

P.R.A.Y. AWARDS ARE FAMILY AFFAIR

Four Siblings Earn their Respective P.R.A.Y. Awards



Annabelle M., 11th Grade, Girl Scout Ambassador – God and Life, Four Star Recipient
Lillian M., 8th Grade, Girl Scout Cadette – God and Church (has 3 awards)
Bennett M., 5th Grade, Cub Scouts Webelos 2 , Arrow of Light – God and Family (has 2 awards)
Flynn M., 1st Grade, 7 years old, Cub Scouts Wolf – God and Me (his first award)

When P.R.A.Y. received Laura's order for her four children, we contacted her. After all, how often does one family earn every level* of the P.R.A.Y. Series? We discovered it is through intentional planning and purpose. Here are the responses we received:

How did you get started on the P.R.A.Y. Award?

Many years ago, when my oldest was in the first grade, our pastor at the time offered a class for scouts and a mentor (mostly aimed at Cub Scouts because the church sponsors a pack) to work on their God and Me award. I didn't know a lot about it but asked for details because our daughter had a conflict with the meeting times. The pastor suggested that we work on it independently and meet with him occasionally for a status check-in. This is how we started with the program.

What does your program look like? How do you manage multiple levels?

Each of our kids are three years apart, so every 2 or 3 years when they all fit in the timeframe of one of the awards, we have a religious awards year. We all work on the awards together. We will sit around the dining room table or sometimes it will be on a road trip in the car with each kid with their book and supplies. They read and then ask questions, and we all discuss as things come up. Sometimes it is Mom who mentors, sometimes it is Dad. The older kids always have input for the younger kids, and they help out with some of the activities. The younger kids always complete their award before the older kids (we have found the middle school book to be the most demanding), so the last few times we get together it is usually just with the older kids.

Is everything done at home?

We start all of the activities at home, but some of the activities and conversations in the books require some time spent outside the family and in that case, I try to have my kids make contact with their "expert" and visit them for conversations away from me because I want them to be able to have a meaningful conversation with another adult outside of my influence.

What does your family get out of it? Why do you continue with the P.R.A.Y. Series?

I feel like the program is a great way for the kids to explore faith and it brings up great questions and discussions within the family. Because we do it as a family, it gives the older kids that reminder that they are always mentoring the younger kids and the younger kids know that they can approach the older kids with questions and for help. While we do attend worship services & other church activities regularly as a family, I feel like we are not always as open about our beliefs as we could be and this serves as a guidance for us to have family conversations about many aspects of our faith and that's really the reason that we continue to pursue these awards.

Talk about this year. How was it a milestone?

This year was a big year for our family. Our oldest received the 4 Star award and our youngest received his first award. Our youngest was the most excited. He knows that the other kids have earned these awards in the past and he was excited to finally be able to work on his own. This will be the only time that all four kids will work on the awards at the same time.

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Faith formation ... that's the emphasis of the P.R.A.Y. Series. Whether the P.R.A.Y. Programs are taught in classes offered by the church, or whether they are taught by parents in a home setting (with the final review done by the pastor), the goal is *Building Faith in Youth*.

Thanks to the Rev. Michael Marion, pastor of Calvary United Methodist Church in Wichita, Kansas for his support of the P.R.A.Y. Program.

**Please join P.R.A.Y. in congratulating this family for growing stronger in faith TOGETHER.
We pray God's continued blessings upon you!**

*Although the P.R.A.Y. Series now includes the new lead-in piece "Jesus and Me" for K-1, the four fundamental programs still form the basis for the core series and the Four Star award.



P.R.A.Y. • www.praypub.org • 1-800-933-7729