

PREP: Curriculum – Kindergarten

Parish Religious Education Program of St. Francis Xavier Church

What typical behavior can I expect from my kindergartner?

The kindergarten student is full of energy and enthusiasm. They desire and attempt to be “good”. They tend to be very centered on “self”. Parents are central figures in their lives and children are eager to please them. They have a strong belief in religious teachings provided by the Church, religious education and family.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

Your child will use the *Blest Are We* Series. The main theme for the year is God’s love. Your child will learn that God made everything. Your child will learn to love themselves because God loves them just the way they are. Jesus as the Son of God is a caring friend and teacher. Your child will learn that it is through helping others we can show our response to God’s love. Church celebrations will be learned.

What prayers and precepts can I help my kindergartner learn?

Your child should learn the Sign of the Cross, mealtime and bedtime prayers.

Your child should know that God and you love them always.

What else can I do to enhance my child’s religious experience?

Teaching your child to pray is an important job for parents. Learning to thank God for our blessings and food at dinner time and learning their night time prayers, “God bless Daddy, Mommy, sister, brother, me etc.” is a good place to start.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade One

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What typical behavior can I expect from my first grader?

First graders demonstrate a lively curiosity and enthusiasm for life. Their learning style tends to be very concrete and they learn best by real experience and tangible objects. They tend to be focused on “self”. They have a strong belief in religious teachings provided by the church, religious education and family.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

The *Blest Are We* series is used to help instruct your child. The *Holy Trinity* is one of the main themes. The children learn about God, who made us and all things, Jesus, the Son of God who came to earth in human form to show us how to live and the Holy Spirit who is always with us to give us the inspiration and strength to live as Jesus showed us.

The children also learn how they are part of the *church community* and that we are all followers of Jesus. They are also introduced to the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.

The *basics of Christian morality* are introduced. The children learn they are responsible to be loving and caring of all people and all things.

What prayers can I help my first grader learn?

Your child should be able to make the Sign of the Cross, and say The Our Father, The Hail Mary, The Glory Be, The Prayer Before Meals.

What else can I do to enhance my child’s religious experience?

Take opportunities to read stories from the Bible with your child. Bring your child to Mass so they become comfortable with being part of the church community. Feel free to ask them about what they are learning in the PREP program. And remember that you are their first teacher concerning God and morals and it is the perfect time to nurture this relationship with your child.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade Two

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What typical behavior can I expect from my second grader?

The second grade student is active, inquisitive and full of life. They are beginning to become more confident than they were in first grade and may be more quiet, thoughtful and sensitive. They continue to be dependent on adults for guidance and seek their approval. A strong focus on “self” may still be present at this age. They are generally good listeners and conscientious students. They have a strong belief in religious teaching provided by the Church, religious education and their family.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

This year is very special for your child. Two sacraments will be received, the sacrament of Reconciliation and the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Your child will learn about God’s unconditional love for all of us. God will always forgive us when we make the wrong choices. Your child will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the fall. Through the stories of Jesus your child will learn about the greatest examples of goodness and kindness. Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to die for us. Before His death, He gave us the celebration of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. Your child will be able to partake of the Eucharist during the celebration of Mass after a semester of preparation in May.

What Prayers can I help my second grader learn?

Your child should know the Our Father by heart since it is the prayer given to us by God through Jesus and is said at each Mass. Your child should also know the Sign of the Cross, the Hail Mary, the Glory Be, and the Prayer Before Meals. They should be familiar with the responses said at mass and begin to learn a Prayer of Sorrow/Act of Contrition.

What else can I do to enhance my child’s religious experience?

The most important experience you can share with your child this year is attending Mass together. Your child needs to feel comfortable and ready to partake as an active member of the Parish not just as a visitor. Discussions about your first experiences when you received the sacraments will delight your child. Practicing the prayers and incorporating them into your daily lives will all add meaning to your child’s religious experience. Two separate books on the sacraments will be given to parents and children to go over together. These will be distributed at the Parent Meetings. Your attendance at these gatherings tells your child of the importance of these events. The meetings and books provide a wonderful time for discussion.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade Three

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What typical behavior can I expect from my third grader?

Third grade students are developing an increased social sense and their relationships with friends are becoming very important. Their ability to reason is developing. They are less centered on “self” and are demonstrating a willingness to share. They continue to seek supportive reinforcement from parents and adults but are beginning to move toward more independence.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

Your third grader will learn about the Catholic church. They will learn about the Marks of the church and some of the beliefs of Catholics. The Apostle’s Creed, the prayer that consolidates our beliefs will be used to do this. The seven sacraments will be explored and the different ministries of the Church will be included. Issues of morality will be taught through the Ten Commandments, Jesus’ law of love and the corporal and spiritual works of mercy will be explored.

What prayers and precepts can I help my third grader learn?

You can help your child learn the Apostle’s Creed. (The Nicene Creed may be more familiar to them because it is said at Mass) The Ten Commandments should also be learned. Your child should know the two Greatest Commandments; to love God above all else and to love your neighbor as yourself. He/she should be familiar with the Corporal and Spiritual works of Mercy. He/she should review a prayer of Sorrow/Act of Contrition and know by heart the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

What else can I do to enhance my child’s religious experience?

This would be a good year to involve your child and family in outreach projects such as giving to the less fortunate. Dinner table discussion about the Commandments and the Greatest Commandment will let your child know that you value them, too.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade Four

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What typical behavior can I expect from my Fourth grader?

