

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Catechist Guide



Don't Miss This!

Handouts and other teaching resources
are available online at
www.smp.org/discover_grade4.



saint mary's press

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Welcome

Welcome to *Discover! Finding Faith in Life*. This exciting program is designed to help children fully engage in the process of discovering and growing in the richness of their Catholic faith, making deep faith a central part of their everyday lives.

The lessons within are designed to foster a clear understanding of the concepts presented through an active-learning approach. This method brings lessons to life in a fun and memorable way through experiential and interactive processes. Core principles of faith are introduced in a manner that allows children to discover meaning and develop understanding while being immersed in solid Catholic teaching and in the prayers and practices that build Catholic identity.

The Catholic Children's Bible is the core text of this program, anchoring the key concepts of each chapter to important Scripture passages. This serves to promote biblical literacy and an in-depth familiarity with and knowledge of key Scripture stories throughout the Old and New Testaments, including their meaning for us today.

Discover! Finding Faith in Life is a program like no other. We are confident that by using this program, you will experience faith coming to life for children in a truly exciting way. May we all continue to discover more deeply the riches of our Catholic faith and so help others find the saving message of the Good News at the center of their lives.

With hopes and prayers for every blessing,

The Publishing Team at Saint Mary's Press

Program Highlights

The Bible Is the Primary Text

Discover! Finding Faith in Life immerses the children in Scripture by anchoring each chapter to a particular Scripture story. The children use *The Catholic Children's Bible* for each chapter in each grade, and the Bible is the core text of this program. This unique feature promotes biblical literacy and in-depth familiarity with and knowledge of key Scripture stories throughout the Old and New Testaments.

Based on Principles of Engaged, Active Learning

The lessons are designed to foster a deep understanding of the concepts presented through an active-learning approach. Experiential and interactive processes create energy and excitement for both the teacher and the children, and activities and activity options throughout the program help teachers build a meaningful lesson in a creative and fun way.

Child-Centered Design

Information and activities are presented using the language and experiences of the child to create an environment for real, engaged learning. The program relays core information through activities and discussions that will make sense to the learners in their everyday lives, thus conveying deep meaning and touching their hearts and minds in a significant way.

Rooted in a "Discover" Approach

The name of this program speaks to an energy and excitement that are infused in the learning process designed for this guide. The content helps the children make connections with previous experiences and knowledge and invites them to deepen both as they discover new concepts and practices in the Catholic tradition. Core concepts are structured in such a way that the children can discover meaning for themselves while being immersed in solid Catholic teaching and exposed to the prayers and practices that build Catholic identity.

Clear and Practical Structure

Each grade level is structured in the same manner: four units with five chapters in each unit. Each grade has twenty core chapters plus eight liturgical season lessons, which can be incorporated into the flow of the catechetical year according to each particular program's schedule and needs.

Each grade level has a generalized area of focus (Grade 1: God; Grade 2: Jesus; Grade 3: Church; Grade 4: Covenant; Grade 5: Sacraments), while at the same time spiraling core concepts and foundational understandings throughout each grade level to introduce and deepen meaning for the children at age-appropriate levels.

Of the five chapters in each unit, four of them focus on the four pillars of the *Catechism*. A fifth chapter introduces a foundational concept related to one of the seven Catholic social teaching principles.

The unit structure for all grades is as follows:

First chapter	Believe (First <i>Catechism</i> pillar)
Second chapter	Celebrate (Second <i>Catechism</i> pillar)
Third chapter	Live (Third <i>Catechism</i> pillar)
Fourth chapter	Live: Catholic Social Teaching (Third <i>Catechism</i> pillar / Catholic social teaching)
Fifth chapter	Pray (Fourth <i>Catechism</i> pillar)

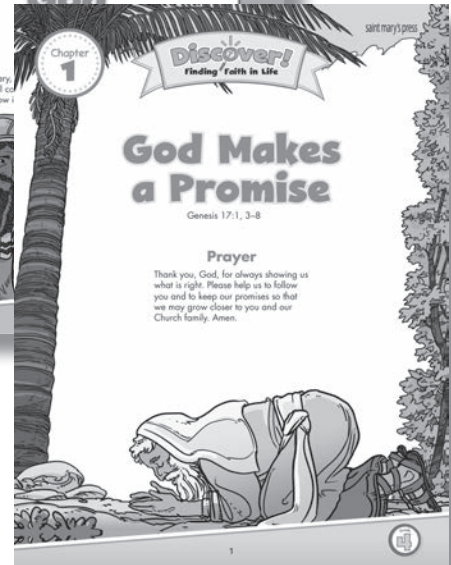
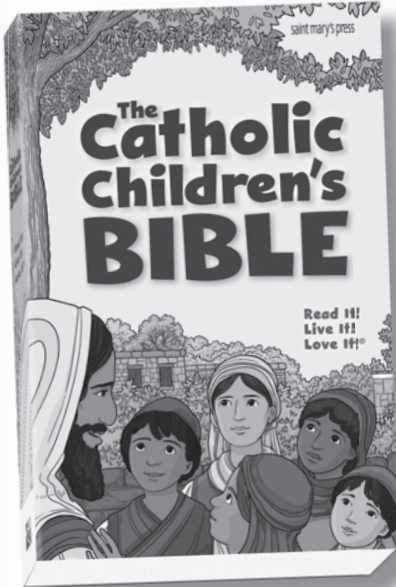
Family Support

This program is designed to extend beyond the classroom and into the home. Each activity booklet across the program includes a family page that helps families follow along with the Scripture story and the core concepts presented in the current lesson.* In addition, this program offers home guides for catechetical programs in which parents or guardians are responsible for a portion of the direct teaching of content. These easy-to-use guides are structured to ensure success in relaying key concepts of faith.

*Spanish versions of all family pages are available online at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Program Components

