

Profile of a Fourth-Grade Child

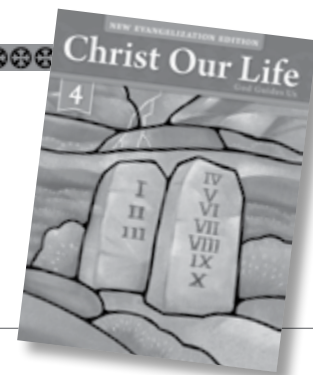
(AGES 9–10)

The fourth grade, ages 9–10, is a relatively calm period for most children. Most children feel capable and in control as skills mastered at earlier stages grow stronger and are refined through practice. Fourth-grade children are ready for solid conscience formation and are beginning to understand more clearly the role of intention in determining whether an act is right or wrong. This is what makes the fourth grade an ideal time to introduce the Ten Commandments, an examination of conscience, and making moral choices.

Children at this age

- ♦ engage in hero worship.
- ♦ enjoy stories of saints and holy people.
- ♦ have a more realistic image of Jesus as a human.
- ♦ see God as faithful, just, and fair.
- ♦ enjoy the rituals of liturgy.
- ♦ have a greater sense of God's Presence.
- ♦ tend to trust that things will work out because God is in charge.
- ♦ are comfortable thanking God for positive things and asking him for help.
- ♦ are capable of reflection and enjoy quiet time.
- ♦ are capable of taking more complex prayers to heart.





The Fourth-Grade Program

The fourth-grade program of *Christ Our Life: New Evangelization Edition—God Guides Us—* focuses on the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes as guides for living. The program is designed to help your child see the Ten Commandments and Beatitudes as guidelines given to us by our loving God, who intends for us to be happy in this life and in the next. Your child will be motivated to respond to God with faith and love, and to show his or her faith and love by observing his commands.

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 reviews our beliefs about the love of God, who reveals himself to us in creation, in Scripture, in the Church, and, most perfectly, in his Son, Jesus Christ. Your child will learn that all members of the Church are commissioned to share their faith, but that Jesus gave Saint Peter and his successors special authority to teach, govern, and lead the Church to holiness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Your child will be motivated to value the gift of eternal life that God promises to those who respond with faith to his love.

Unit 2 explores the means that God has given us to live as we were meant to live. God sent his Son, Jesus, to teach us how to love God and our neighbor. God provided the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation to repair and strengthen our friendship with him and the Eucharist to bind us even closer to him as his people. God has also given us the Ten Commandments as well as the supreme commandment—love—to guide us in our journey on earth toward eternal life with him.

Unit 3 focuses on the first three commandments, which spell out how to love God. Your child will learn how to put God first in his or her life, how to honor him, and how to keep holy Sunday, the Lord's Day.

Unit 4 is devoted to the last seven commandments, which explain how to love our neighbor as ourselves. Your child will be guided in applying the commandments to his or her daily life and is challenged to show love for God and neighbor by keeping God's laws with courage and self-sacrifice.

Unit 5 develops an appreciation for the eight Beatitudes and a desire to live them in a spirit of hope and love. Jesus, who taught the Beatitudes by word and example, and Mary, who lived them perfectly, are presented as models to emulate. The lives of the saints, who exemplified the Beatitudes, also inspire your child to center his or her life in the practice of the Beatitudes.