18 3a	12 3b	3 7	15 4a	19 4b	94
departed			3 5b		2		6 6	12 5b	23
detest			No	t on	List				
de v il	1		5 5a	2 7	1	23 3b	1	8 6	41
disobedience	9					7 5b		1	8
divine					2		3 8	1	6
Easter	210 1a3	167 1a4	145 101	135 152	147 151	71 2a	6 6	14 5a	895
eucharist			No	t on	List				
everlasting						2	57		7
evil		2 4a		8 4a		1	8 5b	18 4b	37
extreme					2	2	3 8	38 3a	45

				GRADE	S				
Word	1	2	3	.4	5	6	7	8	Total Frequencies
faithful			5 5a	4 5b	6 4b	9 5a	11 5a	15 2a	50
fault	1	1	2 6	2 7	8 4a	8 5a	16 4a	21 4a	59
forgive			19 3a	4 5b	17 3a	4 6	30 3a	12 50	86
forgiveness			No	t on	List				
glorious			1	1	1	3 7	18 4a	25 3b	49
Gođ	42 164	38 164	80 165	51 2a	56 2a	37 2b	52 2a	90 2a	446
grace		3 3b	1			1	5 7	6 7	16
grievous			No	t on	List				
guardian					2	1	8 5b	5 8	16
hail	4 3b	2 4a	14 3b	4 5b	6 4b	5 6	13 4b	12 5b	
hallow							2	39	5
hatred							9 5b	9 6	18
heartily				l	1		2	14 5a	18
heaven	5 3a	3 3b	10 4a	4 5d	9 4a	12 4b	19 3b	27 3b	

1	

				GRADI	ES				
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Frequencies
holy		2 4a	2 6	3 6	22 3a	53 2a	21 3b	25 3b	128
host			4 5a	1		3 7		3 9	11
immaculate			No	t on	List				
infinite			No	t on	List				
institute								3 9	3
lord						7 5b		12 5b	
man	662 1a1	800 1a1			817 - 1a2	657 1a2		1868 lal	8133
Mass			No	t on	List				
merit								3 9	3
mercy			1			37	2	24 4 a	
mortal						1	38	39	
оред		5 3a	38 2b	11 3b	20 3a	41 2b	33 3a	40 3a	
offend		0		t on	List				
offense							23 3d		

	1949					-	1.		Total
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 F:	requencies
off er				1	6 4b	8 5a	9 5b	20 4a	44
original	1	1		1	8 4a	13 4a	18 4a	35 3a	77
paradise				1	2	1	5 7		9
peace			12 3b	27 2b	19 3a	18 3b	142 162	125 164	343
penance			Not	on	List				
person	3 3b	15 2a	47 2a	49 2a	76 1b5	228 1a5	256 1a5	475 1a3	1149
prayer	14 2b	3 3b	6 4b	10 3b	5 5a	5 6	12 4b	22 4a	77
priest	1			8 4a	7 4b	3 7	11 5a	17 4b	47
redeemer			Not	on	List				
Resurrection			4 5a					1	5
sacrament			Not	on	List				
sacrifice						7 5b	4 7	8 6	19
sacrilege			Not	on	List				
saints			1	1		8 5a	ı		11

			G.	RAD	ES				
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Frequencies
salvation			Not	on	List				
satisfy				1		3 7	4 7	9 6	17
savior				1	1	2	10 5a	39	17
a se consta é									
sign	23 2a	6 3a	24 3a	38 2a		59 2a	60 2a	136 164	372
sin	1	4 3b	17 3a	27	2	4 6	4 7	9 6	43
sinner								18 4b	18
I0 E (£+)									
soul		1	2 6	27	7 4b	2	11 5a	22 4a	47
				10		1.5		14	
spirit		1	5 5a	15 3a	16 3a	16 4a	38 2b	95 2a	186
			Net		List				
temptation				on	PISC				
trespass			Not	on	List				
Crespass					1100				
trinity			Not	on	List				
unction					List				