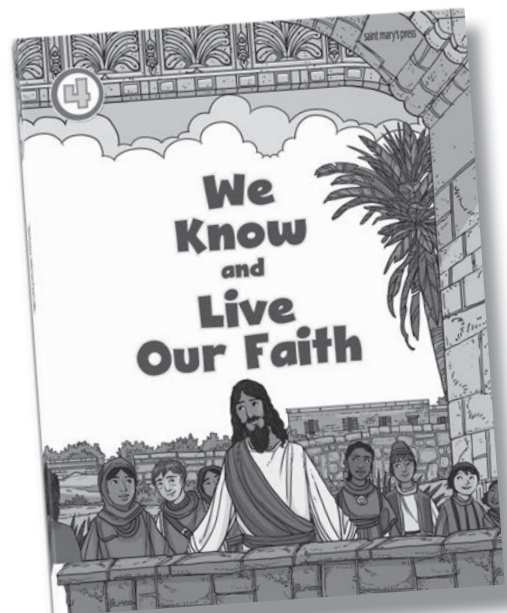
The Catholic Children's Bible



Activity Booklets



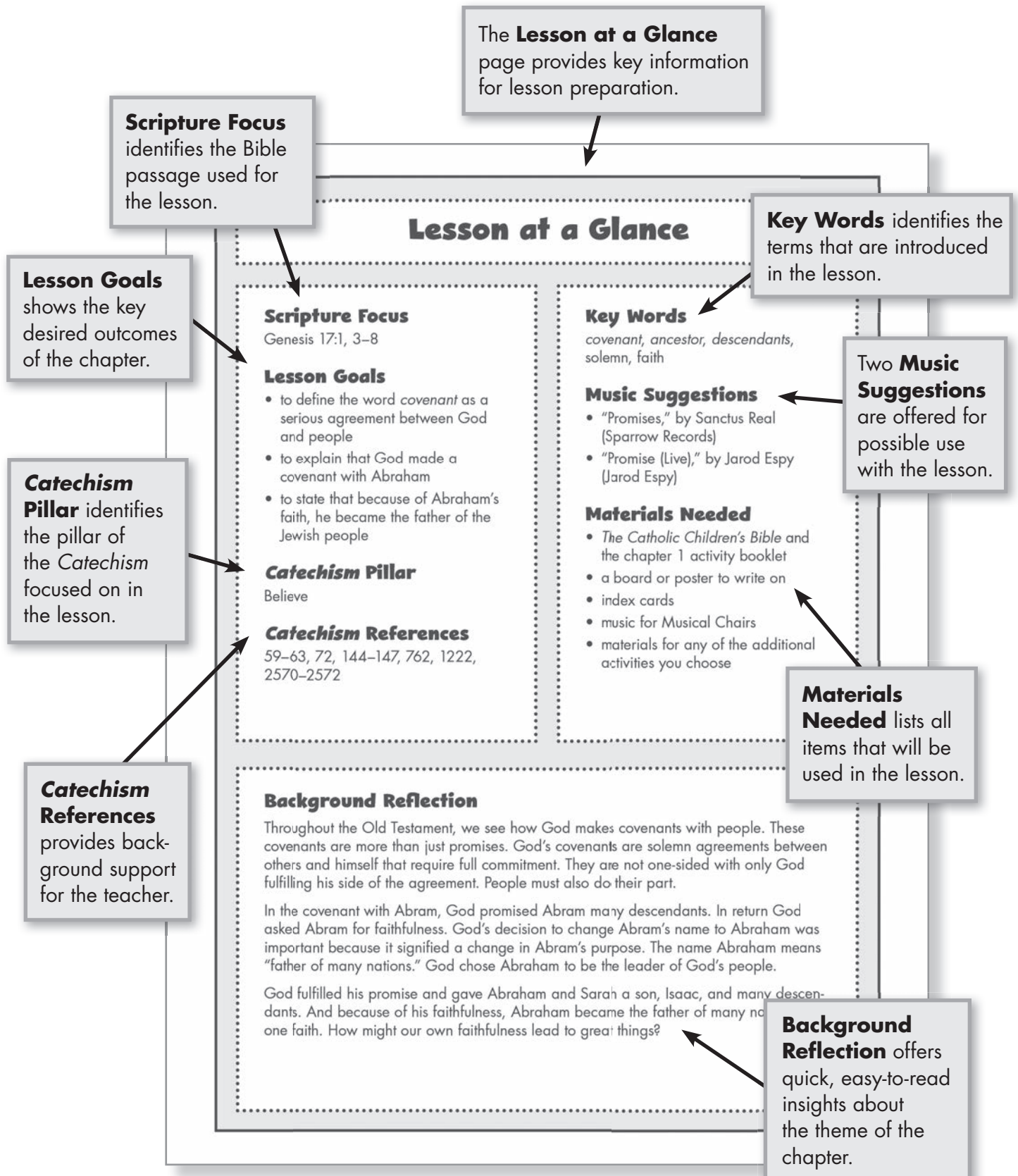
Special Feature



We Know and Live Our Faith Resource

Understanding the Components

Catechist Guide



The **Get Ready!** part of the lesson begins with an opening prayer and an activity that will spark interest and create excitement in the children.

44 Unit 1: Our Covenant with God

Chapter 1

† Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 1 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet to the group. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to brainstorm promises or agreements that they have made with friends or family. Examples might include a family promise of a vacation or a special outing if the children do all their chores without complaining, or time to play with a friend once a child finishes his or her homework. Write the children's answers on the board.
- Ask the following questions:
 - Have you always kept your promises?
 - What happens when you don't keep your side of the agreement?
 - Why is it important to keep your promises?
- Tell the children that today they are going to learn what it means to enter into a **solemn** promise or agreement with God. Explain that **solemn** means serious. Tell them that this kind of serious promise or agreement is called a **covenant**. Explain that God has made covenants with his people to help us know what is right and how to follow God together.
- Tell the group that the Old Testament in the Bible describes many of God's covenants with his people. Explain that today they will learn about a covenant God made with Abraham.

† Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Genesis 17:1–9 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 43). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 44. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 44–45. Invite them to describe what they see in the art framing the pages.
- Invite a volunteer to read the title on page 44.

The **Dive In!** part of the lesson invites the children to interact directly with *The Catholic Children's Bible* and learn important concepts through key Bible stories.

The **Core Teaching** part of the lesson relays key information that supports the lesson goals.

The **Discover!** part of the lesson presents key content through an engaging learning activity and a core teaching section.

Chapter 1

Core Teaching

- Explain how a covenant is different from a promise, using these or similar words:
 - In a covenant, both sides (two people, or God and us) agree to do something.
 - It is a solemn or serious agreement that requires both sides to keep their promises to each other.
- Write the definition of *covenant* from *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 44) on the board.
- Explain why it was important that God chose a new name for Abram that means "father of many nations." (You may wish to write the definition of *ancestor* from *The Catholic Children's Bible* on the board.)
 - His new name, Abraham, signified his new purpose.
 - God was choosing Abraham to be the ancestor and leader of God's people.
- Tell the children that Abraham is our father in faith. Explain that we are all part of God's family, and we are all sons and daughters of Abraham. Tell them that we are all connected because we are part of the Church, God's people.
- Tell the children that when we follow God at all times, even when we don't always understand God's ways, that is called **faith**. Use the following points to explain further:
 - Abraham is called our father in faith because he obeyed and believed God when God asked him to—even when he didn't understand how God could keep his promises.
 - Abraham kept his own promise to believe God even when it wasn't easy. God kept his promise by blessing to all nations because of his faith.

46 Unit 1: Our Covenant with God

Chapter 1

Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Promise Exchange

- Distribute the index cards to the children.
- Instruct the children to write out a promise to God to work on this week. Tell them that these promises should be general ideas that anyone in class could promise to follow, such as promising to do a chore without being reminded, or promising to start the morning with a prayer. Ask them not to write their names.
- Allow 2–3 minutes for the children to write. Then ask them to fold their cards in half so no one can see what they wrote.
- Invite them to arrange their chairs or desks in a circle and place their index cards on their chairs or desks. Then ask them to stand in a circle surrounding the chairs.
- Explain the next part of the activity:
 - We are going to play a game like Musical Chairs.
 - When I play the music, walk to your right in time with the music. Keep walking as long as the music plays.
 - When I stop the music, sit in the seat nearest you.
 - The paper on that seat is what you must promise to do this week.
 - Ready? Let's begin!
- Play the music and conduct the activity.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children to take the cards they landed on and then return to their original seats.
- Invite volunteers to read aloud their promises to the class. If you sense that a child is not comfortable with the promise he or she received, or cannot reasonably fulfill it, reassure the entire group that anyone can write his or her own promise to keep during the week.
- Conclude by explaining that just as God always keeps his promises, it is important that we keep our promises to God. God doesn't do all the work. We must do our part too.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 49 in its place.

Additional Activity Options is a reminder that each lesson offers three alternative possibilities for the core learning activity.

The **Additional Activities** are alternative options for the core learning activity. They may also be used to extend or supplement the lesson as needed.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed
• none

Abraham Says (15 minutes)

- Explain to the children that the group will play a game similar to Simon Says.
- Invite the children to stand up, and explain that you will ask them to follow what you say. Explain that they should follow your instruction only when you say "Abraham Says."
- Offer "Abraham Says" instructions that involve faith-filled actions, such as praying the Hail Mary together, or sharing a sign of peace. For the non-Abraham instructions, suggest actions that are not faithful, such as making faces at each other or pouting. Play a couple rounds of the game depending on class size.
- Remind the children of the importance of following God in faith, as Abraham did.
- Ask the children if anyone had trouble following along. Invite them to share what they could do to follow better next time.

Materials

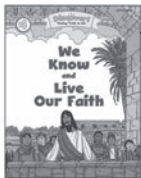
Help with Promises (15 minutes)

... is a conversation with God. Tell them God as Abraham did, we can better ... drawing materials, and materials for ... promises they can make to God. Have ... thanking God for loving them, making ... asking for his help to keep their promises. ... ies to create cards with their prayers. ... yers with the class. ... cards home and put them in a special ... the cards when they say their night prayers.

of Abraham (15 minutes)

... had many Sons—Kids Praise & Worship ... e group. ... ns along with the animation. You can re- ... n a chance to learn the motions and follow ... our father in faith. Then explain that we are ... are all sons and daughters of Abraham. We ... e part of the Church, God's people.

The **We Know and Live Our Faith** resource provides additional content that can be used to support the lesson.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "The Covenant with Noah" + activity, pages 18–19
- "The Covenant with Abraham," page 20

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - A covenant is a serious agreement between God and people.
 - God made a covenant with Abraham.
 - Because of Abraham's faith, he became the father of the Jewish people.
- Invite the children to place their chapter 1 sticker in the appropriate space on their folder.

