



## Curriculum for kids (6-12)

# General Recommendations

### Materials

#### For each lesson you will need:

- Bibles - one for each child attending. A readable translation like *NIV* or *NRSV* is best, but not a paraphrase like *The Message* which will make looking up verses difficult.
- Prayer booklets - one copy for each child attending. The most important portion of this book for lesson purposes is the collect, the prayers before communion and the intercessions. Feel free to make your own.
- Pens, pencils, pencil crayons
- Worksheets - one for each child
- Answer key
- Lesson - it may come in the form of a story, script or activity. Storybooks can be printed and read to the group. For the scripts, you will need a copy for each participant. The items needed for the activities vary, but require very little by way of preparation.

#### These things would also help:

- Lesson chart: “How it all fits together” - As each lesson builds on the previous lessons, the chart will help the kids to visualize the overall context. As part of each lesson, you may wish to have the kids locate the story on the chart.
- An easel, white board, or chalk board - The kids will enjoy the chance to get out of their seats and write worksheet answers on the board.
- “Well done” jar and prizes - As an incentive towards good behaviour and participation (depending on what if any challenges you have with your group), it may help to have a “well done” jar. The idea is that kids earn tokens (such as plastic gems) to put into the jar throughout the lesson. If they have collectively achieved a set number (suggest 30) by the end of the lesson then they may each choose a small prize to take home (eg. candy). Ideally this gets peer pressure working for you as the kids encourage each other to behave well/ participate so that they will get enough gems to all earn a prize.
- Sock puppets - Some of the lessons involve acting stories out. As a change of pace, the kids may enjoy acting stories out with puppets. These are super-easy and inexpensive to make.

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### Set up

**Arrive early** and set out worksheets, prayer books, bibles and pencils in a consistent place. As the kids arrive, the routine that comes from knowing where to go to get started on their work will help to focus them and make them feel confident in the environment.

Depending on your group, you may choose to write the name of the church calendar day and colour of vestments in a consistent place for them to copy, or make an activity of their discovering it for themselves. You may also prefer to have the collects pre-printed for them to cut and paste onto their lessons rather than having them write it out.

### Lesson structure

#### Worksheets, Part 1

Starting the kids off with worksheets works especially well when the kids are arriving at different times. They should fill in the grey column first with the name of the day, the colour on the altar and the collect for the day. Most worksheets have a simple and similar format of fill-in-the-blanks and word-searches. They will likely need help with the blanks. This is often the best teaching time, as kids are engaged hands-on, asking questions and try to figure out what the blanks might be. Kids are amazing at coming up with good questions - sometimes a little too good. If they present you with a stumper, let them know that it's a good question and that you'll find an answer for them by the next week.

#### Opening Prayers

Once the kids have arrived and had some time to work through most of the blanks, invite them to form a circle in another part of the space. Breaking up the space into a work area and a prayer area and moving between the two can really help to minimize fidgeting. Say together the collect for purity. If your kids struggle with reading, you can say a line at a time and have them repeat after you. After several weeks they will have it down. The collect for the day (from the worksheet) will be more challenging. If you have strong readers, they may want to take turns as leaders for the prayers. Introduce the kids to some basic intercessions and encourage them to make a connection between what they are concerned about in their own lives and what they choose to pray for. Let the kids choose a few intercessions to pray together each week.

#### The Lesson

Each lesson contains a story, presented either as a story-book, a script or an activity. Once the story has been told, invite the kids to discuss it.

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### Worksheets, Part 2

The second part of the worksheet contains Bible verses to look up. The goal here is to build familiarity with the Bible, and also to demonstrate the coherence of scripture. Using the answer key, write the various verses on small slips of paper and allow a child to draw one at random for the group to look up. If your kids are familiar with scripture, make it a race. If they are less so, allow them to use the table of contents. If even that is a struggle, you may need to provide page numbers until they get more used to the activity. Once they have found the verse in the Bible, they should write the reference next to the corresponding quote on the sheet.

### Prayers before Communion

If possible, arrange with the ushers to give you a ten minute warning before the kids are expected to join the adult worship for Holy Communion. Call them back to the circle and take time to ensure that they are settled and not being silly before saying together the confession prayer. The kids may like to take turns acting as the leader to say the absolution.

*If you are using a gem jar and prizes, I do not recommend counting gems or giving out prizes until after the Communion.*

### Content

**The goal** of the year one lessons is to introduce the prayers of the church, the church calendar, the Bible and the creed - as building blocks for future learning. The lessons for year one form a basic Bible survey, but many wonderful and meaningful stories are passed over. I hope to bring you more lessons - year two focusing on the Old Testament heroes of the faith through the lens of Hebrews 11, and year three focusing on the ministry of the apostles.

### Other recommendations

**The best church programs** for kids that I have encountered build in exposure to the life of the parish, providing them with opportunities to learn about singing from choristers, serving from acolytes, care of the 'holy hardware' from the altar guild, and so forth. When there are processions or baptisms, the kids join the adult worship. Giving the kids hands-on experiences like these can spark their interest and show them how they can transition into the life of the parish as adults.

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