

Profile of a Second-Grade Child

(AGES 7–8)

The second grade, ages 7–8, is a time of wonderful curiosity, changes, rapid growth, seemingly endless imagination, excitement, and enthusiasm. Though mostly positive and optimistic, some children this age can occasionally become moody and like to spend some time alone. They still love structure and order and work diligently at increasing skills in handwriting, computers, sports, and almost everything in which they are involved. This is also the time when many children prepare for their First Penance and Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. With all the excitement and enthusiasm they have, this can be a wonderful age for learning and faith development!

Children at this age

- ◆ love to celebrate and enjoy ritual.
- ◆ have a natural sense of wonder.
- ◆ are comfortable with prayer and enjoy quiet.
- ◆ are capable of reflecting for short periods of time.
- ◆ are capable of praying spontaneously in a conversational style.
- ◆ see nature as a reflection of God's love and greatness.
- ◆ view the Church as a community of friends who help one another.
- ◆ begin to appreciate the liturgical seasons and feast days throughout the Church year.
- ◆ are capable of taking simple prayers to heart.





The Second-Grade Program

The second-grade program of *Christ Our Life: New Evangelization Edition—God Cares for Us*—is designed to prepare your child for his or her first celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Your child is introduced to Jesus' forgiveness and peace in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Your child will learn about the wonderful gift of the Eucharist, when he or she will receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine. Finally, your child will learn the meaning of the Mass, its different parts, and how to participate in it.

New Gather and Go Forth pages at the end of every chapter reveal to children a fundamental truth—to be Catholic is to evangelize. Children grow in their knowledge and love of God and recognize the missionary heart of the Church. Inspired by the Good News, they share their most precious gift, a lived faith, with others.

Unit 1 presents the image of an all-loving and gracious God, who offers gifts of life and love and who sent his Son, so that we might enjoy deep friendship with him. Your child will become more aware of how each experience is an expression of God's loving care.

Unit 2 helps develop in your child a desire to grow in God's love by keeping his law. Your child will learn the essence of the Ten Commandments: to love God and to love others as God loves us. As your child understands more about Jesus' love through his words and example, he or she will be inspired to behave

in ways that please Jesus. Your child will learn how to respond to God's love by praying, using God's name with love, and celebrating God's day. Your child will learn that love shows itself in words and in deeds that are obedient, kind, pure, honest, and truthful.

Unit 3 begins your child's formal catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. A measure of your child's readiness is his or her awareness of the need to be forgiven by Jesus. Although knowledge of the procedure for receiving the sacrament is desirable, it is not essential. Priests and catechists who understand this will respect your child's basic readiness to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and will guide and assist him or her gently and lovingly.

Unit 4 is devoted to the very heart of Christian life—the Eucharist. Your child will appreciate the goodness of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Eucharist and will learn that in the Mass, Jesus offers himself to his heavenly Father and to us. Children learn that the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit when the priest says Jesus' words at the consecration. Your child's desire grows to receive Jesus and to prepare for the reception of First Holy Communion.

Unit 5 introduces your child to the mystery of the Church—the Body of Christ—through which he remains with us and cares for us. Your child will learn how each member of the Church carries out God's plan and how leaders of the Church guide us to follow Jesus.