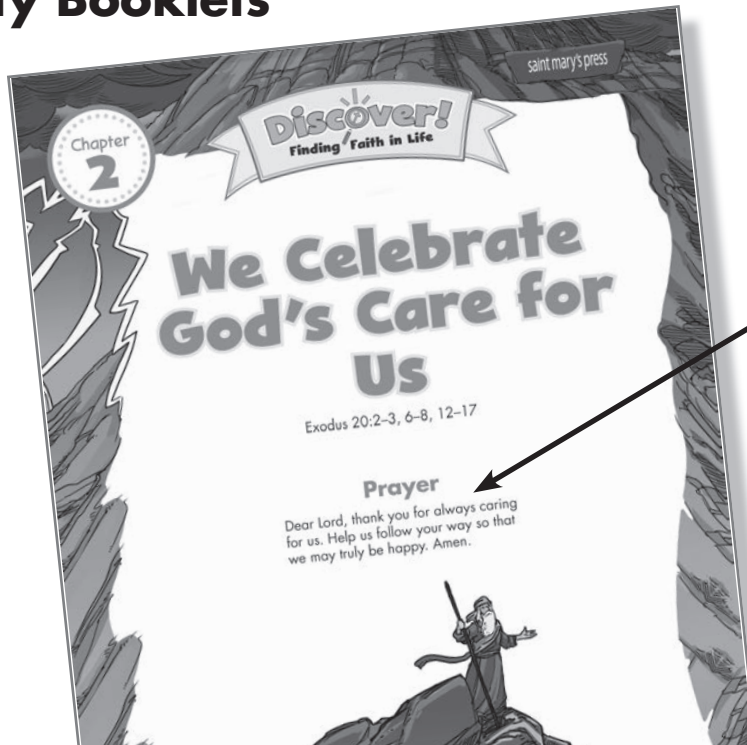


Closing Prayer

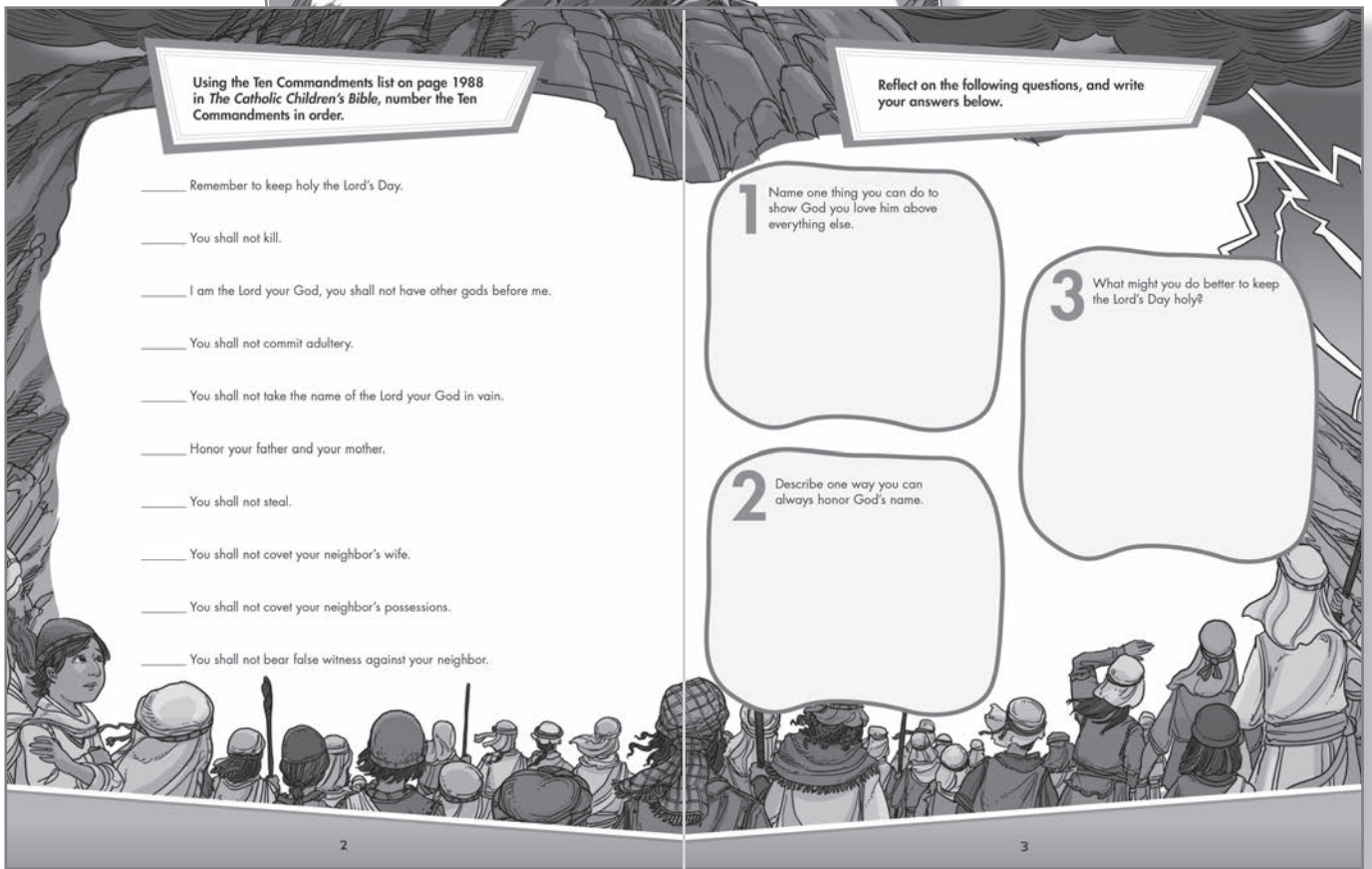
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," and allow a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1994 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* and read together the Act of Faith.
- Close with the Sign of the Cross.

The **Go!** part of the lesson invites the children to recall everything they have learned and ends with a closing prayer.

Activity Booklets



Each activity booklet begins with a **Prayer** that is used as the opening prayer for the lesson.



Page 2 (on left) features an activity that relates to content introduced in the Bible.

Page 3 (on right) features an activity that relates to the core teaching content for the chapter.

The **Family Page** provides families with helpful information about the chapter and ideas to bring the lesson to life at home.

Family Page

Background Reflection

This chapter focuses on the Ten Commandments and the promise God made with Moses and the Israelites. God wrote the Ten Commandments and gave them directly to Moses. As God's Commandments, they apply to all of God's children, which includes us today. These commandments are "rules of love" that show God's care for us. By giving us the Ten Commandments, God is showing us the way to peace, happiness, and eternal life with him in Heaven.

The first three commandments, which are the focus of this lesson, teach us how to love God. They teach us to believe in God and to keep God at the center of our lives. They teach us to honor God's name with reverence. They also teach us to keep the Lord's Day holy by participating in the Eucharist and by making Sunday a truly special day of the week. The last seven commandments, which are the focus of the next chapter, help us understand what it means to truly love our neighbor. By following all of the Ten Commandments, we can know the true happiness and peace for which God has created us.

Family Activities

- Discuss how rules help us to grow and keep us safe. Go through some of your family rules and talk about the reasons for each rule. Explore additional family rules that your child thinks might be important.
- Spend time reflecting together on how you spend your Sundays as a family. Brainstorm one or two small ways you can begin to incorporate family rest and prayer time into your Sunday. (Ideas might include saying a decade of the Rosary as a family, or discussing the Mass readings on the way home from Mass.)
- Watch the video "Kid's Survival Tip #1—Put God First" (YouTube, 3:04) together. Discuss the experiment in the video and explore the following questions: What happens when the kid tries to put the big stuff in the bowl last? What happens when he puts the big stuff in the bowl first? What three things does he say we should do to make it through every week?

People of Faith introduces the children to saints and other holy people who are models of faith.



People of Faith

Moses the Patriarch (c. fourteenth century BC)

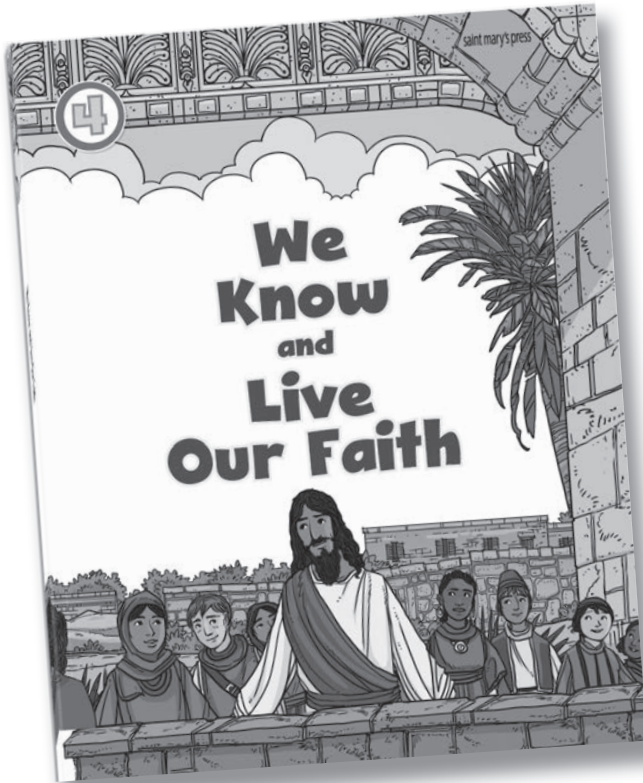
Moses was called by God to free the Israelites from slavery. Moses went to the Egyptian pharaoh and said, "Let my people go." After God sent ten plagues on Egypt, the Israelites were released. God guided Moses as he led the Israelites to the Promised Land through hunger, thirst, sickness, and battle. The Church celebrates Moses's feast day on September 4.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Lord God, we thank you for your commandments, which lead us closer to you. Strengthen us to follow your way. Help us to know that you love us always. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We Know and Live Our Faith



This resource provides an additional opportunity for the children to learn about their faith. It can be used as part of the session or at home with the family.

Original Sin

When God first made Adam, Adam enjoyed God's friendship. God and Adam walked together in the beautiful home, the Garden of Eden, that God had made for Adam. Adam was in a state called **original holiness** or original justice. When Adam chose to disobey God, Adam lost this original holiness and justice. He committed the Original Sin of disobedience. In choosing to disobey God, Adam lost original holiness and justice not only for himself but for all human beings.

Because of Original Sin, human nature is weak—physically, mentally, and spiritually. We are subject to ignorance. That is, we must make an effort to overcome ignorance by study and research. We are subject to suffering. Our bodies and minds are not naturally strong. We can get sick, our bones can break, our minds can be damaged, and eventually we will die. We are also inclined to sin. That is, it is not easy for us to resist temptation and to do what God wants for our good and the good of others.

ACTIVITY

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

On each fruit, write a temptation that someone your age might face. Maybe it is the temptation to disobey parents. Perhaps it is spending too much time with digital devices. Maybe it is teasing others until they become uncomfortable.