Fourth graders are enthusiastic and physically active. They enjoy being with their friends and being part of a group. They like to participate in activities which require coordination and self-discipline. Their ability to reason is increasing. They are beginning to be able to make moral decisions. They are generally cooperative with adults and seek acceptance from them.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

The focus is on morality this year. Moral values are taught by looking at the lives of people who have exemplified them. God as forgiver, Jesus as the perfect example and the Holy Spirit as our guide and helper at times of temptation will be taught. Knowing that making moral decisions can be very difficult, the sacrament of Reconciliation will be reintroduced. Your child will also learn about how the Catholic church is a light and servant to the world.

What prayers and precepts can I help my fourth grader learn?

Your child should know the Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, the Two Greatest Commandments, and the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. This would be a good year to review the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Glory Be, an Act of Sorrow/Contrition, the Creed and the responses said at Mass.

What else can I do to enhance my child's religious experience?

Our society provides daily examples of conflict to Christian morality. Encourage discussions of these issues. Explain that doing the right thing is not an easy thing to do, even for adults. Starting these discussions now will be invaluable as your child approaches adolescence and is confronted with truly challenging moral situations. God gave us His son, Jesus, as the perfect example of humanity. Have your child think of what Jesus would do when confronted with a tough moral decision.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade Five

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What typical behavior can I expect from my fifth grader?

Fifth graders tend to be easy going and matter of fact. They are social and friends are very important. They may begin to be more influenced by their peers. They respect rules and are capable of knowing right from wrong. They may be ready to take on more responsibility. They seek supportive reinforcement from parents and other adults.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

Your fifth grader is going to learn about the seven sacraments and that they are sacred signs as well as celebrations for members of our church. Your child will learn more about the Holy Trinity and how the Trinity relates to the sacraments. Your fifth grader's understanding of morality should be increased through learning what it means to live as a faithful follower of Jesus.

What prayers and precepts can I help my fifth grader learn?

Your child should have a thorough understanding of what the sacraments are and what they mean to Catholics. Continued review of the Creed is encouraged. He/she should have mastered the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and Act of Contrition along with the Ten Commandments, Beatitudes and Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

What else can I do to enhance my child's religious experience?

Taking advantage of the sacraments as a family is a unique opportunity for Catholics. Attending Sunday Mass and receiving the Eucharist is one way of letting your child know that what they are learning this year is important to you, too.

Let your child attend the church service for a wedding of a relative or friend so they can see the adults make the commitment of love in the sacrament of Matrimony. Family baptisms as well as Reconciliation services are positive experiences for your child.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade Six

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What typical behavior can I expect from my sixth grader?

Sixth graders are outgoing, energetic and imaginative. They tend to be physically active. They may begin to challenge authority and limits particularly with their parents. They may begin to question other established authorities, such as teachings of the Church. They are eager to have the freedom to make their own decisions.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

The sixth grade program teaches your child about the Hebrew Scriptures, which is the roots of Christianity. They begin their exploration of the Old Testament with the story of Abraham and Sarah and the covenant made between God and the people. Other Old Testament study will include the Exodus, Moses, David and Isaiah. A trip to a synagogue and the study of Jewish holidays will also be part of the program.

What prayers and precepts can I help my sixth grader learn?

A review of all the basic prayer would be helpful. Awareness of the Church seasons of Advent and Lent should be evident. He/she should know the basic parts of the Mass and the Ten Commandments should be memorized by your sixth grader.

Your child should be able to look up a Bible verse.

What else can I do to enhance my child's religious experience?

This year's curriculum encourages us to teach the moral values of tolerance and acceptance of differences of people and cultures. It is a good time to point out that beliefs may be different but God made us so we are all inherently good. We have been given the challenge to know and love God through Catholicism. Discussions of this nature are important as your child encounters a variety of people as they grow. The Greatest Commandment tells us to love one another as Jesus has loved us. It doesn't specify or qualify who we can choose to love. We must learn to love all people.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade Seven

Parish Religious Education Program of St. Francis Xavier Church

What typical behavior can I expect from my seventh grader?

The seventh grade student tends to be enthusiastic and somewhat calmer and more secure than they were in sixth grade. Friends continue to be a source of pleasure and support. Their conscience is strong and they begin to take responsibility for their actions. They are eager to have the freedom to make decision of their own.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

The children will learn about the life and ministry of Jesus, the 12 Apostles, influential women in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit and the spread of Christianity in the early Church.

What prayers and precepts can I help my seventh grader learn?

Your child should have mastered the basic prayers of the Our Father, Hail Mary and the Creed and the Glory Be. Reviewing the sacraments, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, Church structure would be helpful. He/she should be able to look up passages in the Bible and be familiar with some of the books of the Bible.

What else can I do to enhance my child's religious experience?

Providing your child with an opportunity to be of service to others and connecting this with faith is important. Weekly attendance at Mass supports the program.

PREP: Curriculum – Grade Eight

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What typical behavior can I expect from my eighth grader?

Eighth graders tend to be introspective and withdrawn as they learn about themselves. They may seek solitude. They have greater powers of concentration and self-control which may enable them to appreciate the intellectual challenges of school. They may seek more distance and independence from family and even from their peer group. Their conscientiousness remains strong and they easily know right from wrong.

What religion topics are going to be taught this year?

Your child will use *Confirmed in the Spirit* from Loyola Press. This book will help the candidates in their preparation and decision of receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. The role of the Spirit at work in the Church and in their own lives are highlighted.

What prayers and precepts can I help my eighth grader learn?

This is an important year for your child and a lot of material will be reviewed. Your child will have a complete review of prayers, key doctrine, the Church, sacraments and worship. All students must know the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which they will learn in class.

What else can I do to enhance my child's religious experience?

Supporting your child during the Confirmation preparation process is extremely important. Your interest shows through attendance at meetings and monitoring the various requirements, plus your enthusiasm for the Christian commitment and service speak volumes. Religious education classes continue after the celebration of Confirmation. Your support and encouragement is appreciated.