1	

				GRAI	DES				
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Frequencies
venial			Not	; on	List				
virgin					2		2	4 8	8
wilful			Not	; on	List				
worthily			Not	on	List				

<u>Meaning of Symbols</u> (lal continuing to la5) 1 means the first 1000 al means the first 100 of the first 500 of the first 1000 words

-			Fi	rst 100	00 Word	ls			
		500					500		
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
lal	1a2	la3	la4	la 5	161	162	163	1b4	155

	or 2d words		or 3d words		or 4th words		or 5th words
500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
2a	2b	3a	3b	4a	4b	5a	5Ъ
		6	th 1000 t	o 9th 100	00	1 - 1	
60		6 7000	th 1000 t	o 9th 100		9000	

Number of the one hundred test words falling within the first 1000 of Rinsland's list is 8 or 8%.

being	-	164
believe	•	162
church	•	191
Christmas	-	lal
cross	-	165
Easter	•	la3
God	•	1b4
man	-	lal

Total number occurring in Rinsland's list is twenty-three or 23%.

At least six of the words located in Rinsland's list are of doubtful placement, for it is unlikely that a word like, grace, would have been placed in the 3b group, had the technical use of this word been considered.

<u>Administration of the tests</u>. Tests were administered to eighty-eight pupils in grade one throughout the Mercy Parochial Schools of the City of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The schools taking part in the testing program were: Saint Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint John, Saint Joseph, Saint Mary, Saint Therese, and Holy Saviour.

TABLE III

	No.	Mean C.A.	S.D.	Mean M.A.	S.D.
Boys	44	79.08	5.07	110.04	12,93
	44	80.18	5.37	112.6	10.86

MEAN CHRONOLOGICAL AND MENTAL AGES

There were eighty-eight children used in this study-forty-four boys and forty-four girls. To these eighty-eight children the Otis¹ Group Intelligence Scale--Form A--was given.

¹Published by World Book Company.

Table III shows the mean mental and chronological ages, figured in months.

The range in mental ages in the boy's group was from six years, eleven months to ten years, eleven months. Among the girls the range was from six years, nine months to eleven years, seven months.

Chronological ages of the boys tested ranged from five years, seven months, to seven years, seven months. Among the girls the range in chronological ages was from five years, eleven months to eight years, three months.

The tests were administered by the class room teachers. It was explained that this was a test on the meaning of some words used in their catechisms classes. Each child was taken privately and asked the meaning of each of the one hundred words. Responses were tabulated as given by the child. While it is not possible to discuss each of these items in detail, the significance and worth of a number of the items will be discussed later.

A pupil's score on the test was the number of correct responses.

<u>Results of testing program</u>. A tabulation was made of the number of correct responses to each of the one hundred test items. From the data obtained, the percentage of correctness for each item was calculated by dividing the number of correct responses by the number of pupils tested. The percentages, determined for boys, girls, and for both boys and girls are given in Table IV. The total percentages to the nearest tenth per cent range from 0.0% to 92.0%. ANALYSIS OF ITEMS IN TERMS OF PERCENTAGE OF CORRECTNESS

	P	ercentages		
	Item	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Gođ	75.0	63.6	69.3
2.	sin	72.7	61.4	67.0
3.	holy	27.3	52.3	39.8
4.	heaven	68.2	70.5	69.3
5.	grace	29.5	43.2	36.4
6.	lord	2.3	0.0	1.1
7.	Amen	65.9	70.5	68.2
8.	blessed	47.7	29.5	38.6
9.	angel	56.8	65.9	61.4
10.	person	72.7	61.4	67.0
11.	communion	72.7	79.5	76.1
12.	priest	61.4	54.5	58.0
13.	soul	40.9	52.3	46.6
14.	sacrament	38.6	36.4	37.5
15.	man	54.5	50.0	52.3
16.	Mass	29.5	31.8	30.7
17.	commit	22.7	27.3	25.0