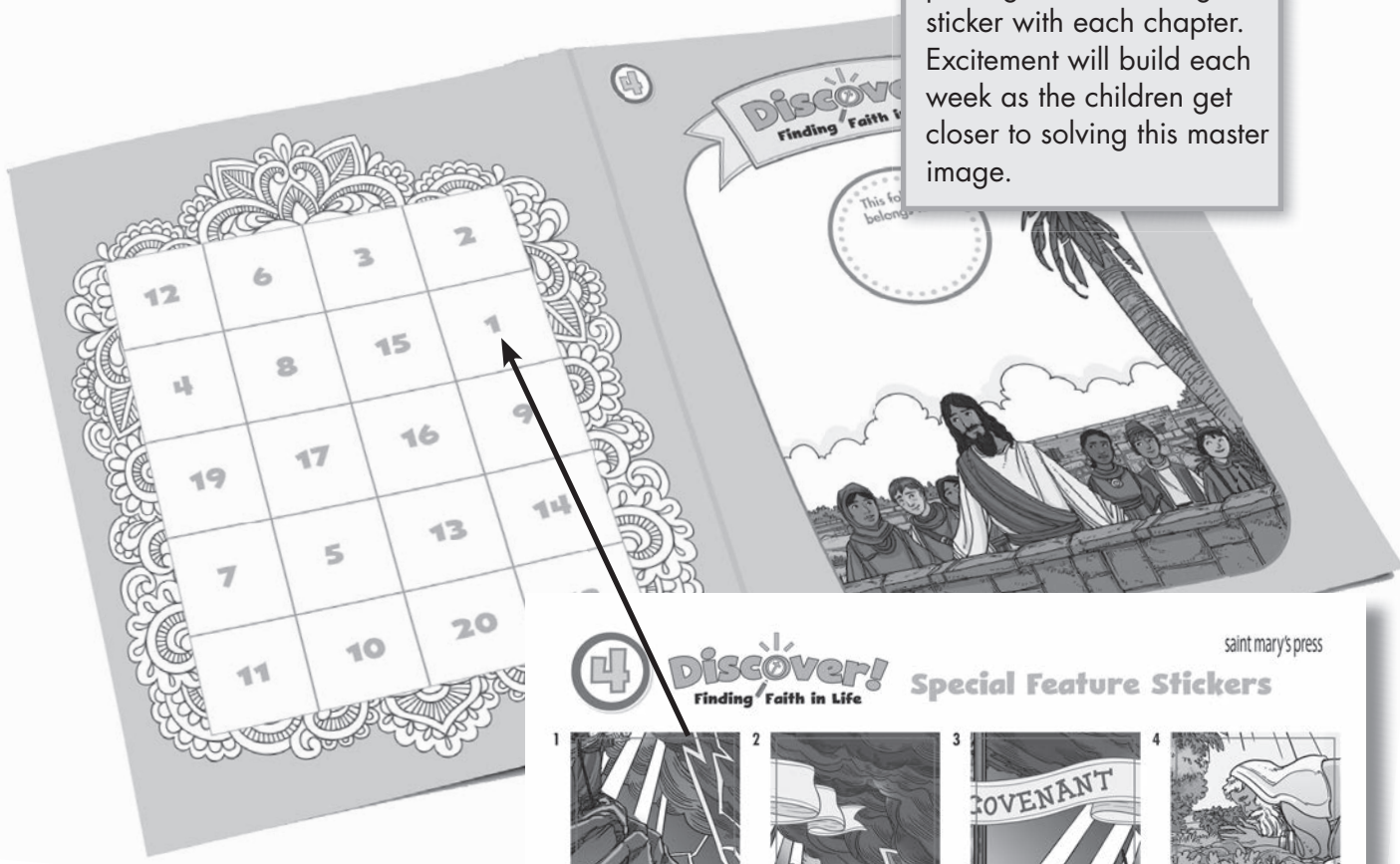
Say a quiet prayer asking God to deliver you from these or other temptations and to help you stop "picking these tempting fruits."

12

13

Special Feature for Grade 4

The **folder** includes a main image that can be discovered only by placing a coordinating sticker with each chapter. Excitement will build each week as the children get closer to solving this master image.



Folder

4 Discover! Finding Faith in Life Special Feature Stickers

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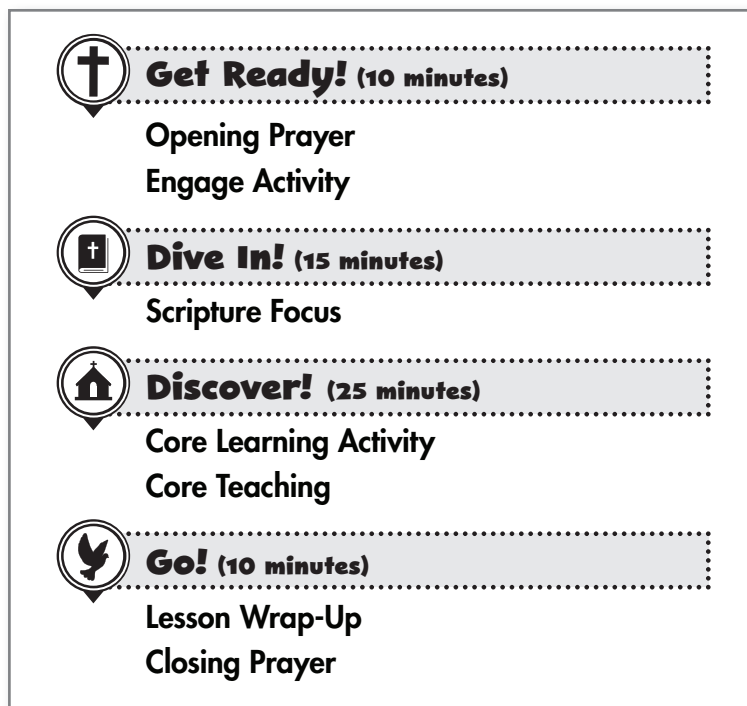
At the end of each of the twenty core lessons, the children will be encouraged to take a **sticker** and find where it belongs on the back of their folders. At the end of the twenty core lessons, their grid of stickers will complete one main image.

Sticker Sheet

Key Elements of the Program

Catechist Guide

Each lesson follows the same overall structure and timing. It will be important to assess the time frames according to your unique group makeup and time parameters. Some activities may take longer for some groups than others. Reading through each lesson prior to the session will guide you in making necessary adjustments to ensure success in your particular setting. The 60-minute timing structure is presented as follows:



Get Ready!

This first part of the lesson starts with an opening prayer and an engage activity that lays the foundation for the lesson by accessing the children's prior knowledge and experience. This engages the children by providing them with an early opportunity for success by prompting discussion and activity around concepts they are familiar with and then connecting those concepts with content they will be learning in the lesson.

Dive In!

This part of the lesson immerses the children in the Bible through a key Scripture passage. This part always focuses on helping the children to understand the Scripture story and involves processing the content presented in the Understand It!, Live It!, and Tell It! features of *The Catholic Children's Bible*.

Discover!

This part of the lesson involves a core learning activity (a craft in the liturgical season lessons) that brings to life one of the themes of the lesson in an interactive way. Frequently, this involves an out-of-the-seat activity that creates energy and excitement while helping the children further explore a concept related to the lesson. The core teaching part of the lesson is presented after this learning activity, giving you essential catechetical information to share and questions to ask to assess comprehension.

Go!

This part of the lesson wraps up the session with a final check and recall of the core lesson goals. The children close with one additional fun activity (in the twenty core lessons) that rewards them for completing the lesson and builds excitement for the lessons to come. The session then ends with a closing prayer.

Activity Booklets

A fun and colorful activity booklet accompanies each chapter. The activities provided in these booklets may be used in the group lesson or may be completed at home with the family, depending on time parameters. Each booklet includes the opening prayer used for each lesson, two activity pages that support the learning of the chapter, and a family page that offers families background information on the chapter topic, suggested activities, and a family prayer. *Note:* In the liturgical season lessons, the activity on page 3 is replaced with a prayer service that can be used at the end of the lesson.

We Know and Live Our Faith

This resource, a supplemental piece that follows the pillars of the *Catechism*, is filled with articles that present additional doctrinal content to expand the core concepts covered in the program. Directions in the catechist guide pinpoint which articles from this resource relate to which chapters in the program. Some articles may be referred to multiple times, as they may relate to several chapters. Other content in this resource may not be referred to directly in lessons, as it may introduce concepts that are not focused on in the core program. The *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource can be used either directly in class as time allows or as a family-centered piece that deepens family understanding through reading and discussing faith content together.

Special Feature for Grade 4

In this grade, each chapter will conclude with the children taking a sticker and finding its place on their folder. As the children progress through more and more chapters, the weekly stickers will combine to form an image. At the end of the the twenty core chapters, a main image will be revealed that relates to the year's content focus.

Music Suggestions

Music can add another wonderful dimension to this program. Each chapter includes two song suggestions that correspond to the chapter theme. These songs can be purchased and downloaded individually online. For a complete list of all the songs for the program, please see the *Discover! Finding Faith in Life* resources at www.smp.org/discover_grade4. Of course, you may also wish to add your own favorite hymns or songs, such as those popular in your parish community.

