

# Teaching the Facts of Life

10¢



**DIVINE WORD PUBLICATIONS**





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2016

# TEACHING THE FACTS OF LIFE

*by Rev. Paul M. Baier*



1st Printing  
15th Thousand

1959

DIVINE WORD PUBLICATIONS  
Techny, Illinois

спец  
запом



## FOREWORD

There are five general 'norms' for sex education. It must (1) be private, (2) be gradual, (3) be repeated, (4) be continued throughout the period of growth, and (5) meet and slightly anticipate the needs of the individual.

Parents should and can observe these 'norms' very closely, and easily, by the method outlined in this booklet for teaching their children the facts of life.

Experienced pastors and priests urge Catholic parents to 'bestir themselves' in this regard of teaching the facts of life.

Use this aid-word quiz to teach your children. It can be simply and beautifully approached by this method.



# Teaching the Facts of Life

You know how easy it is for children to ask questions. A first grader can often amaze you with deep truths or insights and quaint expressions of them. It is just as simple and easy for YOU to ask questions . . . and teach your children while you are doing so. A few lists of words can show you how to start.

Words are magic. Written words convey ideas and truths to a child. Spoken words are, however, — with or without illustrations — the usual means of conveying truths or facts or insights. Children learn many things through the sense of sight in the eye, but meanings, explanations and understandings come also through the sense of hearing in the use of words. Experience combines both sources of information in many ways.

## RELIGION

Parents can, for instance, teach religion by means of questions. Give a fourth grader a list of words on the Life of Christ. Ask the child how many words or terms are known. Take your time. Be patient. Listen. Coach a little. Hint here and there . . . and enjoy the eager efforts at communication and expression. (The method and art one learns in asking one list of words will be helpful afterward in other similar "quizzing" situations.)

Agony in Garden, Annunciation, Andrew, Apostles, Ascension, Assumption, Baptism of Jesus, Barabbas, Beatitudes, Bethlehem, Calvary, Cana, Capharnaum, Carpenter, Carrying of Cross, Centurion, Circumcision, Cleansing of Temple, Coronation (of Mary), Crowning (with thorns), Crucifixion, Daughter of Jairus, Dead Sea, Descent of Holy Spirit, Devil, Disciples, Dismas, Draught of Fishes, Elizabeth, Evangelists, Feast of Passover, Finding in Temple, First Holy Communion, First Mass, Flight (to Egypt).

Gabriel, Galilee, Golden Rule, Good Samaritan, Gospels, Healing the sick, Herod, Holy Family, Holy Innocents, Holy Land, Holy Week, James, Jericho, Jerusalem, Jesus Christ; John the Baptist, John the Beloved Disciple, Jordan, Joseph, Judas Iscariot, Judea, Lake Genesareth, Last Supper, Lazarus, Longinus, Lord's Prayer, Magi, Magnificat, Mary (Blessed Virgin), Mary Magdalen, Matthew, Messiah, Miracle, Moses, Multiplication of loaves and fishes, Nativity, Nazareth.

Palm Sunday, Passion, Pentecost, Peter, Peter's denial, Pontius Pilate, Presentation, Prodigal Son, Redeemer, Redemption, Resurrection, Sabbath, Salvation, Samaria, Savior, Scourging, Sepulcher, Seven Last Words, Seven Sorrows (of Mary), Simeon, Simon the Cyrenean, Stations of the Cross, Storm on Lake, Temple, Thomas the Doubter,



Upper Room, Veronica, Way of the Cross, Wise Men, Zaccheus, Zachary.

Those are the bread-and-butter words of *teaching* many truths in the Life of Christ and also, it must be remembered, of *learning* them. Vocabulary is as important to the child-learner as it is to the adult-teacher. Words are the bearers of ideas and truths between parent and child . . . and it must be a two-way street between them.

Parenthood means having a child in marriage; fatherhood and motherhood mean more than that. Fathers and mothers have the happy (at least, it should be happy) task of introducing their sons and daughters to the wide, wide, wonderful world into which they come as strangers from the hand of God. Strangers need a guide: a guiding hand, a guiding word, a guiding light. God's world is in them and all around them. Blessed are the children whose fathers and mothers act always as guardian angels to "light and guard, to rule and guide" — in the world of grace and also wisely in the fascinating and law-regulated world of nature around them.