Percentages					
It	em	Воуз	Girls	Total	
18	. baptism	36.4	45.5	40.9	
19	. forgive	29.5	50.0	39.8	
20	. mortal	43.2	56.8	50.0	
21	. almighty	13.6	13.6	13.6	
22	. offer	54.5	63.6	59.1	
23	. penance	4.5	6.8	5.7	
24	• virgin	11.4	13.6	12.5	
25	. original	13.6	25.0	19.3	
26	. church	27.3	31.8	29.5	
27	. catholic	13.6	13.6	13.6	
28	. prayer	86.4	70.5	78.4	
29	. believe	15.9	29.5	22.7	
30	. apostle	36.4	45.5	40.9	
31	. mercy	9.1	15.9	12.5	
32	. trespass	11.4	18.2	14.8	
33	. actual	50.0	50.0	50.0	
34	. eucharist	52.3	59.1	55.7	
35	. trinity	50.0	65.9	58.0	
36	. cross	15.9	20.5	18.2	
37	. venial	56.8	59.1	58.0	

Percentages					
	Item	Boys	Girls	Total	
58.	offend	56.8	47.7	52.3	
59.	divine	9.1	9.1	9.1	
0.	saint	54.5	45.5	50.0	
1.	act	25.0	29.5	27.3	
2.	confess	68.2	70.5	69.3	
3.	baptize	22.7	15.9	19.3	
4.	creator	75.0	54.5	64.8	
5.	guardian	43.2	47.7	45.5	
6.	sign	34.1	29.5	31.8	
7.	hail	29.5	40.9	35.2	
8.	immaculate	20.5	13.6	17.0	
9.	forgiveness	63.6	65.9	64.8	
0.	confession	72.7	70.5	71.6	
51.	creed	0.0	15.9	8.0	
52.	everlasting	52.3	56.8	54.5	
53.	contrition	43.2	56.8	50.0	
4.	appearance	20.5	20.5	20.5	
5.	sacrifice	40.9	45.5	43.2	
6.	faithful	34.1	31.8	33.0	
7.	temptation	13.6	13.6	13.6	

	Ре	rcentages		
It	0 m	Boys	Girls	Total
58.	crucify	31.8	36.4	34.1
59.	sinner	50.0	59.1	54.5
60.	evil	43.2	52.3	47.7
61.	hallow	6.8	11.4	9.1
62.	Resurrection	34.1	36.4	35.2
63.	deliver	18.2	20.5	19.3
64.	savior	70.5	68.2	69.3
65.	offense	31.8	45.5	38.6
66.	spirit	86.4	77.3	81.8
67.	bounty	2.3	0.0	1.1
68.	institute	22.7	27.3	25.0
69.	peace	56.8	50.0	53.4
70.	creature	56.8	56.8	56.8
71.	departed	43.2	43.2	43.2
72.	Christmas	95.5	88.6	92.0
73.	paradise	27.3	43.2	35.2
74.	Easter	88.6	81.8	85.2
75.	satisfy	22.7	36.4	29.5
76.	obey	56.8	56.8	56.8
77.	worthily	29.5	18.2	23.9
78.	detest	34.1	25.0	29.5

	Per	centages		
Item		Boys	Girls	Total
19.	consecration	22.7	22.7	22.7
30.	devil	56.8	70.5	63.6
31.	heartily	9.1	6.8	8.0
32.	commandment	29.5	43.2	36.4
33.	unction	6.8	2.3	4.5
84.	extreme	2.3	6.8	4.5
35.	altar	15.9	13.6	14.8
86.	sacrilege	0.0	0.0	0.0
37.	wilful	2.3	4.5	3.4
38.	merit	6.8	6.8	6.8
39.	disobedience	72.7	56.8	64.8
90.	glorious	18.2	25.0	21.6
91.	conception	0.0	0.0	0.0
92.	being	25.0	25.0	25.0
93.	salvation	13.6	9.1	11.4
94.	grievous	4.5	9.1	6.8
95.	redeemer	50.0	52.3	51.1
96.	host	61.4	54.5	58.0
97.	hatred	52.3	63.6	58.0
98.	infinite	0.0	0.0	0.0