Videos

Options for activities that incorporate fun and engaging videos are provided throughout the program. If you have access to the necessary technology, you can use this additional media to further enliven learning. The video suggestions are also included on the family page in the children's activity booklets, so even if you do not use them within the formal learning environment, the children can enjoy them at home with their families. Quick links to the video resources that are referenced throughout this program are available as part of the online resources for this program, found at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Handouts

Some chapters include additional handouts for the lessons. These handouts can be accessed in different ways:

1. They can be found at the end of the chapter in the catechist guide.
2. They can be accessed as part of the online teaching resources for this grade at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Grade 4

Scope and Sequence

Unit 1: Our Covenant with God					
Chapter Number and Title	1. God Makes a Promise	2. We Celebrate God's Care for Us	3. God's People Promise to Live the Covenant	4. We Promise to Care for the Earth	5. We Are Part of a New Covenant
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	59–63 72 144–147 762 1222 2570–2572	2052–2195	2196–2557	299 306–307 337–344	1 73 578–580 610–611
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to define the word <i>covenant</i> as a serious agreement between God and people to explain that God made a covenant with Abraham to state that because of Abraham's faith, he became the father of the Jewish People 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain that God made a covenant with Moses and the Israelites to identify that the Ten Commandments are rules from God to help his people be safe and happy to state that when we obey the Ten Commandments, we are celebrating God's care for us 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to review that God promised to be the God of the people of Israel to state that the people of Israel promised to obey the Ten Commandments to explain that we are part of this covenant with God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to review that God made the Earth, and us, out of love to identify that God placed human beings in charge of caring for the Earth to state that God asks us to care for the Earth and we agree to do our part 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that God promised to send us a savior, Jesus to explain that Jesus gave us his Body and Blood and made a New Covenant with us to state that every Mass is a celebration of the New Covenant
Scripture	Genesis 17:1, 3–8 (p. 44)	Exodus 20:2–3, 6–8, 12–17 (p. 132)	Exodus 24:4–7, 12 (p. 140)	Genesis 1:26–31 (p. 22)	Mark 14:22–24 (p. 1560)
Key Words*	<i>covenant</i> <i>ancestor</i> <i>descendants</i> solemn faith	<i>worship</i> <i>generation</i> <i>accuse</i> Ten Commandments Israelites Sabbath	<i>altar</i> <i>sacrifice</i> <i>covenant</i>	<i>created</i> <i>descendants</i> steward dominion stewardship	<i>disciple</i> <i>covenant</i> institute
People of Faith	Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)	Moses the Patriarch	Saint Joseph	Pope Francis	Saint Mark

* Italicized key words indicate terms introduced and defined in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.

Unit 2: Jesus Is the New Covenant					
Chapter Number and Title	6. The Passover Lamb	7. Jesus Gives His Life for Us	8. The Great Commandment	9. Our Covenant Includes Others	10. Jesus Is Our King
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	517 608 1094 1329 1340 1363	601 611–613 616 1356–1369	1822–1829 1970 1972–1974 2055	1691 1698 1700–1702	786 908 2305
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain that the Israelites were spared from death because their doorways were marked with the blood of a lamb to identify Jesus as “the Lamb of God” who saved us from sin and death to state that we receive the Lamb of God at Mass in the Body and Blood of Christ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recognize that Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross for us to state that through his death and Resurrection, Jesus brought us back to God to identify the Mass as a celebration of Jesus’ death and Resurrection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to summarize the Great Commandment as the commandment to love God and others to identify that Jesus taught the Great Commandment as part of the New Covenant to explain that if we love God and others, we will be keeping all the other commandments as well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that keeping the covenant includes treating others with kindness and respect to indicate that we care for others because we are all children of God with equal dignity to recall that the last seven commandments are about loving others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify Jesus as the royal son foretold by Isaiah to describe the meaning of some of the titles of the special king to summarize the meaning of “Jesus the King” as the one who cares for us always
Scripture	Exodus 12:21–23 (p. 116)	Matthew 27:50–54 (p. 1516)	Mark 12:28–31 (p. 1556)	Ephesians 4:1–6 (p. 1846)	Isaiah 9:6–7 (p. 1102)
Key Words*	<i>Passover</i> <i>spring</i> <i>hyssop</i> Lamb of God	<i>Temple</i> <i>Holy City</i> Paschal Mystery redemption		<i>humble</i> <i>tolerant</i> <i>preserve</i> <i>unity</i> dignity	<i>counselor</i> <i>eternal</i> <i>successor</i> <i>determined</i> triumphed
People of Faith	Saint Agnes	Saint Óscar Romero	Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist	Saint Elizabeth of Hungary	Mary, Queen of Heaven

* Italicized key words indicate terms introduced and defined in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*.

Unit 3: Others Help Us Keep the Covenant					
Chapter Number and Title	11. Good Leaders Help Us Keep the Covenant	12. The Church Helps Us Keep the Covenant	13. A Covenant of Love	14. The Peaceful Kingdom	15. We Renew Our Baptismal Promises
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	897–913 1142–1143 1548–1551 2179	783–786 901–913 1141–1142 1241 1253	201–202 2083–2195	672 736 2302–2306 2437–2442	1213–1284
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain that Samuel anointed David as leader of the Israelites in the Old Covenant to identify the Church and its leaders as the community that helps us keep the New Covenant to state that God gives us certain gifts to help one another keep the New Covenant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to review that the Sacrament of Baptism brings us into the Body of Christ, the Church to state that Baptism is a covenant between God and us to identify each one of us as an important and necessary part of the Body of Christ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that loving God is part of the Old Covenant to identify that Jesus made loving God part of the New Covenant also to recall that the first three commandments are about loving God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain that the prophet Isaiah has shown us a picture of the peace of the Kingdom of God to identify Jesus as the king who will bring about this peaceful kingdom to describe peaceful ways we can contribute to the coming of the Kingdom of God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recall that Baptism is a new birth that makes us children of God and members of the Church to review that Baptism makes us part of the New Covenant of Jesus to discuss the meaning of the promises made at Baptism for us by our godparents
Scripture	1 Samuel 16:10–13 (p. 390)	1 Corinthians 12:14–18, 27 (p. 1808)	Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (p. 254)	Isaiah 11:6–9 (p. 1106)	John 3:4–6 (p. 1658)
Key Words*	<i>anoint</i> obedient	parish Communion of Saints	consistency	<i>leopard</i> <i>poisonous</i> <i>sacred</i> harmony	<i>womb</i> <i>physically</i> <i>spiritually</i> godparents
People of Faith	Saint Louis IX of France	Saint Francis Xavier	Saint Thérèse of Lisieux	Blessed James Miller	Saint Paul the Apostle

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Unit 4: We Live the Covenant					
Chapter Number and Title	16. The Way to Happiness	17. We Celebrate Our Covenant with God	18. Living the Covenant	19. We Care for Those Who Are Poor	20. God's Covenant Love
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	1716–1729	1322–1332 1373–1375 2130 2594	1822–1829 2331–2400 2443–2449 2514–2557	1397 2401–2463	603 2558–2745
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that Jesus shows us the way to God's Kingdom to define three ways to be happy as taught by Jesus to describe how we can follow the ways to happiness today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that the Ark of the Covenant was a sign of the presence of God and his covenant among the community to identify that God's presence among us brings us joy to name the Mass as the way we celebrate our covenant with God today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that love was Jesus' message in the New Covenant to name love in action as something that can help those who are in need to state that the Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Commandments are against unloving thoughts and actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to summarize that the prophet Amos called people to treat others fairly and justly to identify that we are called to share what we have with others who may not have enough to state that following the covenant means treating others fairly and justly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that Jesus showed us that nothing can separate us from God's love to recall the love of God and how it has been shown to us in our lives to state that prayer is our connection with God who loves us
Scripture	Matthew 5:6–9 (p. 1456)	2 Samuel 6:12–15 (p. 424)	1 John 3:11, 16–18 (p. 1936)	Amos 8:4–7 (p. 1390)	Romans 8:35, 37–39 (p. 1780)
Key Words*	<i>merciful</i> <i>pure in heart</i> Beatitudes	<i>ark of the Lord</i> <i>fatling</i> <i>girt</i> Ark of the Covenant tabernacle sanctuary lamp	<i>claim</i> envy	<i>trample</i> <i>measures</i> <i>debt</i> <i>sworn</i> justice	<i>persecution</i> victory
People of Faith	Saint Josephine Bakhita	Saint David the King	Saint John Baptist de La Salle	Saint Katharine Drexel	Saint Peter Claver

* Italicized key words indicate terms introduced and defined in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.