## GENERAL SCIENCE

Scientific truths and realities make up a vast fund of human knowledge. These realities and facts of the world of science surround us on every side. They touch our lives and the lives of children most intimately.

Air (oxygen and nitrogen), Altimeter,

Anemia, Antibiotics, Astronomer, Astronomy, Atmosphere, Atom (protons, neutrons, electrons), Atom-splitting, Balanced diet, Binoculars, Birds, Body of man, Botany, Calorie needs, Cells of Body, Chemical elements, Climate, Clouds, Colors, Comet, Constellation, Contact lenses, Diesel engine, Drugs, Dynamo, Earth as planet, Earth's rotation and revolution, Electricity, Electricity's uses, Electromagnet, Energy, Evaporation, Eye.

Field glasses, Fish, Fluorescent light, Forests, Fossils, Geology, Germs, Geyser, Glacier, Glands (of body) Gravitation, Health, Heat, Heredity, Hormones, Human physiology, Hydraulic brakes, Hygiene, Infra red rays, Jet propulsion, Kinescope, Light, Light year and speed of light, Magnet, Matter (solid, liquid, gas), Matter: change, Matter: organic and inorganic, Metal, Meteor, Meteorologist, Microbes, Microscope, Milky Way, Molecule, Morse Code, Music (and/or noise), Nitrogen in air, Ocean, Organism, Organs (of body), Osmosis, Oxygen in air.

Penicillin, Photoelectric cell, Photosynthesis, Planets; orbits, Precipitation, Protoplasm, Radar, Radio, Rainbow, Reptiles, Rocket engines, Rocks, Sanforizing, Satellites, Science, Scientific facts, Soil, Sonar, Sound, Sound track (movies), Sun: distance, Star, Stereoscope, Stratosphere, Synthetics, Telegraph, Telephone, Telescope, Temperature, Thermostat, Tissues (of body),

Ultra-violet rays, Universe, Vaccination, Virus, Vitamin, Weather.

The school of experience has made it clear to us that there is no royal road to learning and comprehending these facts. Youngsters and oldsters can (and do) take many of them for granted and pay little or no attention to them. These wonders of the world of science, however, can bring a man of faith closer to his God. Many indeed have studied the God-given realities and God-regulated truths of nature in such a way as to follow the clear path of them up to the source of truth, God Himself. God gave us a mind. He wants us to know the world around us; through it, He wants us to know Him.

In what is a child interested? What is a child's capability in knowing? What is the capacity of a youngster for learning, if he or she is guided by an interested and interesting teacher? Parents know that these questions are difficult to answer. The mind of a child is eager, quick, penetrating and retentive. Interest and attention may be short in childhood, but they are phenomenally keen and real.

### **SECRET OF SUCCESS**

The point we wish to make, however, does not lie actually in the facts themselves or even in the knowledge of them. The vital point is in an individual's personal interest. One person already knows at least some of

the facts and wishes to impart them; the other person must still learn the information. Whose personal interest is vitally necessary?

Tell a child to get interested in the Life of Christ or in the truths of General Science.

Tell the youngster that personal interest in such vital subjects will bring rich rewards. What happens? Nothing. Or only very little. Try it once and see for yourself.

Show a child, on the other hand, that you are interested in the youngster's knowledge of the Life of Christ or knowledge of General Science. Those three words "You are interested" shed an all-transforming light on the problem.

It is a fact of experience. When parents want a child "to be interested in something," they sometimes hope to attain this goal without "becoming personally interested" in it themselves. Such a hope is very often an empty one. Such an approach is almost a complete waste of time.

A child observes when "you are interested." Actions speak louder than words. Your words are noticed; your actions are treasured. Genuine personal interest is the "action," and the message received joyfully in the heart of the child is the most precious of all truths, "You love me."

"You are interested . . . you love me." No satisfactory substitute for real personal interest has ever been found.