]	Percentages		
Itom	Boys	Girls	Total
99. amend	13.6	13.6	13.6
100. fault	31.8	25.0	28.4



TABLE V

MEAN SCORES OF BOYS AND GIRLS

Group	No.	Mean	S.E.M.	S.D.	m1-m2	S.E.D.	C.R.
Boys	44	36,41	1.82	12.09			
					1,98	2.66	.74
Girls	44	38.39	1.95	12.96			

Table V shows the mean scores of the boys and girls on the word meaning test.

The mean of the boys' group was 36.41 words, compared with 38.39 words for the girls' group. The critical ratio of .74 is not statistically significant.

To the word <u>Christmas</u> (Item 72), 92.0% of the eightyeight children, thirty-nine girls or 88.6% and forty-two boys or 95.5%, responded correctly; whereas in items 86, <u>Sacrilege</u>,--91, Conception, and 98, <u>Infinite</u>--there were no correct responses. Many of the children confused <u>Infinite</u> and <u>Infant</u> (the former was defined as a small child). Items 86 and 91--the children had no conception of at all.

To <u>Salvation</u> (Item 93), meaning "saving of the soul; getting to heaven," the most frequent response was--Salvation Army.

To <u>Hallow</u> (Item 61), meaning "make holy; make sacred," the majority of the children gave the meaning as "hello."

<u>Mass</u> (Item 16), a word which represents the core of the Catholic Religion, was very foreign to many of the children. They gave such responses as "Mass is for people"--"Mass is on Sunday"--"Something that you talk to God at"--"In church." Only fourteen boys and thirteen girls gave a correct response.

For <u>Mortal</u> (Item 20), meaning "that which kills the soul; deadly," was not clear to some of the children. The most common meaning given was "bad". The principal idea of being something that brings death to the soul is lacking. The importance of this concept in distinguishing mortal from venial sin is at once apparent, since venial sin is also something bad.

For <u>Sacrament</u> (Item 14), the response most frequently given was "an outward sign instituted by Christ." There is an indication here of the response being motivated by the use of the words, outward sign, used in the definition of sacrament.

Being (Item 92), was confused with the word, bean. Other responses were: "food", "something you eat."

<u>Temptation</u> (Item 57), is definitely confused with sin in the children's minds. Only 13.6% of the children gave a correct meaning. To <u>Cross</u> (Item 36), many of the responses were: "crucifix". Probably a more thorough explanation and demonstration of both objects would have clarified the concept for the children.

For <u>Soul</u> (Item 13), the most frequent response was, "something we cannot see", which is one of the properties of the soul. This property is not the essence of a soul, for there are many other things that cannot be seen. A few different responses were: "heart", "something inside you", "a miracle", "it goes to heaven", all of which prove the child has a very hazy idea of what the soul really is.

Many of the items were associated with another word that the child had heard being connected with them, e.g.,

Immaculate	(Item 48),	Immaculate Conception, Immac-
		ulate Mother, Immaculate Heart
		Sisters
Blessed	(Item 8),	Blessed Mother, Blessed Virgin
		Mary, Blessed Sacrament
Angel	(Item 9),	Guardian Angel, Angel Gabriel
Holy	(Item 3),	Holy Communion, Holy God
Lord	(Item 6),	Lord God, Lord Jesus
Almighty	(Item 21),	Almighty God, Almighty Father
Hail	(Item 47),	Hail Mary, Hail, Holy Queen

- Virgin (Item 24), Virgin Mary, Blessed Virgin
- Mercy (Item 31), Have mercy on us! My Jesus mercy! Mercy Hospital
- Divine (Item 39), Divine Nature, Divine God, Divine Persons, Divine Saviour, Divine Son
- Sign (Item 46), Sign of the Cross, Outward Sign
- Everlasting (Item 52), Everlasting life, Everlasting pains of hell, Life everlasting, Amen
- <u>Sacrifice</u> (Item 55), Sacrifice to God, Sacrifice during Lent, Sacrifice of the Cross

