



saint mary's press

touching hearts. enlivening minds.

# Considering a summer program?



Summer programs are a tremendous experience for the entire parish community, engaging people of all ages as leaders, organizers, helpers, and participants. While building community, developing leadership, and offering members an opportunity to live out their baptismal call. A summer program can also be a powerful springboard to many more life-giving experiences within the parish throughout the year.

If you're wondering how to get started on such a program, **Discover: Finding Faith in Life!** and **The Catholic Children's Bible** offer many options to support your efforts.



## Here is a suggestion on how you can create a week-long summer program using *The Catholic Children's Bible*:



- 1. Gather a team to develop your goals for outcomes and your theme(s) for the week.**  
Consider all the elements you'd like to include: music, prayer, outdoor and indoor games, Bible lessons, guest presenters (i.e., a magician or a petting zoo, depending on your theme), snacks, or an ending celebration for families, such as a picnic and a Mass. Tweens and teens are excellent leaders and helpers in overseeing and leading many of these elements.
- 2. Gather your leaders.**
  - A nurse to keep all medical info/forms and medications, as well as a first-aid kit
  - Leaders to decorate and prepare the gathering space each day, according to theme
  - Leaders to oversee the games, crafts and snacks each day
  - Catechists for groups of no more than eight, to allow for effective engagement
- 3. For the Bible lessons, select a Featured Story from *The Catholic Children's Bible*, one for each day of the week.** All of the Featured Stories are listed at the front of the Bible, and four different Reading Plans are listed on the back page. Each Reading Plan includes eight Featured Stories that follow a common theme. Selecting from here might be helpful.

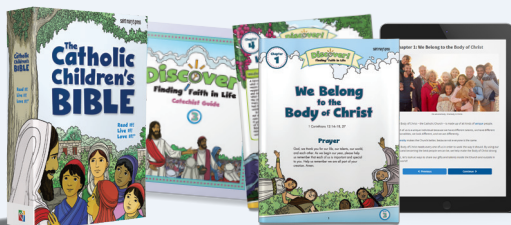
Each Featured Story includes three elements for teaching and engaging the children in discussion: *Understand It!*, *Live It!*, and *Tell It!* More info on these elements can be found here:

[www.smp.org/product/4151/The-Catholic-Childrens-Bible-Revised-Edition](http://www.smp.org/product/4151/The-Catholic-Childrens-Bible-Revised-Edition)



The *Leader's Guide for The Catholic Children's Bible* contains a beautiful section on teaching Scripture to children. This guide is an excellent resource and help! It can be reviewed here:

[www.smp.org/product/4211/The-Catholic-Childrens-Bible-Leader-Guide](http://www.smp.org/product/4211/The-Catholic-Childrens-Bible-Leader-Guide)



If you're wondering how you might use the *Discover!* program for children in grades 1-5 in a summer program format, we'd be delighted to talk about the possibilities with you!

**Call us at 1.800.533.8095**



# Sample Outline

## Half-day schedule for a week-long program:

8:30–9:00 a.m.	Drop-off activity based on the theme of the day. This activity should be fun and active and help to build community. Some ideas: A graffiti wall or a game of “Pull Up.”
9:00 a.m.	Welcome and Opening Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You might begin with a song of the week to gather the children for large-group times or as a cue to rotate the groups to their next session. You might also use hand motions and movement to make it fun!</li></ul>
9:20–9:50 a.m.	Session 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Arrange the children into small groups of no more than eight, and create a lesson rotation for the groups. For example: Group A will begin with outdoor/indoor games. Group B will begin with a Bible lesson. Group C will begin with a craft activity. Then, in the next session, the groups rotate to a different lesson.</li><li>Allow for 10 minutes between the sessions so the children can get to their next session and settle in.</li><li>This outline allows for three session times that are each 30 minutes in length.</li></ul>
9:50–10:00 a.m.	Rotate the groups.
10:00–10:30 a.m.	Session 2
10:30–10:50 a.m.	Snack time for everyone! (If you have a guest presenter, this is a great time to have them speak to the whole group.)
10:50–11:00 a.m.	Rotate the groups.
11:00–11:30 a.m.	Session 3
11:30–11:40 a.m.	Regather as a large group.
11:40–12:00 p.m.	Wrap-Up and Closing Prayer
<p>On the final day, hold a family Mass and picnic. Include some games and a dunk tank or a few sprinklers on the lawn, especially if the weather is warm!</p> <p>Plan to send a note home each day—both an email and a printed note to go home with the children—to build trust and relationships with your families!</p>	