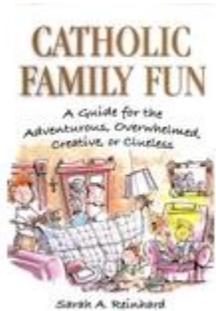


5 Fun Summer Activities for Catholic Families



Summer is a great season to get outside and enjoy great weather and fun family time! Did you know that you can also enrich your family's faith this summer, without sacrificing fun in the process?

Author Sarah A. Reinhard's book [Catholic Family Fun](#) offers these (and many more) summertime family activities that work great with kids of all ages:

- **Visit the zoo.** This doesn't have to be a pricey venture—there are many free zoos that will cost you no more than gas for your car to get in! On the way, get the kids thinking about the many animals mentioned in the [Bible](#); then see how many of those animals you can find in the zoo that day.
- **Plant a Mary Garden.** It's always fun to plant and tend a garden; this one is themed to honor the Blessed Mother. You can build the garden around an [outdoor statue](#), making Mary the heart of the garden. Choose flowers that are associated with the Blessed Mother in art, or plant a blue-and-white garden or a rose garden. This can become a special place for family members to gather and pray.
- **Nature Walk and Creation.** Here's a two-part activity; you can save Part Two for a rainy day. Begin by reading [St. Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Sun](#). Then take a walk—or even a long hike, depending on your children's ages and abilities, and collect items to make a wreath, pinecone creation, or suncatcher. Later, when the weather turns cool and rainy, you'll have the supplies you need to spend a quiet afternoon crafting together.
- **Water Fun.** What could be better than cool fun on a hot day? Start by sharing a Scripture story featuring water: for example, the Creation, the Baptism of the Lord, or the Wedding at Cana. Depending on your children's ages, your family might enjoy a water balloon toss, splash contest in the pool, experiments with floating, sinking and evaporation, or a bathtub-duckie race.
- **Build a Backyard Obstacle Course.** Use the theme of Exodus as your inspiration. With your backyard sandbox "desert" and wading pool "sea," you've got a starting point for an obstacle course your kids can build out of their favorite outdoor toys. Make it a maze, including things to creep under, jump over or crawl through. Wind up at the "Holy Land" with a picnic lunch feast!

Here's a bonus activity that my family loves: **building a campfire**. Make a fire circle with rocks, logs or benches, and build the fire safely within the circle. Add hot dogs or marshmallows on long sticks for instant fun! This is a great time for [sing-along songs](#) as well as recalling the Easter fire at the Easter Vigil.

You don't have to spend a lot of money to have good family fun and celebrate your faith! Harness your children's natural energy and enthusiasm, and let them see that being Catholic isn't only about being quiet in church. All of these activities are even better when you share them with extended family or friends—after all, faith grows best when it is shared.