## THE "FACTS OF LIFE"

The facts of life are true. There are many methods of teaching these truths. Any method that is involved, unusual, startling or in any way really embarrassing will not be widely accepted. The speaker and the hearer both have human sensibilities. A mind that is chaste and pure and a soul that is naturally Christian both have an innate sense of the fitness of reality, and that common sense of the fitness of things is needed above all else in this particular problem. The truth . . . in a certain way . . . at a certain age . . . from a certain person: that is what the children want and have a right to expect from the parents.

The goal of knowledge in this respect is reached step by step at various levels of age and intelligence. Parents are the judges, and they are also the teachers. One must remember that, when the interest of a child is ignored or curiosity is repressed, the children simply learn from other sources what they want to know.

This writer has explored many of the possibilities of the following list of words and has tested it quite thoroughly. Some readers of this article may be ultra-careful or ultra-conservative. Are there not some who would as a precaution omit Circumcision from the word-list of the Life of Christ? Some who would omit Organs of body from the General Science list? Yes, even some who would, if they could, omit the word

Womb from the "Hail Mary" or the word Adultery from the Ten Commandments because of a certain inelegance in these words? Pre-judging of this kind is very near to prejudice (notice the words themselves!), and these overly careful individuals need a prayerful meditation on the oft-quoted words of Chesterton: "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting, *it has not been tried*" (italics added).

Parents can teach the truth to their children . . . a little at a time. Once a beginning is made, it is quite simple and easy to continue. If, however, parents teach a half-truth or a whole untruth to their children, the deception will make it difficult to clear up the real truth at any time later.

An oft-repeated verse has more than a kernel of truth in it in this regard: "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, When first we practice to deceive!" Wisdom lies in truth . . . the real truth . . . part by part . . . a little at a time.

## PARTS OF THE HUMAN BODY

Abdomen, Adam's apple, *Adenoids*, *Alimentary canal*, Ankle, AORTA, *Appendix*, Arch, Arm, *Arteries*, *Auditory canal*, AURICLE, Back, Backbone, BACTERIA, Beard, Belly, Belly button, *Biceps*, *Bile*, Birth canal from womb, Bladder, *Bladder opening*, Blood, Blood vessel, Body, Body (solid and fluid), Bone, Bowels, Bowel movement (BM), *Bowel opening*, Brain, Breast (chest),

*Breast (nursing)*, Breastbone, Bridge, BRONCHI, Brow, Buttock (butt), Calf, Capillaries, Cell (many kinds in body), Cheek, Chest, Chin, *Circulation: circulatory system*, CLITORIS, COCYX, Collar bone, COLON, CORNEA, *Corpuscles (red-white)*, Crazy bone, *Cuticle*.

*Diaphragm, Digestive system*, Drum, Elbow, *Esophagus*, EUSTACHIAN TUBE, Eye, Father cell, Finger, Foot, Forearm, Forefinger, Forehead, *Foreskin*, Gall, Glands, GLOTTIS (EPIGLOTTIS), *Groin*, Gullet, Gum, Guts, Hair, Hands, Haunches, Head, Heart, Heel, Hips, *Hymen*, Intestines, Iris, Jaw, Jugular vein, Kidneys, Knee, Kneecap, Knuckle, LARYNX, Lashes, Leg, Lens, Lid, *Ligament*, Limbs, Lips, Liver, *Lobe*, Lungs, MASTOID, *Membrane*, *Midriff*, *Molar*, Mother cell, Mustache.

Nails, Nose, Nostril, mouth, Muscle, Nape, *Navel*, Neck, Nerves: nervous system, Nipple, OPTIC NERVE, Organs, *Ovaries*, *Ovum (mother cell)*, *Palate*, Palm, PANCREAS, *Pelvis*, Penis, PHARYNX, PITUITARY GLAND, PLASMA, Pores, Private parts, PROTOPLASM, PULMONARY ARTERIES (& VEINS), Pulse, Pupil, PYLORUS, Rectum, *Respiration: respiratory system*, RETINA, Ribs, Rump.

