**Time saving Lesson Planning Tips**

By Jared Dees, *TheReligionTeacher*

Whether you teach in a Catholic school or volunteer as a catechist for your parish, finding the time to create great lesson plans is hard to do. I had a tendency to spend more time than was necessary to lesson plan. I came up with a few strategies that helped me save time and still created quality lesson plans. Also, the resources at the bottom of this email have been a huge help for me.

* **Have a regular planning time.** I usually do all my lesson planning on Sunday afternoon or evening. Some teachers find that a weekday morning is the best and some like to plan on Friday for the following week. If you have a set time, then you can maximize the rest of the week for other things.
* **Be great in one class and good in the others.** If you are like me, you are a perfectionist. When I had six different classes to teach, I was overwhelmed because I wanted each day and each class to be perfect. Once I made a commitment to be over-the-top great in one class and "good enough" in the others, I was less stressed and a better teacher for all of the classes.
* **Unit Plan instead of lesson planning.** When each lesson is a part of a unit plan, then much of the time deciding what to do in a lesson is already decided. This saves time and gives lesson plans more purpose. For more on unity planning, refer to [*The Religion Teacher's Guide to Lesson Planning*](http://thereligionteacher.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f8b64865fa6efb470a83fb467&id=94b46b53e3&e=dc965bfb1c).
* **Set aside a specific amount of time and stick to it.** If you give yourself a time deadline, you are much more likely to focus and hustle to get things done on time. There is a great online tool called egg timer (see e.ggtimer.com), that allows you to set an alarm in your web browser to go off after a certain amount of time.
* **Turn of e-mail, Facebook, and all other distractions.** Do you tell your students to keep these things on while they do homework? C'mon!
* **Make copies once a week.** Making copies can take a lot of time. It takes even more time when you do it multiple times per week. If possible, dedicate one time per week to prepare and make copies for the week.

**Some related resources:** In my book, [*31 Days to Becoming a Better Religious Educator*](http://thereligionteacher.us2.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=f8b64865fa6efb470a83fb467&id=0c2ff23975&e=dc965bfb1c), I suggest an exercise on [day 14 to "Eliminate the Time-Wasters](http://thereligionteacher.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f8b64865fa6efb470a83fb467&id=1db895110f&e=dc965bfb1c)." Check out these resources to help you save time planning and executing your lessons: [www.thereligionteacher.com/31days/day14/](http://thereligionteacher.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f8b64865fa6efb470a83fb467&id=1db895110f&e=dc965bfb1c)