

Stage 2 (c 5-6)

CATECHISM

Aim 1: To know the order of Rosary mysteries

The easiest way to teach this is to pray the rosary every day as a family and give a short explanation as you go through the mysteries - since they are in chronological order it's not difficult to construct a simple narrative as you go.

In addition, you can use a set of rosary pictures: these can just be a set of cards each showing one of the fifteen mysteries. Taking each set of five separately, mix them up and have your child order them - helping where help is needed, and again emphasising the narrative sequence. If your child enjoys a challenge and this is too easy, give him all 15 cards and have him sort them first into Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious, and then sort them within each set. There are some nice pictures here which you could leave black and white or colour:

[Joyful mysteries](#), [sorrowful mysteries](#), [glorious mysteries](#).

There are plenty of easy crafts you can do to help fix the mysteries in your child's mind, and help him meditate on them more meaningfully. Try making three sets of tissue paper flowers (e.g. white for Joyful, red for Sorrowful and yellow for Glorious). Glue or pin each set to a piece of card and next to it place the title of the mystery with either your child's illustration or a coloured-in picture. You can make a nice wall display in this way.

Aim 2: To be able to sequence Mass cards

Make a set of Mass cards, each depicting a significant point in the Mass. You can draw the pictures yourself, copying them from the child's missal, or print some off. As with the rosary cards, have the child sequence them as they occur in the Mass. I tend to make a few levels - easy level with just a few pictures (e.g. gospel, creed, consecration, last blessing); middle level (e.g. easy level plus *Gloria, Sanctus, Kyrie*, offertory); advanced level with all the cards at once (e.g. add in *confiteor*, epistle, *dominus non sum dignus*, last gospel etc.).

Of course, you could take these to Mass, though it might become unwieldy as you add more cards!

Aim 2: To become familiar with a wider range of bible stories

As mentioned earlier, I tend to knit the bible study in broadly with what's happening in the liturgical calendar. For this reason I use the following pattern:

Autumn term: Old Testament stories (Jesse Tree)

Choose ten or twelve important Old Testament stories (e.g. Creation, fall, flood, Abraham and Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Jonah, Daniel). Read a story aloud. Discuss it to check understanding and details. Have your child tell it back to you and write down his words. He can illustrate or colour a picture to go with it. If he's keen to write, he could write some of it too (at least the title). For this it is good to use an A4 book in which each page is lined on one half and blank on the other. The main thing to emphasise is the pattern of creation, the fall from grace and the need for a redeemer in the run up to Christmas.

In Advent, make a Jesse Tree as a visual representation of the main events and people leading to the birth of the Messiah. There are lots of resources online for this. If you did this last year, you can be more ambitious this year, adding in more symbols or just making the symbols more complex.

Winter/spring term: New Testament stories (including Stations of the Cross and Easter garden)

Continue reading the bible stories, this time New Testament. Emphasise the events in our Lord's life and His miracles to show that He is the promised Redeemer. Work out the schedule so that you can focus on the Stations of the Cross during lent, and the Resurrection at Easter.

During Lent, we like to make a simple Stations book: again, this can be either your child's own illustrations and/or writing, or it can be coloured printed pictures with text provided. It is nice for a child to be able to take his very own book to Stations of the Cross, at least on Good Friday by which time it should be finished!

Other ideas for Lent include making sacrifice beads, collecting beans/crosses or anything else small in a jar to record good deeds done. All of this should be aimed at helping your child draw closer to Our Lord by reflecting on His sufferings.

At Easter we like to make a simple Easter garden with soil, mosses and flowers, three simple twig crosses and an empty tomb. If you are keen, you can place a figure in the tomb and roll the stone across. When the little one comes down on Easter morning, the stone will be rolled away, the body gone and the risen Christ standing in the garden. This makes the joy of the resurrection really tangible for little ones.

Summer Term: Life of the Church, Pentecost and saints' lives.

Again following the liturgical year, this is a good time to focus on the foundation of the Church at Pentecost. There are some lovely crafts for this feast, mainly focussing on the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. From Ascension to Pentecost we always make the great Pentecost novena and sing the '*Veni Creator Spiritus*' each evening (if you don't know it, you can listen to it on youtube and learn it that way). At the same time, we create a poster representing the Holy Ghost coming down upon the apostles and Our Lady, and on each of seven days of the novena we add a card naming one of the gifts to the poster. We then reflect on that gift and pray for it.

Another idea is to make a mobile with 'flames' representing the gifts. If you look at the Catholic blogs mentioned in the 4-5 catechism pages you'll get plenty of good ideas for how to celebrate this great feast.

After Pentecost, running down to the end of the academic year, it is a good time to really focus on the saints (perhaps fittingly the saints of the early church and the first martyrs), since it is through studying the saints that we can learn best how to live our Catholic life in the Church. Perhaps make a simple project or wall chart studying your child's favourite saints of this era.