



introduction to formal learning should above all be an enjoyable experience that will set the stage for a lifetime of wanting to learn. On the other hand, forcing a preschooler into an educational environment when the child is not ready or resisting, may give the young child a distaste for formal education. No parent or teacher wants to encourage that.

**Please remember the Lesson Plans are a suggestion.** Your child is very young, and each child, especially preschoolers, learn at different levels. Because each child learns at a different pace, parents should use the Lesson Plans as a guide, not as a master.

The rest of the supplementary materials are coloring books. Pages assigned are selected because they reinforce the main lesson of the day. They may also be used on one of the other days when the main catechism lesson is not taught, or if your child is eager for more coloring.

One additional supplement we highly recommend is to get is a child's book of saints. (We suggest *Picture Book of Saints*, also written by Father Lovasik, available through Seton Educational Media.) It is a good practice to read to your child about the saint of the day. Often, your child will want to know more about the saints depicted in the *Coloring Book about the Saints*. Having a good, profusely illustrated children's book of saints handy would serve your homeschool very well.

As a homeschooling parent, you will be pleased to know that Pope Pius XI, in *Decretum*, published March, 1930, declared that a Plenary Indulgence is granted to anyone who, for approximately 30 minutes, but not less than 20 minutes, would devote themselves to teaching or learning Christian doctrine. "The Indulgence can be gained twice during the same month on days which they may choose, provided they, being duly penitent, have gone to Confession and Holy Communion, and have visited some church or public oratory, and there prayed for the intention of the Roman pontiff."

The Holy Father also granted a Partial Indulgence of 100 days to "these same members of the Faithful, provided they are contrite of heart, as often as they devote themselves for the above mentioned space of time to teaching or learning Christian doctrine." Not only are you blessed with the privilege of being the one to form the heart and mind of your little one, but the Church actually grants you an indulgence for so doing!

## GRADES

Grades are not given for Pre-Kindergarten.

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# FIRST QUARTER

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Our goal for your child this First Quarter is to learn the basic prayers of the Faith. Hopefully, by the end of the Quarter, your child will be able to make the Sign of the Cross, learn most of the Hail Mary, Our Father, and Glory Be. Of course, the more your child is exposed to daily prayer, the easier it will be for him or her to learn them. Praying the Rosary together as a family, saying Grace before and after meals, starting each school day with prayer, reading the Bible, and most importantly, attending daily Mass are some of the ways to live the Catholic life. In this way, we obey Our Lord's instruction to "pray always" (St. Luke 18:1). There is no point in going on to learn the catechism, the doctrines of the Catholic Faith, if we are not praying every day.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

**Parent:** Inside *Religion for Young Catholics – Pre-Kindergarten*, on the back of the first page, you will see that the book was granted an *Imprimatur*. This means that the book was reviewed by a bishop, who declared that everything in it agrees with Catholic teachings, and the material is free from doctrinal error. The word *Imprimatur* literally means "let it be printed," and thus, the bishop assures the reader there is nothing therein contrary to faith and morals.



Take a look at the Table of Contents to see the material that will be covered in this course. Then read the quotes of Our Holy Father from his recent visit to the United States. Next, read the book's General Introduction. These two pages include statements from the last two Popes as well as statements from the Second Vatican Council that show the importance the Church places on a child's proper education. Finally, read the Special Introduction for Parents and Teachers on the following page.

Read page 1, which is addressed to you. Get into the habit of beginning each lesson with a prayer, whether formal or informal.

Look inside *New Catholic Picture Bible*. The inside front and back covers have maps of the Holy Land during the times of the Old and the New Testament. On pages 228-232, there are photographs of the places where Our Lord walked. Refer to these interesting photos throughout the year in order to give your child a better image of the Holy Places. Take some time before beginning the course to study the photos and read their informative captions. In the front of the book, there is a lovely presentation page where you can inscribe your child's name and date. Years from now, your child will look upon that page with fond memories of his introduction to learning about the Catholic faith.

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## WEEK ONE

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### Day 1

*Religion for Young Catholics – Pre-Kindergarten:* Chapter 1: p. 1, Prayers. Show your child the picture on the book cover. Ask your child to point out the Blessed Mother and Baby Jesus. Point out the little children and explain that Jesus loves the little children and the little children love Him. One little girl is bringing flowers to Jesus. Explain to your child that our good works and prayers are the flowers that we can give to Jesus. The lovely painting is found in the Basilica of Our Lady of Angustas (Sorrows) in Granada, Spain.

Show your child the picture on page 1, which is a classic painting of Heaven. Point out each Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Blessed Mother, the Angels, and the Saints. Next, show your child the stained glass depiction, page 2, which shows the little children once again approaching Jesus, but this time, He is a grown Man. Read to your child page 3. Show your child the drawing on page 4. The artist shows Jesus in the clouds. The little girl prays to Him. From the expression on her face, we see the prayer comes from her heart. She cannot see Him, but Jesus is there, listening to her. Explain to your child that Jesus is always near her or him, and "prayer" means having a conversation with God, talking to Him as you would talk to another person.

*Coloring Book about Jesus:* Have your child color p. 17. Teach your child how to color inside the lines, but this is a fine-motor skill that most preschool children have not yet developed. Encourage your child and praise his masterpiece!

### Day 2

*Religion for Young Catholics – Pre-Kindergarten:* The Sign of the Cross, p. 5: Read and explain to your child. Demonstrate how the Sign of the Cross is made, then have your child try. Repeat it several times and encourage the child to practice making the Sign of the Cross throughout the day, especially at the times of prayer: Grace before and after meals, Rosary, night prayers.

Page 6: Making the Sign of the Cross while saying the Glory Be is a matter of custom in some places, while other places, a respectful bow of the head replaces the Sign of the Cross. Follow your own family's custom in this. Either way, the Sign of the Cross or the bow should be concluded at "...and to the Holy Spirit." At family Rosary time, point out to your child the Glory Be and remind him how it should be said.