

# EDUCATION MINISTRIES

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This past week was unique in that we got to recognize the feast day of two saints. While there are many festivities in the U.S. surrounding St. Patrick's Day, St. Joseph also deserves our special attention.

Some of our classes took the opportunity to mark March 19th, St. Joseph's feast day, by celebrating our fathers and those who are like fathers in our lives. Since school is not in session when Father's Day is typically celebrated and St. Joseph is recognized as the patron saint of fathers, a few of our classes used this past Friday to honor them. In doing so, they reminded our little ones of the members of Jesus' family on earth and how important St. Joseph was in the life of Jesus.

Learning about the life of St. Patrick, shamrocks, and all things green were part of the week as well. St. Patrick returned to Ireland, even after being a slave there, to teach the people about God. There are stories that the shamrock was used as a way to help the people understand that God was three persons in one. As you might imagine, the concept of one God being all three is difficult for

most preschoolers to understand so we are regularly searching for opportunities to teach it. I remember using the three colors in candy corn, a carton of Neapolitan ice cream, and the three sides of the triangle to help illustrate this with my class. All the individual parts come together to make one. One of our four-year old classes cut out a heart, a dove, and a cross, decorated them, and then glued them onto a shamrock. The items represented God as the Father, God in Jesus, the Son, and God in the Holy Spirit.

While we emphasize God throughout our days at preschool and often use the story behind holy days to further demonstrate His love for us, we also are sure to incorporate as much fun, creativity and imagination when we can. St. Patrick's Day offered us the perfect opportunity to stir up some giggles and surprises! After all, those sneaky leprechauns are quite mischievous! When I stopped by one of our 3-year classrooms, the students were thoroughly exasperated with the leprechaun and his shenanigans! He not only came in and turned chairs upside down, threw books on the floor, and put tape all over the tables, but also switched all of

the numbers around on the class calendar! One of our other classes managed to find some shiny gold coins and traces of green throughout their room. I was told on several occasions to be on the lookout for those leprechauns because they were small, tricky, and really fast! I even heard that if you forgot to wear green, they might try and pinch you! A few classes encouraged the children to use recyclables such as cereal boxes, egg cartons, and coffee cans to design and build an 'authentic' leprechaun trap; we certainly inspired some future architects and engineers!

No matter what the excitement or the learning that is happening in their daily play, our children are encouraged to recognize God's presence in everything. His love for us can be seen, felt, and heard from events of both the past and present. May our children be taught to never forget this!

A few spaces are still available for the 21-22 school year! To learn how to join our fantastic preschool, please visit our website at [preschoolatstfrancis.com](http://preschoolatstfrancis.com) or contact Shelley Freeman at [shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org)