Saliva, Scalp, SCROTUM, SCRUFF, Senses: sense organs, Sex: male and female, Sex organs, Shin, Shoulder, Shoulder blade, *Sideburn*, *Sinus*, Skeleton, Skin, Skull, SOLAR PLEXUS, Sole, Sperm (father cell), *Spinal*

*column, Spinal cord, Spine, SPLEEN, Stomach, Stool (body waste matter), Sweat glands, Tail bone, Taste buds, Tooth, Temperature, Temple, Testicles, Thigh, THORAX, Throat, Thumb, THYROID GLAND, Tissue (fleshy & bony), Toe, Tongue, Tonsil, Trunk, Urine (body waste water), Uterus, UVULA, Vagina, Veins, VENTRICLE, Vertebrae, Vitals, Vocal cords, Voice box, Waist, Windpipe, Wisdom tooth, Womb, Wrist, YELLOW SPOT, ZONULE OF ZINN.*

It is not expected that either a child or an adult will know all of these words. A few of the words were added, let us say, for the sake of honesty; it means a lot to a child to hear an adult admit honestly: "I myself do not really know what that word means." Actually, a child of ten knows a high percentage of the 130 words in Group I (regular type), some of the 40 words in Group II (italics), and even a few of the 30 words in Group III (small caps). Parents in general do exceptionally well with the list; the earlier School of the Three R's is a poorer teacher in this than the School of Life.

### IN PRACTICE

The list of words is a valuable quiz by itself, but the lessons learned in the quizzes of the Life of Christ and General Science can be applied here with wisdom and understanding. If, for instance, a mother finds that a little girl does not know the meaning of Beatitudes or Evangelists, she is



content with the question alone. If a father finds that a little boy does not know the meaning of Energy or Microbes, he is satisfied with the "mere saying of the words without any explanation of them."

Someone may be wondering what effect the mere asking of a question or the mere saying of a word could or would have. The effect, it is true, is small when a word is unknown and unfamiliar. But then, the parent-educator is certainly not looking for the shocking or startling effect that is produced at times by a single instance of profanity or blasphemy (for obvious reasons, no examples will be given in print). Parents, thanks be to God, know that the growth of a child is a long process and the true education of a child proceeds very, very slowly also.

Another problem presented itself in the question of HOW to use the list effectively in (1) a step by step fashion (2) on various age levels. An "Addition" was decided upon and devised for the purpose of meeting this need.

### **THE "ADDITION"**

*Fact No. 1:* An eight or nine year old knows that a boy's body is different than a girl's body. This difference is in the private parts or sex organs of each person. The sex organs of the boy are on the outside of his body, and the sex organs of the girl are on the inside of her body.

*Fact No. 2:* A nine or ten year old knows that a boy's organs of sex are called the penis and the testicles. The girl's organs of sex are called the womb and the birth canal (from the womb to the outside of her body). We use the word womb in the "Hail Mary." The birth canal is also called the vagina.

*Fact No. 3:* A ten or eleven year old knows that a baby grows in the body of the mother. God creates the soul of the baby when the father cell and the mother cell are united in marriage to form the body of the baby. The man and woman in marriage are called husband and wife. The baby grows for nine months in the womb of the mother before it is born.

*Fact No. 4:* An eleven or twelve year old knows that changes take place in the body of the boy when he grows up to be a man and in the body of the girl when she grows up to be a woman. These changes are a sign that the father cells and the mother cells are beginning to grow in the body of each person. The time of these changes is called puberty or adolescence, and the twelve year old is told about these changes before they begin to appear.

(Note: It cannot be known with certainty in what way St. Anne imparted this information on the facts of life to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Gospel story makes it unmistakably clear, however, that Our Blessed Lady knew both the full meaning of her vow of virginity and the sublime meaning

of motherhood before her betrothal to St. Joseph and before the Angel Gabriel came to her in Nazareth at the time of the Annunciation.)

## YOU ARE THE JUDGE

Beating around the bush — hedging and hesitating — is a fatal mistake in this task of teaching the facts of life. If you, as a father or a mother have decided that you wish to tell your fifth grader something (not everything!) about the facts of life, you say simply: "Come here, my child, I want to find out how much you know about this list of words. First, I am going to read a simple and easy fact (Fact No. 1) . . . OK, that's it. Now you read it to me . . . that's fine. We'll come across those ideas as we go along through this list of words. What part of your body is your abdomen? Your Adam's apple? Your adenoids? Etc, etc, etc."

You may prefer to omit the "Addition" in the beginning. In such a case you simply add the fact or truth as an "extra" at an appropriate place in the course of the list of words. The direct and the indirect methods both reach the same goal of clear information and clear knowledge.