Resurrection (Item 62), Resurrection of our Lord, Resurrection of the body

Apparently the analysis of the test items has yielded information that should prove to be of some value to the teacher of religion. Many of the responses to the items seem to be indicative of deficiencies in the teaching of catechetical instructions. Without doubt, there are many technical terms whose meanings never become clear and definite in the children's mind; but, on the other hand, there are difficult terms which are inevitable but not unsurmountable. From the results of this study it is evident that the child does not always understand the meaning of the term he uses. It would seem that no definition in the catechism should be memorized until each word of that definition is understood.

The child must be taught the meanings of these words. These meanings can be learned only by proceeding from the known to the unknown, which is the way of all learning.

Words having more than one meaning should be made known to the child and distinguished. Words similar in sound and form should be carefully taught. In brief, the writer believes that the teacher of religion, should conscientiously develop the catechetical vocabulary and make it an integral part of religious instruction.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND NEEDED RESEARCH

<u>Conclusions</u>. What can be concluded from this study of the vocabulary presented in the catechetical teaching of first grade children is that there are specific problems related to the vocabulary as follows:

- The words differ widely in difficulty.
- 2. An analysis of the responses revealed interesting and important evidence concerning the incorrect meanings that the children attach to these words.
- There is little difference in the word knowledge background of the boys and girls.

It would seem that unless a definite word meaning program is developed, children would be comparatively unprepared for comprehension of Grade Two material.

The present study is submitted with the hope that further research be encouraged and that this may help pave the way. <u>Suggestions for Needed Research</u>. As a result of this study, the writer thinks it would be of value to continue the study of children's knowledge of word meanings in catechetical training along these lines:

- To revise this testing program and give to a larger population.
- 2. To make a study to determine the best methods and procedures for teaching word meanings.
- 3. A study similar to the present one could be conducted among children attending Catechetical Centers.

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APPENDIX A

The Vocabulary of Religion Presented in Grade One

(Note: The following list is an alphabetical arrangement of the words in Table I. The number in the first column indicates the total frequency of the word; the number in the second column refers to the number of catechisms in which the word is used.)

WORDS OF THE VOC	ABOLARI OF I	RELIGION PRESENTED IN GRADE C
act	23	14
actual	32	8
adorable	2	1
adoration	3	2
adore	7	5
almighty	45	14
altar	7	3
Amen	100	14
amend	3	3
angəl	78	14
angelical	2	2
anger	3	3
angry	2	1
Annunciation	1	1
apostle	34	12
appearance	20	8
ascend	17	11
Ascension	2	2
baptism	49	12
baptize	22	6

being	6	5
believe	35	11
bestow	2	2
bishop	1	1
bless	26	14
blessed	85	14
bodiless	2	2
bodily	1	l
bounty	13	13
capital	2	2
catholic	37	13
celebrate	1	1
chalice	2	2
charity	2	2
christian	3	3
Christmas	12	11
church	38	12
commandment	9	5
commemoration	4	3
commit	49	13
communion	70	13
compose	6	6

conceal	l
conception	7
confess	23
confession	21
confessional	3
confidence	1
confirmation	9
conscience	4
conscious	1
consecrate	l
consecration	9
consent	2
contrition	20
covetousness	2
create	6
creator	22
creature	12
creed	20
cross	30
crucify	18
curse	1
deliberate	1

.

