

The History of the Catholic Church in Florida  
A curriculum project for the Diocese of St. Augustine

**Project Outline**

**Goals:**

- To develop a curriculum outlining the history of the Catholic Church in the state of Florida (from Pedro Menendez-1565 to Bishop Verot-1870) for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in our Diocese and the Province of Florida. In the future, this project will ultimately link to additional efforts at the middle school, high school, and adult formation level.
- To encourage pilgrimages and visits to key historical sites in St. Augustine connected to the Catholic Church.
- To educate teachers, as well as students, in the elemental aspects of our faith history in Florida. Likewise, to provide them with valuable resources for further research and study.
- To focus on the following social studies objectives 4.15-4.18 for timeline and lesson plans:
  - 4.15: Identify the events in the Catholic church that are often connected to the historical events of time (e.g. the first mass in St. Augustine, Father Lopez, etc.)
  - 4.16: Identify St. Augustine, Florida as the location of the oldest permanent European settlement, parish, and Catholic community in Florida.
  - 4.17: Explain the impact of Spanish/Catholic influence on the establishment of Florida as a colony.
  - 4.18: Explain the purpose of and daily life on missions (e.g. San Luis de Talimali in present day Tallahassee)
- To create and utilize a dynamic website with:
  - an interactive timeline which highlights the important events and people in Florida Catholic history. For time reference, some significant world events are also included.
  - images of significant events, locations and people (with necessary permissions) which may, in the future, include podcasts and/or videos of teachers and/or students reporting from significant locations (the Great Cross, the Shrine of our Lady of La Leche, the Cathedral, O'Reilly museum, etc.) offering a brief explanation of where they are and why it's significant.
  - maps of the province (then and now), as well as historical artifacts or documents.
  - lesson plans for teachers, designed as unit plans, incorporating Spanish and Religion objectives, writing assignments, discussion questions, study guides, and project ideas(with rubrics) from around the Diocese.

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**Potential Visitation Sites in St. Augustine:**

The Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine  
Mission of Nombre de Dios, Our Lady of La Leche Shrine, the Great Cross and the Museum  
The Father Miguel O'Reilly House Museum  
Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse and Historical Archives

**Preliminary Suggested reading list:**

*The Cross in the Sand* by Dr. Michael Gannon  
*Florida: a short history* by Dr. Michael Gannon  
*Cacique: A novel of Florida's Heroic Mission History* by Bishop Robert Baker  
*Beyond the Call: The Legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine, Florida* by Sister Thomas Joseph McGoldrick, SSJ  
*Cross and Crozier* by Dr. Charles Gallagher (as available)

**Diocesan Online Resources:**

[www.DOSAFL.com](http://www.DOSAFL.com) - About us section contains and wealth of historical information  
<http://www.oreillyhouse.org/> - Website for the Father Miguel O'Reilly House Museum  
[www.thefirstparish.org](http://www.thefirstparish.org) – Website for the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine  
[www.missionandshrine.org](http://www.missionandshrine.org) – Website for the Mission of Nombre de Dios and the Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche.  
[www.ssifl.org](http://www.ssifl.org) – Official website of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Florida.

**Other possible secular resources for teachers:**

[www.floridamemory.com](http://www.floridamemory.com) Florida Library services: The Online Classroom: an educational resource for students and teachers with transcripts and scanned images of primary documents from Florida's past. Materials, lesson plans and online activities are tailored to meet the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.  
<http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/> Exploring Florida: social studies resource via USF  
[www.usmissiontrail.com](http://www.usmissiontrail.com)

Others listed in scope of timeline.

*Note: Secular textbooks do a functional job teaching objectives 4.16, 4.17 and 4.18, but without a strong Catholic element. Schools are creating materials for 4.15-4.18 from their own research and often fulfill the objective with field trips to the Cathedral, Shrine/Mission, and/or the O'Reilly House Museum*