Liturgical Season Lessons				
Liturgical Season	Our Lady of the Rosary	All Saints' Day	Advent	Christmas/Epiphany
Chapter Title	Holy Mary, Mother of God	Holy Men and Women, Pray for Us	A King of Peace	The Gifts We Bring
Catechism References	531–534 963–975 2197–2233	946–962	522–524 1095 2612	525–530
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recall that Mary is the Mother of Jesus to state that Jesus gave Mary to us to be our Mother too to identify Jesus as being obedient to his parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify All Saints' Day as the day on which we celebrate all the saints who are in Heaven, even those whose names we do not know to recall that everyone who believes in Jesus will live forever to state that we are all called to become saints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recall Advent as the season in which we await the coming of the Savior, the Prince of Peace to define the three comings of Jesus: his coming as a child in Bethlehem, his coming at the end of time, and his coming into our hearts at Christmas to identify Jesus as the king foretold by Isaiah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify Jesus as not only the King of the Jews but also the King of the entire world to explain that the "men from the East" in the Gospel passage are also called "Magi" or "the Three Kings" to state that the tradition of Christmas gift-giving comes from the gifts of the Magi
Scripture	Luke 2:46–52 (p. 1582)	John 11:25, 38–41, 43–44 (p. 1680)	Isaiah 11:6–9 (p. 1106)	Matthew 2:9–11 (p. 1448)
Key Words*	<i>Temple</i> <i>treasured</i> <i>favor</i>	<i>resurrection</i> <i>canonization</i> <i>intercessors</i>	<i>leopard</i> <i>poisonous</i> <i>sacred</i> Advent	<i>frankincense</i> <i>myrrh</i> tangible intangible
People of Faith	Our Lady of the Rosary	Saints Mary, Martha, and Lazarus	Saint John the Baptist	Saint John Chrysostom

* Italicized key words indicate terms introduced and defined in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.

Liturgical Season Lessons				
Liturgical Season	Lent	Easter	Pentecost	Ordinary Time
Chapter Title	A Time of Preparation	Meeting the Risen Jesus	Strengthened by the Spirit	Jesus' Life and Teachings
Catechism References	1217–1222 1229–1233	638–658 1169 1384–1390	683–747 2670–2672	678 1397 1822–1829 1929–1933 2443–2449
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain that the waters of Baptism lead us to freedom from the slavery of sin to identify Lent as a season in which we prepare for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter to define the Easter Vigil as the night when new Christians receive the Sacraments of Initiation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recall that Easter is the season in which we celebrate Jesus' rising from the dead to explain that the Risen Jesus is present at every Eucharist, just as he was at the meal with the two disciples to compare this event to the celebration of the Eucharist, in which we receive the Body and Blood of Christ with faith and love 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that the Holy Spirit moved over the disciples at Pentecost, forming a new creation, the new Kingdom of God to identify that the Holy Spirit moves over us at Baptism and Confirmation, which makes us a new creation to recognize that the Holy Spirit guides and strengthens us with the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recall that Ordinary Time is the season of the year when we learn more about Jesus' life and teachings to identify that caring for others was a key part of Jesus' life and teaching to name ways we can care for people in need all through the year
Scripture	Exodus 14:21–25 (p. 122)	Luke 24:28–32 (p. 1644)	Genesis 1:1–5 (p. 21)	Matthew 25:34, 37–40 (p. 1510)
Key Words*	<i>pursued</i> <i>chariot</i> <i>panic</i>	disciple Resurrection	new creation	<i>righteous</i>
People of Faith	Saint Augustine of Hippo	Saint James the Greater	Saint Hippolytus	Blessed Frederic Ozanam

* Italicized key words indicate terms introduced and defined in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.

Support Articles

Characteristics of Fourth Graders

Fourth graders are now some of the older children in their elementary school. Thus, they often feel pretty mature, important, and more autonomous. They are willing to work independently and have less need for adult direction. They are ready to take on more responsibility and make decisions. Indeed, this is a good age to discuss the responsibilities of discipleship. Fourth graders may also develop particular interests in a hobby, sport, or activity, and they may take it very seriously.

Physical Characteristics

Girls are more physically mature than boys at this point. Some girls have begun pre-puberty and even puberty. Girls and boys alike may be more temperamental and brooding. But, at the same time, they are still high energy and like to play outside and with friends. They may also enjoy team sports.

Intellectual Characteristics

Fourth graders are able to do some abstract thinking and reasoning, but they still do best with concrete, hands-on learning. They like using books and references, and they have an interest in facts and figures. They also have a developing conscience and definitely have a sense of what is fair, right, and just. These interests make it a good time to have them delve more deeply into the Scripture stories that have moral lessons, as most of them do. For instance, a fourth grader will be intrigued by the fact that Jesus tells Peter he should forgive not seven times but seventy times seven times. Why would Jesus ask us to keep forgiving someone who keeps sinning?

Also, nine- to ten-year-olds have the capacity to complete a more complicated and prolonged project. So, for example, with guidance from you, a small group can take a Scripture story and act it out as a skit.

Social-Emotional Characteristics

This is an age for high emotions and dramatic intensity, especially among girls. Fourth graders are often critical of themselves and others and sometimes express this inappropriately by talking about friends and classmates. Many fourth graders are interested in the opposite sex. Even when this is the case, however, most still want to stay within their same-sex groups for socializing. In addition, they like working in small groups and can even come to a group decision. Again, emphasizing that Jesus wants us not only to welcome one another as friends but also to love and help one another can lead fourth graders to develop empathy and respect for those they may not naturally like.

Summary

These are all general characteristics of fourth graders. Although these characteristics might not describe every child, an awareness of these qualities will help you to plan developmentally appropriate learning activities for your group. The more you learn about the spectrum of child development, the more you will understand where the children you teach have “come from” and where they are headed in their next phase of development. Each child develops at his or her own pace, and it is likely an uneven pace at that! One child may be far ahead intellectually but a little behind socially. Another child’s social development may be right on target, but he or she may face challenges in thinking skills. The activities in this guide are varied so that you are sure to find some to meet almost every child’s need to grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

One way to give every child a chance to grow and develop in your classroom, even if a group meets only once a week, is to give each child a job. Line leader, paper passer, prayer leader, movement leader, Bible carrier—whatever small job is available should be assigned for one session (or one week), and then reassigned for the next one. Keep a running list of assignments so that each child gets a turn at doing each job. Write the assignments for each session on the board. All elementary-age children love to help and enjoy feeling appreciated, and you will be rewarded with a smooth-running group of proud and happy children.

Biblical Literacy and the Teaching of Scripture

As a teacher or catechist of Catholic children, you know the power that Scripture has to touch children's hearts and inspire their moral and spiritual lives. To remind us to draw on this power in catechesis, the Church's teaching documents always call us to make the Bible an integral part of our ministry.

Catechesis should take Sacred Scripture as its inspiration, its fundamental curriculum, and its end because it strengthens faith, nourishes the soul, and nurtures the spiritual life (*National Directory for Catechesis*, p. 70).

Likewise, the holy synod forcefully and specifically exhorts all the Christian faithful, especially those who live the religious life, to learn "the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Phil 3:8) by frequent reading of the divine scriptures (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation [Dei Verbum]*, 1965, 25).

Through your catechetical ministry with children, you equip them with the essential knowledge and skills required for their lifelong journey of faith. When it comes to the Bible, you want to begin teaching the knowledge and skills that will help the children to ultimately become biblically literate adults. So let's start by describing biblically literate adults.

Biblically literate adults are comfortable reading and using the Bible. They know how the books of the Bible are arranged and how to quickly and easily locate a specific book or passage. They have a solid understanding of the biblical story of salvation history, and they are familiar with key people and events and how God's saving power worked through those people and events. Biblically literate adults understand that any book or passage from Scripture must be understood in its proper context. When reading the Bible, they consider things like the literary genre, the culture of the time, the original author's intended message, how the message fits into the bigger picture of salvation history, and how the passage is understood in the Church's Tradition.

We can help children to become biblically literate adults by working on three specific goals:

- A. Help them to become knowledgeable and comfortable using the Bible.
- B. Help them to know and understand the biblical story of salvation history.
- C. Help them to understand how to interpret biblical books and passages in their proper contexts.

Goal A is the **Access** goal. Goal B is the **Big-Picture** goal. Goal C is the **Context** goal. Taken together, these can be called the ABCs of biblical literacy.

The three goals of biblical literacy follow a certain progression. The **Access** goal is the most basic; its competencies create a foundation for working on the **Big-Picture** and **Context** goals. The **Big Picture** competencies build on the **Access** competencies and create greater knowledge that the **Context** competencies can then build on. All three goals are closely related; working on any one goal usually reinforces the others.

As a general guideline, with elementary-age children, your primary focus should be developing the **Access** competencies and introducing some **Big-Picture** knowledge. You will probably not focus on the **Context** competencies, because they require more abstract reasoning than most young children are capable of. However, you will use specific **Context** skills and knowledge competencies as you teach children about the meaning of specific Bible stories.

Let's take a closer look at these three goals and how you can help children to develop the competencies needed to become proficient in them. (For a more detailed look at these three goals, read *Biblical Literacy Made Easy: A Practical Guide for Catechists, Teachers, and Youth Ministers*, Saint Mary's Press, 2008.)

Access Goal: Helping Children Become Knowledgeable and Comfortable Using the Bible

Many children do not know how to use the Bible. They may have heard Bible stories, and maybe they were even given a Bible for their First Communion. But they do not know how the Bible is structured or how to find specific passages or stories within it. By focusing on the competencies of the **Access** goal, we can help children to become more familiar and comfortable with the Bible.

The most critical practice for achieving the **Access** goal—a practice so basic that many people overlook it—is simply having the children *use* the Bible. Too often children read Scripture passages as quotations in textbooks. There may be only one Bible in the classroom, so the catechist looks up the passage and then hands the opened Bible to a young person to read. These practices do not encourage children to learn basic biblical literacy skills. If young Catholics are to become comfortable in accessing the Bible, they must use it regularly. Every classroom or meeting space must have enough Bibles for each student to use. What we model as important has a much greater impact than what we say is important!

