



Guest blog: 5 reasons why I send my child to a Catholic school

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Gina Sabo reveals 5 reasons why she and her husband, Jon, have decided to send their 7-year-old son, Danny, to Catholic school.

Why do I send my son to a Catholic School? by Gina Sabo

My husband and I have been happily married for almost 10 years. We have a beautiful, rambunctious, 7-year old boy, and two years ago, we had to make an important decision. We had to consider serious, life-altering decisions (I was in the middle of changing jobs) on where we would want our young impressionable child to start his formal education.

Now, my husband and I were both part of the “hybrid” Catholic School and public school upbringing. We had attended both types of environments at some point in our educational career, so we knew what each type of school brought to the table.

The public school our son would be attending had several amazing teachers, great after school opportunities he could participate in, and many of his friends would attend the same school.

Their test scores were high, and they had access to the public library programs right next door. The before and after school program would allow for us to not make any major changes to our work schedules, however, it would cost as much for the Catholic School tuition. With that being said, it was a serious contender in our discussions.

The Catholic School we were considering had students who performed well on standardized test scores, and the student-teacher ratio was something public school teachers dream about. It offered Spanish, art, and music much like the public school, and SMART Boards, and iPads in every classroom. But the most important difference we saw in the Catholic School that was lacking in the public school was the *spirit* you felt walking through the front door.

So here are just a few reasons why we choose to send our son to Catholic School:

Prayer...Prayer...Prayer

Like many families, we pray together as a family. We say grace at mealtimes and we ask our guardian angels to watch over us when things get tough. But we also try to pray throughout the day. When we encounter an accident while we are traveling anywhere (the store, long trips to see family, etc.) we always say a quick prayer for whoever was involved. We thank God for all the beautiful things we encounter in nature. At our school, we say morning prayers, Grace, a short prayer before classes start. Sometimes we even pray the rosary together as a school. My son is able to freely ask questions about his faith, and discuss how much he enjoys learning about God and praying with his friends. It is my husband's and my hope that through our guidance and the continued support from the school, that our son turns to God in times of need.

Uniforms

Okay, so this may seem like an odd reason to send my child to Catholic School, but hear me out. Although uniforms can be expensive, most Catholic Schools participate in a uniform exchange program. This helps keeping the cost down for many families. Uniforms are also a timesaver in the morning. Although I have to remember if it is a P.E. day or regular uniform, I don't have to argue over whether or not a certain shirt is clean. This allows for more family time

in the morning before we trek to work and school. While in school, it is clear that it is time to focus on the learning, and not who has the best label or newest shoes. Everyone was created equal in the eyes of God, so why not extend that into the learning environment as well.

Wanting to Serve Others

In school, each grade level participates in outreach and service projects. Students make sandwiches for the hungry, collect money for the poor. This year, they participated in the Water Project to raise awareness and money for those who do not have access to clean water. At Christmas time, the school rallies together and sponsors a family. The students and their families gather gifts for those who are less fortunate. In our own families, we volunteer for Faith Formation Classes, take food to those less fortunate for Thanksgiving, and help out with other church-sponsored activities.

It is my hope, that through my husband's and my example, as well as through his experience in the Catholic School, that our son sees that we don't do these things just to give back to the community (though this too is noble) but, that we are following in Jesus's footsteps, and he will continue to do so as he gets older.

It's Academic But Not the Most Important Thing

Yes, learning is an important aspect of any school. However, it wouldn't matter if the school had a state of the art Science lab, a robotics club, or drama. I am more concerned that my child becomes a kind, selfless person. The Catholic School practices the same values that we as parents "preach" at home.

Can't Do It Alone

Although I would like to believe that my husband and I would be able to provide all our son needs to have a personal relationship with God. That he will grow up to value his Catholic faith and upbringing. But I would be naive to believe that we could do that alone. Children learn from example; not only from their parents/guardians, but also from other children and adults. We do what we can at home, but in this day and age, we can use all the help we can get. I am so thankful for the community of our Catholic School.

You see, our school is similar to the public school in many ways. But it is clearly more than just a school. It is a tight knit community. Our students, faculty, and parents come together every day in a community of faith and warmth, something that has grown increasingly more important in a world of harsh realities. Our school provides an important space for our students to feel a sense of belonging and a safe haven to openly discuss their beliefs, hopes, and dreams. Yes, our school prepares their minds, but with the help of our Catholic Faith, it prepares their souls.