deliver	15	13
departed	12	12
descend	16	11
desire	7	6
detest	9	9
devil	9	5
devotion	2	2
disciple	l	1
disobedience	6	5
disobey	5	4
distinct	2	2
divine	23	8
divinity	5	4
duly	2	2
Easter	11	10
envy	2	2
eternal	2	2
eucharist	32	10
everlasting	20	11
evil	17	14
external	3	2
extreme	8	8

faith	4	4
faithful	19	12
fast	10	6
fault	l	l
feast	1	l
figure	2	2
forgive	48	14
forgiveness	21	11
form	1	1
foster-father	1	1
fruit	22	11
glorious	6	5
glory	1	1
gluttony	2	2
God	550	14
grace	103	14
grief	3	3
grievous	6	6
guardian	22	10
guilt	2	2
hail	22	14
hallow	16	14

hate	1	
hatred	5	
heartily	9	
heaven	150	
heir	2	
hell	32	
holiness	2	
holy	224	
holyday	3	
hope	8	
host	5	
humility	2	
image	6	
immaculate	21	
immolate	1	
immortal	6	
impure	1	
incarnation	1	
infinite	4	
inherit	2	
innocence	1	
innocent	l	

institute	12	
interior	2	
invoke	l	
just	8	
kingdom	19	
110	3	
lord	102	
lust	2	
man	54	
mankind	3	
mark	2	
marry	2	
Mass	51	
matrimony	8	
matter	4	
meek	1	
merciful	2	
mercy	33	
merit	6	
minister	5	
misery	2	
mission	l	

mortal	46	
mystery	l	
nature	12	
obey	10	
obligation	3	
occasion	5	
offend	29	
offense	14	
offer	42	
offering	5	
omission	7	
order	10	
original	40	
pain	4	
paradise	12	
pardon	2	
peace	12	
penance	40	
perfect	3	
persevere	l	
person	73	
petition	1	

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piety	2	
pope	1	
praise	1	
pray	30	
prayer	37	
preach	3	
priest	69	
pride	2	
privilege	3	
pure	5	
purgatory	1	
recollection	2	
redeemer	6	
reflection	2	
resolution	2	
resolve	9	
respect	2	
Resurrection	16	
right	11	
sacrament	64	
sacred	7	
sacrifice	19	

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sacrilege	7	
saint	23	
salutation	2	
salvation	6	
sanctify	2	
sanctifying	9	
sanctity	1	
satan	1	
satisfy	11	
save	2	
savior	15	
scourge	1	
secret	3	
senses	2	
sign	22	
sin	395	
sinner	17	
sloth	2	
soul	68	
spirit	14	
steal	2	
supernatural	3	

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supreme	7	6
tabernacle	2	2
temple	1	1
temporal	l	1
tempt	l	1
temptation	18	14
trespass	32	14
trinity	30	10
unbloody	5	5
unction	8	8
unworthy	l	1
venial	30	11
virgin	40	13
wilful	6	6
worship	2	2
worthily	9	6
worthy	3	3

APPENDIX B

VOCABULARY OF RELIGION TEST

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VOCABULARY OF RELIGION TEST

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City	
Age Last Birthday	Date of Birth
}rade	Teacher
Boy or Girl	Date

God	
sin	
holy	
heaven	
grace	
lord	
Amen	
blessed	
angel	
person	
communion	
priest	
soul	
sacrament	
man	
Mass	
commit	
baptism	
forgive	
mortal	
almighty	
offer	

penance	
virgin	
original	
church	
catholic	
prayer	
believe	
apostle	
mercy	
trespass	4
actual	4
eucharist	
trinity	
cross	
venial	
offend	
divine	
saint	
act	
confess	
baptize	
creator	

guardian	
Contraction of the second	
immaculate	
forgiveness_	
confession	and a second
everlasting_	
contrition	
appearance	
sacrifice	
faithful	
temptation	
erucify	
sinner	
evil	
Resurrection	
deliver	
savior	
offense	
spirit	in a second s

bounty	
institute	
peace	
creature	
departed	
paradise	
Easter	
satisfy	
obey	
worthily	
detest	
consecration	
de v il	
heartily	
commandment	
unction	
extreme	
altar	
sacrilege	
wilful	
merit	

disobedience	
glorious	
conception	
being	
salvation	
grievous	
redeemer	
host	
hatred	
infinite	
amend	
fault	