

Parents

We recognise parents as the primary educators of their children. We value the role they play in the religious education of their children and we work in partnership with them. Parents are invited to all religious services. In particular we consider their attendance at the pre-sacramental enrolment services to be of the utmost importance, demonstrating their support for their children at these important milestones on their faith journey. Where possible we invite parents to take an active role in these services and it is a valuable opportunity for the children to see teachers, chaplain and parents working together.

Primary One

Me: Beginning for the first time.

The main aim is to develop in the children attitudes of love, praise and thanks towards God as well as attitudes of awe, wonder and surprise at the beauty and variety of creation. The children are helped to observe seasonal changes and the effects of these on people. God is introduced as a loving father. The children are encouraged to respond to the father's love with trust, confidence and love. They pray to God the creator, the One who gives and sustains life, who loves and cares for each of them and is always with them. The children are helped to become aware of and to rejoice in the gift of life in their own bodies and in the world around them. During the year they are brought to visit the church. The building itself and the presence of people praying are signs of God's presence among us. Faith in God is fostered through prayer and the children learn to express this faith in prayer.

Saint Brigid is the Primary One saint.

Primary Two Me – You

Once again God is presented as a loving father who cares for us, is with us at all times and wants us to be happy. God is the source of all love, beauty, goodness, creativity and life. As in primary one the children are encouraged to rejoice in the gift of life in their own bodies and in the world around them and to respond to the love of God with wonder, trust, confidence, gratitude and love. However they also look at relations with others in the class and the beginnings of responsibilities are introduced. They look at people who help and care for them and how they should relate to them. Appreciation of others helps to develop appreciation of God who cares for them. Jesus, the son of God is introduced as the one sent by God to show how much he loves and cares for us and is studied through the Christmas and Easter stories. The Holy Spirit is introduced in prayer as the one who helps us to live as Jesus asks us to.

Saint Patrick is the Primary Two saint.

Primary Three Me – You - Others

The themes of time and “journey” are important in the primary three programme. These are explored in the light of the Christian message. Life is a journey through time. God accompanies us on our journey. We also journey with others. A sense of togetherness emerges. As a Christian community we journey together in faith.

Jesus is presented as a storyteller, a journey man, diviner, and teacher. The children are encouraged to begin to take responsibility for their actions and how they relate to one another as they prepare for the sacrament of penance. The wilderness theme is explored and the story of the Lost Sheep and the Good Shepherd is of great importance. They also look at sharing including sharing meals. This lays the foundation for work which will be continued in Primary four as they prepare for First Holy Communion. The Holy Spirit is also discussed.

Saint Columba is the primary three saint.

Primary Four Spirit of Connectedness.

Jesus constantly sought to lead people to an awareness of the integratedness of life. In the primary four programme the children explore the spirit of love that connects them to their families and to the Christian community. Relationship as friendship is explored and they look at the idea of unity in their class. The qualities of Jesus are discussed. These include saying, doing, telling parables. Beings are explored. The liturgical seasons are discussed at appropriate times of the year. Reconciliation is revisited. Central to the teaching in primary four is the work on the Eucharist as the children prepare to receive their First Holy Communion. An important part of their preparation for the sacrament includes looking at the most important parts of the Mass. These include gathering, listening, celebrating, forgiveness and sharing, and going in peace.

Saint Gobnait is the saint for primary four.

Primary Five Beginnings and Endings

At the beginning of the year the children revisit the sacrament of Baptism. The “beginnings and endings” theme helps them to understand that just as life is a process, so too is Baptism. We live our Baptism every day. Baptism makes us members of the church community. This community has a tradition. The children will have their sense of that tradition expanded as they hear the stories of God’s covenant with Abraham, Sarah, Moses and his people. This leads on to a study of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and our covenant with Jesus. The sending of the Holy Spirit is part of that covenant and the children look at the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They are helped to deepen their understanding of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They are reminded of our call to love God and others in the Spirit.

The kingdom of God is explored through stories, for example The healing of the centurion’s servant, The calming of the storm, The cure of the man who was paralysed. Drama is used to help the children have some experience of the kingdom rather than simply listening as someone tells them about it.

The children are helped to get in touch with our Christian roots by exploring the coming of the faith to Ireland.

Saint Brendan is the saint for primary five. His story is revealed through discussing the early Christian community.

Primary 6 Nourishment

The major theme of this year's programme is *nourishment*. The programme begins with an imaginative ritual which helps the children to focus on the moment of beginning - linking it with the theme of creation.

The children see how creation nourished Jesus and gave him imagery with which to nourish people's sense of God. God nourishes us and calls us to love one another. The children are led to see their physical nourishment as a manifestation of God's spiritual gifts. They are led to consider the many levels - physical, emotional and spiritual - at which Jesus nourished people.

The children learn how the Holy Spirit is sent to nourish us and how his work is seen today in the lives of those who nourish others and in the children when they nourish themselves. They are helped to see how we should live our lives following the Ten Commandments.

The children explore the various types of nourishment offered by Christmas and particularly the nourishment that comes to us through remembering the events in which Jesus was sent into the world to feed us and nourish us.

The pupils are introduced to the Rite of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. They are reminded of the link between the season of Lent and the time Jesus spent in the wilderness. They focus on Lent as a season of fasting - a different sort of nourishment. By going without, the children are led to participate in the Church's concern for those in need.

The love between parent and child is an assurance of God's love which never falters and is a source of the most essential of nourishments - nourishment of the spirit. It is taught through *The Parable of the Prodigal Son*. Holy Week speaks of God's never ending love.

The Mass is discussed in Term 3 and what it means to be part of God's family.

St. Canaire is the Saint for Primary 6

Primary Seven - Spirit

The major theme is spirit, which is appropriate since this is the year in which most of the children receive the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The programme explores the spirit of prophecy- how Jesus was a prophet and the Commandments given to guide us in life. It also deals with the new mysteries of the Rosary – the Mysteries of Life.

The spirit of unity is emphasised – the Holy Spirit, the second person of the Blessed Trinity. The Holy Spirit is explored as breath, wind and fire and we discover how the Holy Spirit makes a difference in our lives.

The programme continues with the ceremony of Confirmation. It deals with the presence of the Risen Jesus at mass, through the power of the Spirit. Growth and life after Confirmation is also dealt with. It refers to a deepening of faith, responsibility and preparation for the world.

Saint Kevin is the saint for Primary Seven