

Pope Francis and the Papacy

Unit One: The Life of Pope Francis
Grades 3-5 and Middle and High School

Produced by the
Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America
Office of Educational Services



Pope Francis and the Papacy



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2025



Lesson Plan

Grade: Grades 3-5

Subject:

Date:

Topic: The Life of Pope Francis

Lesson # One

Learning Objectives:

SWBAT : Students will learn about the life of Pope Francis, his early years, journey to the papacy, and how he serves as a leader of the Church.

Materials Needed:

 Short Story: "A Boy Named Jorge" (Story-based introduction to Pope Francis page 5)

 Timeline Activity (Students arrange key events in order page 6-7)

 Coloring & Drawing Activity (Pope Francis' symbols and life)

 Video Clip (Optional: A short children's video about Pope.

[\(Click Here\)](#)

Structure / Activity:

Lesson Structure:

1. Introduction – Storytime (10 min)

- Read aloud “A Boy Named Jorge” (a short story summarizing Pope Francis' early life).
- Ask: “What do you think Jorge was like as a child? What do you think made him a good leader?”

2. Main Lesson – Learning About Pope Francis (15 min)

- Show a picture of Pope Francis and ask:
 - “What do you notice about him?”
 - “What does a Pope do?”
- Discuss his real name (Jorge Mario Bergoglio), his love for soccer, and his journey to becoming Pope.
- Emphasize his kindness, humility, and care for the poor.

Structure / Activity:

3. Activity – Timeline Sorting (15 min)

Directions:

- Give students event cards from Pope Francis' life.
- Have them arrange the events in order on a board or table.
- Discuss the key moments as a class.

Events for Sorting:

- ✓ Born in Argentina in 1936
- ✓ Became a priest in 1969
- ✓ Became Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998
- ✓ Became Pope in 2013
- ✓ Wrote an important letter about taking care of the earth in 2015

4. Creative Activity – Drawing & Reflection (15 min)

Option 1: Draw a Scene from His Life

- Students illustrate a moment from Pope Francis' life (childhood, becoming Pope, helping the poor).

Option 2: Design a Symbol for Pope Francis

- Students create a symbol that represents his leadership (e.g., a heart for kindness, a globe for caring for the world).

Reflection Question:

- “What do you admire about Pope Francis?”

5. Conclusion & Prayer (5 min)

- Summarize: "Pope Francis teaches us to be kind, help others, and take care of the earth."
- End with a simple prayer for Pope Francis:
- “Dear God, thank you for giving us Pope Francis to guide us. Help us to follow his example of kindness and love. Amen.”

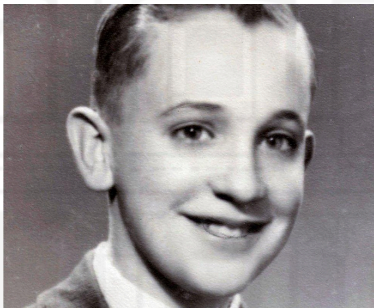
Assessment:

- ✓ **Participation in timeline activity**
- ✓ **Drawing or written reflection on Pope Francis' leadership**



A Boy Named Jorge

"Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born in Argentina in 1936. He loved playing soccer with his friends and helping his grandmother in the kitchen. As he grew older, he realized he wanted to help people, so he decided to become a priest. He lived simply, took the bus to work, and always cared for the poor. In 2013, he became Pope Francis, the first Pope from Latin America! He teaches people to be kind, take care of the earth, and love one another—just like Jesus taught."



From L to R, standing: Pope's sister Maria Helena; mother Regina Sivori; brother Alberto; Pope Francis; brother Oscar; sister Martha; stepbrother Enrique Narvaja. Sitting from L to R: his grandfather Juan Bergoglio; grandmother Maria and father Mario. AFP

● Born in Argentina
Jorge Mario Bergoglio
was born on
December 17, 1936, in
Buenos Aires,
Argentina."

● He Decides to
Become a Priest "As a
young man, Jorge
studies chemistry but
feels God calling him
to be a priest. He joins
the Jesuit order."

● Ordained as a Priest
"Jorge becomes a priest
and begins serving
people, especially the
poor, in Argentina."

● Becomes Archbishop
of Buenos Aires "Jorge
is chosen to lead the
Church in Argentina,
helping people in need
and riding the bus like
everyone else."

● Elected Pope
Francis "Jorge is
chosen as the new
Pope and takes the
name Francis, after
St. Francis of Assisi."

● Writes an Important
Letter About Caring for
the Earth (2015)
"Pope Francis writes
'Laudato Si,' teaching
people to take care of
the planet and help
those in need."

● Visits Many Countries
to Spread Love & Peace
(2013-Present)
"As Pope, Francis travels
the world, meeting people
of different faiths and
reminding them to love
one another."

🎯 Challenge
Extension:
Add a Mystery Event:
Have students
research a recent
action or teaching by
Pope Francis and
create their own event
card!

Timeline Board Activity

1936

2013

1958

2015

**Timeline
Board
Activity**

1969

**2013-
2025**

1998

Lesson Plan

Grade: Middle to High School

Subject:

Date:





Topic: The Life of Pope Francis

Lesson # One

Learning Objectives:

SWBAT explain the life of Pope Francis, including his early years, his journey to the papacy, and his contributions to the Catholic Church.

Materials Needed:

-  Handout: Biography of Pope Francis (See page 10)
-  Timeline Worksheet (See Page 11)
-  Click: [Francis: The Pope from the New World.](#): One Hour or [Francis: The First Jesuit Pope:](#) 3 minutes.
-  Images: Photos of Pope Francis at different stages of his life (See Page 12)

Structure / Activity:

1. Introduction (10 min)

Begin with a discussion:

Ask: “What do you know about Pope Francis?”

Write student responses on the board.

Show images of Pope Francis at different stages of his life.

2. Main Lesson (20 min)

Distribute and read the biography handout together.

Highlight key moments in his life (see the biography below).

Discuss:

What makes Pope Francis unique?

How has his background influenced his leadership?

Structure / Activity:

3. Activity (15 min)

Option 1: Complete the timeline worksheet by filling in major events in Pope Francis' life.

Option 2: In small groups, discuss and present one of Pope Francis' major contributions to the Church.

4. Conclusion (10 min)

Reflection question: "What can we learn from Pope Francis' life and leadership?"

Invite students to share their thoughts.

Assessment:

- Short quiz (optional)**
- Written reflection on Pope Francis' leadership**
- Perform a skit about Pope Francis' life.**



Early Life of Pope Francis

- Born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on December 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- His parents were Italian immigrants.
- He studied chemistry before feeling called to the priesthood.

Path to the Papacy

- Became a Jesuit priest in 1969.
- Served as Archbishop of Buenos Aires (1998-2013), focusing on helping the poor.
- Created a culture of humility, riding public transportation and living simply.
- Elected Pope on March 13, 2013, becoming the first Pope from Latin America and the first Jesuit Pope.
- Chose the name “Francis” after St. Francis of Assisi, symbolizing humility and service.

Leadership as Pope

- Advocates for care for the poor and the environment.
- Wrote the encyclical "Laudato Si'" (2015) on protecting the planet.
- Promotes interfaith dialogue and peace.
- Continues to focus on mercy, compassion, and inclusion.

Timeline Worksheet

1

Write the Year:

Jorge Mario Bergoglio is born in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

2

1969

Write the Event

3

1998

Write the Event

4

2013

Write the Event
Write the Event

5

2015

Write the Event

6

Write the Year:

Write Your Favorite Pope Francis Event