You may not know some of the words yourself. It matters not at all. Your child may not know a lot of the words. So what? The point is that you *say* the words to your fifth grader, and your fifth grader *bears* the words from you. Maybe in the sixth grade

you will add another fact (Fact No. 2); you will *say* the words again, and the sixth grader will *hear* the words again. When you think your child is ready for more information, you will add other facts (No. 3, No. 4, or your own Fact No. 5). You will not only *say* the words, but you will begin to ask the child to *say* certain words after you, *read* some of them and perhaps *spell* a few of them. A fund of knowledge is built in this way, and a clear and accurate vocabulary is built along with it for the child.

You are the judge. A writer cannot presume to tell you when your son or daughter is ready to hear certain facts or truths. The list of words is suggested humbly as a useful aid, and the "additions" are presented as one simple way of doing the task step by step on various levels.

Your children will someday be ready for the knowledge you can give them. Words are necessary; know-how is invaluable. The day for you to help your children in this regard may be close. You want to be prepared to help them easily and simply when they need your help. You are the judge; you are also the teacher.

### **IT'S WORTH TRYING**

You need a vocabulary. You can build it quickly for yourself from the list of words. The child needs a usable vocabulary also, but it cannot be built quickly. You actually acquired your vocabulary step by step. Give

your child a break; help him to acquire his or her vocabulary in the same gradual way.

You need an idea on how to begin: Know-how. The list of words is a quiz for a youngster, and the "additions" are a sample of certain facts that can be added one by one (as you decide they are needed).

It seems best to present each fact or truth in conjunction with the list; this procedure serves the very useful purpose of keeping each single fact clear as one small part or section of a growing and extensive fund of knowledge. When a start has been made, other occasions and opportunities will present themselves.

There are many ways of teaching the facts of life. All of the ideas in the world, however, will be quite useless without two vital factors: your own generously given **TIME** and your own truly sincere **PERSONAL INTEREST**.

Parents can teach the facts of life, if they teach them step by step on various levels. Truth is the secret of success. The whole truth and nothing but the truth . . . but only a little at a time . . . when a child is ready for it.

.. Ablution cloth — ablution cup .. Acolyte  
 .. Advent wreath .. Aisle .. Alb .. Altar  
 boy .. Altar cards .. Altar chimes .. Altar—  
 a. cloth & a. cover .. Altar sepulcher .. Am-  
 bry .. Amice .. Antependium (frontal)  
 .. Apse .. Assistant .. Balcony .. Banner  
 .. Baptismal font .. Baptismal shell .. Bap-  
 tistry .. Benedictus .. Benediction .. Bible  
 .. Biretta .. Bishop's candle (bugia) .. Boat  
 .. Bobache .. Brazier .. Breviary .. Burse  
 .. Candelabra .. Candle .. Candlesticks  
 .. Candle tube .. Canopy .. Cape (altar  
 boy) .. Cappa magna .. Cassock .. Cata-  
 falque—c. candlesticks .. Catechism .. Cen-  
 ser — c. stand .. Chalice — c. veil .. Chapel  
 cap (veil) .. Charcoal — c. tongs .. Chas-  
 uble .. Chimes .. Choir .. Chrism .. Church  
 bell .. Church Year .. Ciborium — c. veil  
 .. Cincture — c. tassel .. Clapper .. Code  
 of Canon Law .. Collar .. Collection bas-  
 ket .. Communion paten .. Confessional —  
 c. screen .. Confessional counter .. Cope —  
 c. clasp .. Corporal .. Creche .. Credence  
 table .. Crib — c. set .. Crozier .. Crucifix  
 .. Crucifixion group .. Cruciform church  
 .. Cruet .. Curate .. Dalmatic .. Deacon  
 .. Dossal (of altar) .. Eton collars .. Ewer  
 .. Extinguisher .. Faldstool .. Filigree cruci-  
 fix .. Finger towel (lavabo) .. Flag —

