

## Tools for Catechists:

### 10 Ideas for a Great First Day

1. **Arrive early** so you have time to get settled and offer a private prayer for your first day.
2. **Pre-make name tents** and arrange them, then greet students at the door with a warm smile. Instruct them to find their names and let them start decorating their name tents (or do another simple seat activity) while you greet the rest of the children.
3. **Do an activity that engages** and breaks the ice for students, making them feel comfortable and allowing them to get to know one another.
4. **Have your name written on the board** or somewhere handy and pronounce it for the children, then have them repeat it. Next, have them introduce themselves, sharing their first name and something fun they did this summer.
5. **Offer a prayer!** It can be as simple as the Sign of the Cross for little ones (that is a prayer!) or something more elaborate for older children. Do a textbook scavenger hunt, singly or in pairs!
6. **Distribute texts to the children**, and hand out a sheet with various items relative to topics you will cover this year that they can find throughout the book. For example: a) Find a picture of Jesus in your book. Write the page number here b) In what chapter will you learn about the Ten Commandments? c) Will you learn about Lent this year? Where did you find your answer?
7. **SMILE!** Show your excitement for the year ahead. Your excitement will be contagious!
8. **Go over your class routine**, telling them things such as: you expect them to come in and sit down quietly, you will take attendance at the start of each class, you will begin and end the class with prayer, etc.
9. **Have the children push in their chairs** (or set them on the desks), straighten the room, throw away garbage, etc. Teach them to respect their parish property.
10. **Via email, send parents a simple weekly recap** of what you studied (three or four sentences is enough to give parents talking points for at-home discussion).
11. **Thank God** for helping you through your first day of class! You did it!!