

*Fifteen Ideas to Bring
Religious Education to Life*

15 Ideas to Bring Religious Education to Life

Whether your Religious Education program is just gearing up again or you are looking for new ideas to invigorate your existing program, this exclusive eBook will offer inspiration with fifteen tips for bringing Religious Education to Life.



1. Interactive Church Scavenger Hunt

We are invited to encourage students and their families to reinvigorate their faith lives. Re-familiarize them with the Church itself! Give students a list of clues that lead to places in the church. For example, a clue might be: *At this spot, you might be welcomed and initiated into the Church* (the baptismal font). This exercise will help students to learn important vocabulary and understand the purposes of different items in the church building.

2. Mock Conclave

Teach your students how the conclave process works. Then, give them each a cardinal to research and afterwards invite them to participate in a “mock conclave” in which they explain why their cardinal would make a great Pope!

3. Teaching Mass

A teaching Mass is one of the most effective ways to engage the students and encourage participation in the Mass. Invite all students to a mass in which the priest explains what is happening during respective parts, and what each prayer means and where it originated. Students understand why we do what we do at Mass, and feel more a part of it when they attend.



4. Stations of the Cross Scramble

During Lent, explain each of the Stations of the Cross to your students. Then, divide them into groups of five. Read each station number out loud (without explaining what happens), out of order, ask students to pose in a “freeze frame” of the station. See which group gets the most right.

5. Adventure Quest with Mary

In order to aid students in developing a devotion to our Blessed Mother, help them to understand the weight and gravity of the decisions she made. Set up different scenarios on a wall, have all students start at scenario 1 and end the scenario with a decision. For example: *When the Angel comes to you to ask you to be the mother of God, do you say yes or no?* Have those who answer yes proceed to scenario 2 and those who answer no proceed to scenario 3. Have different choices and their consequences reflect the differences in our salvation had Mary lived differently.



6. Get to Know your Priests

Give your students the opportunity to feel a deeper connection to their parish and its staff by hosting a question and answer session with your parish priests and deacons. Have them write questions for each on index cards in the weeks leading up to the session. This is a great chance for the students to interact with the leaders of the parish and see the priesthood in a new light.

7. Living Rosary

During a large group session (59 students, one for each bead of the rosary) give each child a battery operated tea light or a glow stick. Have them stand around the room, and each be a “bead” on the living rosary. When it is their turn, have them light their candle or glow stick and lead the prayer designated to it. Introduce each mystery as you go through. You can also do a “decade” rosary with a smaller group of children. One of the Spiritual Works of Mercy is to pray for the living and the dead! Before you begin choose someone that you will offer all of your prayers for and take pictures of the students participating in the living rosary. Send the recipient of the prayers the pictures and a card explaining that you prayed for them!





8. Morality Menu

Help students understand the importance of seeking guidance by making a morality menu. Give each child a piece of paper and ask them to write their ideal menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day. They can have anything they want, ice cream, cookies, pizza, and candy! Then, take each menu and correct it to be more balanced. Ask them what they think would happen if they really ate ice cream for three meals a day forever. Explain to them that they would become sick. Then explain that this is why God gives us the 10 Commandments. He knows what is good for us and is helping us to stay healthy!

9. Who's Who in the Bible

Help students come to know the different people whose stories are included in the Bible by playing a "Who's Who?" Bible trivia game. Without giving students a name, read the biblical person's scenario. For example: *I was the strongest gladiator in all of the promised land, so long as I didn't cut my hair. I was betrayed by a woman I loved, but God made me strong again.* (Sampson) This activity will demonstrate that the Bible is full of exciting and interesting stories and give students a grasp on the identities of different key figures.



10. Service

In order for students to feel connected to their faith, they need to feel like they have opportunities to live it. Inviting them to participate in service opportunities is one of the best ways to make this connection. Service projects engage students and help them see and feel their faith in action.

11. Walking Prayer

Design a walking prayer during a retreat. Make a pathway lit with luminary candles and provide reflection questions for the students to consider as they walk along. For example: *How can you feel closer to God?* At each question, students simply, stop, consider and then proceed. It is a beautiful meditative exercise!

12. Reflection Room

In the same vein as the previous suggestion, the reflection room is another way to give students an opportunity to really feel the presence of the Lord. In a room, hang poster board with different quotes from Scripture followed by a question. Ask them to record a response as they move from station to station. Have a large group sharing afterwards where students can discuss their experiences and responses.



13. Candle Prayer

Students love this activity! At the end of each class, light a battery operated candle and have students sit in a circle. Start the group in prayer by sharing your intentions, then pass the candle to your left and have each student share someone or something they want to pray for and then do the same. Students who may be uncomfortable praying aloud can pray silently and then pass the candle.

14. Sound Doctrine

Our students live in a world that is saturated with all different types of media. Find anyone of them on any given day and chances are, they are “plugged in.” Pick 3 popular and appropriate songs and print a copy of the lyrics for each student. Play the songs one at a time and point out instances where the lyrics may remind you of the love God has for us, his forgiveness, or our desire to know him. This exercise helps students connect the Scripture, God, or the saints with media that is relevant to their lives.



15. Screenings

Choose a movie a few times throughout the year and host a large group screening. Follow it with dinner and discussion to help the students truly process what the film is trying to tell them about God and the faith.

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