American f. and papal f ..Flame protector  
 ..Flint ..Following of Christ ..Gothic  
 vestments ..Gradine (of altar) ..Gremial  
 ..Holy Picture ..Holy Sepulcher ..Holy  
 water .. h.w. font, h.w. pot, h.w. sprinkler  
 ..Holy Week ..Host box ..Humeral veil  
 ..Imitation of Christ ..Incense ..Infant of  
 Prague ..Key of Heaven ..Kneeler ..Lec-  
 tern ..Lectionary (book) ..Lent ..Lighter  
 ..Luna — l. case ..Lunette ..Madonna  
 ..Magnificat ..Maniple ..Mantilla ..Mass  
 — Low M., High M., Solemn High M.  
 ..Mass card ..Medal ..Medallion ..Men-  
 sa (of altar) ..Mercy cross ..Missal —  
 m. marker & m. stand ..Miter ..Mon-  
 strance ..Mourning card ..Nativity group  
 ..Nave ..Novena ..Octave ..Oil of the  
 catechumens ..Oil of the sick ..Oil stock  
 ..Ombrellino ..Ordo ..Orphrey ..Osten-  
 sorium ..Pall ..Pallium ..Pardon cruci-  
 fix ..Paschal candle — p.c. candlestick  
 ..Pastor ..Paten ..Pax-brede ..Pectoral  
 cross ..Pedestal ..Pews ..Pieta ..Pontifi-  
 cal (book) ..Poor box ..Prayerbook ..Pre-  
 della ..Prie Dieu ..Processional Cross  
 ..Processional lantern ..Pulpit ..Purifica-  
 tor ..Pyx ..Rabbi (rabat) ..Raccolta  
 ..Relics ..Reliquary ..Repository ..Rere-  
 dos ..Resurrection (statue) ..Retable (of

altar) ..Ritual ..Rochet ..Roman vest  
 ments ..Rosary — r. case & r. indulgences  
 ..Rose window ..Rubrics ..Sacrarium  
 ..Sacristy — s. bell ..Sanctuary ..Sanctu-  
 ary bench ..Sanctuary lamp ..Sanctuary  
 veil — s.v. stand ..Sanctus bell ..Sash  
 (altar boy) ..Scapular ..Shrine ..Sick  
 call set ..Sprinkler ..Stations of the Cross  
 ..Statue ..Stipend ..Stole — s. tassel  
 ..Stole fee ..Stopper ..Stylus ..Subdeacon  
 ..Surplice ..Tabernacle — t. curtain, t. key,  
 t. veil ..Taper ..Te Deum ..Thabor  
 ..Tester (of altar) ..Throne (of bishop)  
 ..Torch ..Transept ..Triduum ..Tunic  
 ..Vase — v. liner ..Veil (for Benediction)  
 ..Verse cards ..Vestibule ..Vesting card  
 ..Vestment — v. banding, v. emblem, v.  
 case ..Vestry ..Votive candle — v.c. light,  
 v.c. stand ..Wax savers.

\* \* \*

Note: Mark with a check the unfamiliar  
 items in this list. Each correct item gives  
 ½% toward the goal of 100% for you.



IMPRIMI POTEST

Nicholas Bisheimer, Provincial

NIHIL OBSTAT

J. Musinsky  
Censor Deputatus

IMPRIMATUR

✠ Albert G. Meyer  
Archbishop of Chicago

July 7, 1959





# TEACHING THE FACTS of LIFE

by PAUL M. BAIER



“What would you say, Father?” is the time-worn query of fathers and mothers seeking guidance for teaching their youngsters the facts of life. Parents know the truths and general rules — but it’s the ‘KNOW-HOW’ they need . . . and can’t seem to get. This booklet is the culmination of questions such as this put to Father Baier by parents.

Father Baier is the Assistant pastor of St. Boniface Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. His articles on youth problems and religion teaching have appeared in a number of Catholic publications.

*Another Book by Father Baier*

## SUPERNATURAL LIFE

*Life! New Life! Life of Grace! Supernatural Life!* All of the deepest meanings of the term “state of grace” — the age-old and ever-new truths of religion—are expressed by St. John and St. Paul in the words LIFE and LIVING. Parents and teachers could find the terms equally as valuable. Cat. #3008F 25¢

**ORDER FROM:**

**DIVINE WORD PUBLICATIONS**  
TECHNY, ILLINOIS