To help children become comfortable in using the Bible, we can teach them two important competencies: (1) knowing the Bible's structure and (2) locating a passage in the Bible.

Knowing the Bible's Structure

The Bible is not one book; rather, it is a collection, or even a small library, of books and letters. These books are organized in a specific and intentional structure, sort of like books might be grouped in sections on a bookshelf. At the beginning of *The Catholic Children's Bible*, these sections are briefly explained and visually presented in the section called "The Bible Is Like a Bookshelf." Here is a slightly more detailed explanation of those sections:

- **The Old Testament** is the first major section of the Bible. Its books are primarily about God's relationship with his Chosen People, the Israelites (or the Jews).
 - The first part of the Old Testament is called the **Pentateuch**. The stories in these books are the heart of the Old Testament.
 - The second part of the Old Testament is called the **Historical Books**. These books recount how the Chosen People settled in the Promised Land and how they eventually became a kingdom ruled by great and not-so-great kings.
 - The third part of the Old Testament is called the **Wisdom Books**. These books teach some of the collected wisdom of the Israelites.
 - The fourth part of the Old Testament is called the **Books of the Prophets**. These contain the warnings and consolations of some of Israel's prophets.
- **The New Testament** is the second major section of the Bible. Its books tell how God fulfilled the Old Testament promises by sending us the Savior, Jesus Christ.
 - The first part of the New Testament is the four **Gospels** and the **Acts of the Apostles**. The Gospels have the stories about Christ's life and teaching, and the Book of Acts tells us about how the Church spread after Christ's Ascension.
 - The second part of the New Testament is the **Letters**. Early Church leaders sent these letters, some to certain individuals and others to specific Christian communities.
 - The last book of the New Testament is the **Book of Revelation**. It is a unique collection of prophecies and symbolic visions.

Refer to these sections when the children look up passages in the Bible. Say things like, "This Bible story is from the Book of Exodus, which is in the Old Testament of the Bible," or "This Bible story is from the Gospel of Mark. The Gospels have stories about the life of Jesus and the things he taught."

Locating a Passage in the Bible

The simple system for finding a particular passage in the Bible is explained in the beginning of *The Catholic Children's Bible* in the section called "How to Find a Bible Passage." After explaining this system to the children, help them to develop the skill of locating Bible passages through practice, practice, practice! This skill will take time for children to master, but it is crucial for lifelong Bible reading. You will find help in teaching navigation skills to children in the section of this catechist guide titled "Helping Children Navigate *The Catholic Children's Bible*."

Big-Picture Goal: Helping Children Know and Understand the Biblical Story of Salvation History

Because of our Lectionary-based liturgies, Catholics are often familiar with most of the important people and stories of history. But if liturgies are a person's only contact with Scripture, she or he may not see how those individual stories fit into the overarching biblical story of God's covenant relationship with the human race, which we also call salvation history. Much of Catholic theology is based on the presumption that we know and understand the overarching story of salvation history.

Salvation history is often organized into different periods to help us understand God's saving work. In all relevant Saint Mary's Press® resources, eight historical periods are named to describe the arc of salvation history:

1. Primeval History (the figurative stories in the Book of Genesis)
2. The Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob)
3. Egypt and the Exodus (Moses and the desert experience of Israel)
4. Settling the Promised Land (Joshua and the Twelve Tribes of Israel)
5. The Kingdoms of Judah and Israel (the time of the Prophets)
6. The Exile and Return (the Babylonian Captivity and restoration of the Temple)
7. The Life of Jesus Christ
8. The Early Christian Church

Understanding how each biblical book's story fits into this bigger history is the mark of a truly biblically literate person. This kind of knowledge grows with repetition and review. You can best help children develop this knowledge by exposing them to key people and events in Scripture. *The Catholic Children's Bible* helps you to do this by focusing on 125 key people and events in the Featured Stories on two-page spreads. Using these Featured Stories consistently with children will provide them an excellent foundation for knowing and understanding salvation history.

Context Goal: Helping Children Understand How to Interpret Bible Books and Passages in Their Proper Contexts

The **Context** goal is more subtle and complex than the **Access** and **Big-Picture** goals. Teachers typically do not work on the skills required to master this goal with young children. It requires a level of abstract thinking that this age-group is not yet capable of. However, teachers need to understand this goal in order to teach children the correct interpretation of the biblical stories they read.

This excerpt from the Second Vatican Council document *Divine Revelation* describes how to correctly interpret the Bible.

Seeing that, in sacred scripture, God speaks through human beings in human fashion, it follows that the interpreters of sacred scripture, if they are to ascertain what God has wished to communicate to us, should carefully search out the meaning which the sacred writers really had in mind, the meaning which God had thought well to manifest through the medium of their words. (12)

This excerpt states that we must do two things when interpreting a Bible story or teaching. First, we must seek to understand what the original human author intended to communicate. The Church Fathers called this the “literal sense” of Scripture. Second, we must seek to understand what God is revealing through the story or passage. The Church Fathers called this the fuller sense or the “spiritual sense” of Scripture. Often the literal sense and the spiritual sense of a passage are closely related. But in some Scripture passages, God reveals, through the spiritual sense, a deeper and more universal truth than the human author originally understood or intended.

Paragraphs 109–119 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* further explain how to apply these principles. These paragraphs describe the contexts we must consider when interpreting any particular passage of the Bible, which is why we describe this as the Context goal.

- **Historical context** To understand the full importance or meaning of a certain event, we need to know the larger historical situation the event occurred within.
- **Cultural context** Sometimes the true meaning of certain actions or words makes sense only when we understand the cultural practices or beliefs of the time.
- **Literary genre** The Bible is composed of many different types of literature. We must know which type we are reading and realize that each genre has its own rules for interpretation.
- **Unity of the whole Bible** When taken as a whole, God’s revealed truth is presented in the Bible without error. This is the case in many Old Testament passages, whose Christian meaning can be completely and accurately understood only in light of the New Testament revelation.
- **Living Tradition of the Church** To fully understand some Bible passages, we must take into account how the Magisterium—the official teaching authority of the Church—has interpreted the meaning of those passages.
- **Coherence of the truths of faith** When it comes to religious or moral truth, the Bible cannot contradict itself or any other revealed truth of our Tradition.

If we do not interpret the Bible using these contexts, we can easily misinterpret God's Revelation. This is the danger of biblical fundamentalism, an approach to biblical interpretation that Catholics are cautioned to avoid. In its extreme forms, biblical fundamentalism leads people to false beliefs, such as the belief that God created the universe in six twenty-four-hour days.

Even though you will not necessarily mention these different contexts when working with young children, the Featured Stories in *The Catholic Children's Bible* provide trustworthy tools to help children correctly understand the contexts of 125 Bible stories. The engaging art in *The Catholic Children's Bible* provides strong visual cues about the human authors' intentions. The Tell It! panels provide children the opportunity to retell the story using the visual prompts so that they begin to process its meaning. And the short Understand It! panels explain what God is revealing through the story, drawing on the contexts of the unity of the Bible, Tradition, and the coherence of the truths of faith.

Helping Children Navigate *The Catholic Children's Bible*

Helping children become familiar with the structure of the Bible so that they can easily locate specific books and passages is a foundational part of building biblical literacy. *The Catholic Children's Bible* offers multiple tools to help children more readily navigate their way around the Bible.

Color Coding

When you look at the bottom of *The Catholic Children's Bible* or open it to any page, you will notice bands of color along the bottoms of the pages. These colors delineate the major divisions of the Bible.

Bible Section	Bible Books	Band Color
The Pentateuch (or Torah)	Genesis through Deuteronomy	aqua
The Historical Books	Joshua through Second Maccabees	brown
The Wisdom Books	Job through Sirach	purple
The Books of the Prophets	Isaiah through Malachi	orange
The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles	Matthew through John and the Acts of the Apostles	blue
The Letters and Revelation	Romans through Revelation	green
Prayer and Bible Helps	back of the book	yellow

The same colors are shown in the table of contents (pages 3–6) as bands of color behind the name of each section of the Bible. They are also repeated in “The Bible Is Like a Bookshelf” image on page 15 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*. This image can be helpful in introducing children to the structure of the Bible and can be another resource to help them identify where a particular book of the Bible is located.

Page Tabs

You will also notice that the table of contents (pages 3–6) indicates a specific color for each book of the Bible. These colors are matched with tabs that are provided along the sides of each page within the Bible. A chapter number is also included in the tab to indicate the core chapter that is featured on each page.

Finding Specific Passages in the Bible

The article “How to Find a Bible Passage” on page 13 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* presents the traditional method of finding specific Bible passages by the name of the book, the chapter, and the verse. This is basic information for anyone who wishes to understand Scripture citations and use them to locate a particular Bible passage.

Navigating the Featured Stories

One of the most attractive elements of *The Catholic Children’s Bible* is its Featured Stories. These stories encapsulate a Scripture story or passage, illustrate it, and surround it with the helpful Understand It!, Live It!, and Tell It! teaching aids. In addition, new or unfamiliar words are printed in bold type and presented with definitions. A full list of the 125 Featured Stories that are offered within the Bible is presented on pages 7–11 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible*.

When the children encounter a Featured Story, such as the one presented on page 122, for example, they will see a green leaf at the beginning and end of the Scripture text. This indicates that this is a portion of text repeated from the main body of the Bible. To identify where this text comes from, the children can simply look at the Scripture citation or citations above the Scripture text. In many cases, this text for the Featured Story is a shortened version of a longer Scripture citation. The children can find the “full story” citation in their Bibles and will see two green leaves that indicate where the full story starts and stops (see pages 120–121).

The Dark Passages of Scripture

In helping children read and understand the Bible, teachers must be aware that some Bible stories are not child-friendly. The accounts of incest, rape, genocide, and holy war in the sacred pages of Scripture can come as a surprise for many beginning Bible readers. In his apostolic exhortation "The Word of the Lord" ("*Verbum Domini*," November 2010), Pope Benedict XVI called these stories the "dark" passages of the Bible. Here is what the Holy Father said regarding these passages:

In discussing the relationship between the Old and the New Testaments, the Synod also considered those passages in the Bible which, due to the violence and immorality they occasionally contain, prove obscure and difficult. Here it must be remembered first and foremost that *biblical revelation is deeply rooted in history*. God's plan is manifested *progressively* and it is accomplished slowly, in *successive stages* and despite human resistance. God chose a people and patiently worked to guide and educate them. Revelation is suited to the cultural and moral level of distant times and thus describes facts and customs, such as cheating and trickery, and acts of violence and massacre, without explicitly denouncing the immorality of such things. This can be explained by the historical context, yet it can cause the modern reader to be taken aback, especially if he or she fails to take account of the many "dark" deeds carried out down the centuries, and also in our own day. In the Old Testament, the preaching of the prophets vigorously challenged every kind of injustice and violence, whether collective or individual, and thus became God's way of training his people in preparation for the Gospel. So it would be a mistake to neglect those passages of Scripture that strike us as problematic. Rather, we should be aware that the correct interpretation of these passages requires a degree of expertise, acquired through a training that interprets the texts in their historical-literary context and within the Christian perspective which has as its ultimate hermeneutical key "the Gospel and the new commandment of Jesus Christ brought about in the paschal mystery."¹ I encourage scholars and pastors to help all the faithful to approach these passages through an interpretation which enables their meaning to emerge in the light of the mystery of Christ. (42)

In this teaching, Pope Benedict emphasized the following points:

- The Bible does not shy away from telling about the worst things that humans do to one another—these are the very things that Jesus Christ came to save us from. Unfortunately, these evil acts continue even into our time.
- The biblical author does not always explicitly say that a particular action is immoral; at the time he was writing, these actions might not have yet been seen as immoral (such as the killing of whole groups of people) or the biblical author may have presumed the reader knew that these were immoral actions (such as Lot’s daughters having sexual relations with their drunken father). Because God’s Revelation is “manifested *progressively*” and “is accomplished slowly, in *successive stages*,” the preaching of the prophets and, ultimately, the teaching of Jesus Christ help us see the true moral meaning of these actions.
- Properly understanding these passages requires the help of people trained in biblical interpretation, such as pastors and biblical scholars.

So what does this mean for you as a teacher of children when it comes to these dark passages of Scripture? The best advice is to avoid these passages completely, because they can be too disturbing and confusing for young and innocent minds. *The Catholic Children’s Bible* does not use any of these stories as Featured Stories, so you do not have to worry about coming across any dark stories when you use these special two-page spreads.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Unit 1

Our Covenant with God

Chapter 1

God Makes a Promise 42

Chapter 2

We Celebrate God's Care for Us 50

Chapter 3

God's People Promise to Live the Covenant . . 58

Chapter 4

We Promise to Care for the Earth 66

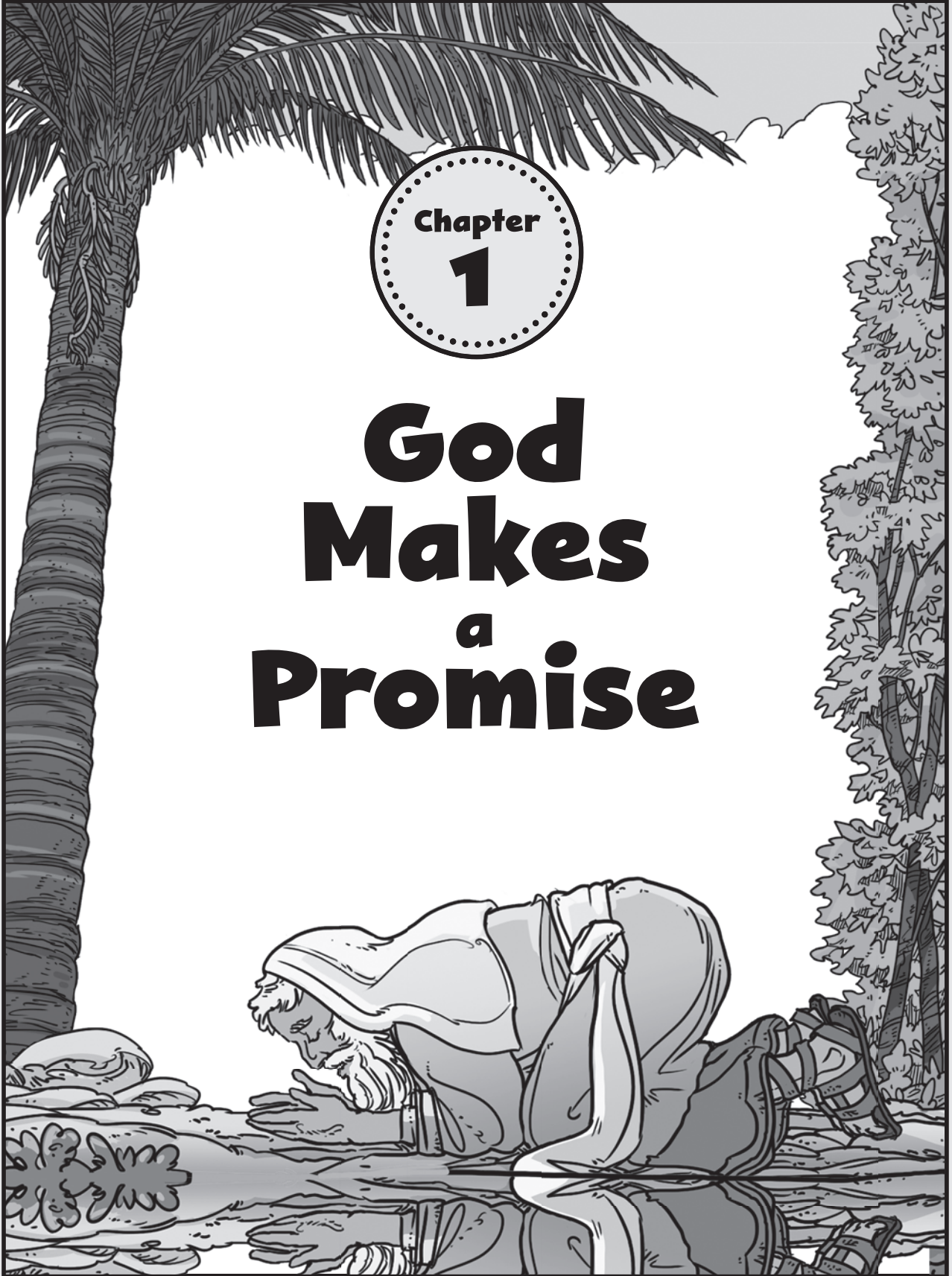
Chapter 5

We Are Part of a New Covenant 74

Chapter

1

God Makes a Promise




 Chapter
1

Lesson at a Glance

Chapter 1

Scripture Focus

Genesis 17:1, 3–8

Lesson Goals

- to define the word *covenant* as a serious agreement between God and people
- to explain that God made a covenant with Abraham
- to state that because of Abraham's faith, he became the father of the Jewish People

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

59–63, 72, 144–147, 762, 1222, 2570–2572

Key Words

covenant, ancestor, descendants, solemn, faith

Music Suggestions

- "Promises," by Sanctus Real (Sparrow Records)
- "Promise (Live)," by Jarod Espy (Jarod Espy)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 1 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- index cards
- music for Musical Chairs
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Throughout the Old Testament, we see how God makes covenants with people. These covenants are more than just promises. God's covenants are solemn agreements between others and himself that require full commitment. They are not one-sided with only God fulfilling his side of the agreement. People must also do their part.

In the covenant with Abram, God promised Abram many descendants. In return God asked Abram for faithfulness. God's decision to change Abram's name to Abraham was important because it signified a change in Abram's purpose. The name Abraham means "father of many nations." God chose Abraham to be the leader of God's people.

God fulfilled his promise and gave Abraham and Sarah a son, Isaac, and many descendants. And because of his faithfulness, Abraham became the father of many nations in one faith. How might our own faithfulness lead to great things?



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 1 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to brainstorm promises or agreements that they have made with friends or family. Examples might include a family promise of a vacation or a special outing if the children do all their chores without complaining, or time to play with a friend once a child finishes his or her homework. Write the children's answers on the board.
- Ask the following questions:
 - Have you always kept your promises?
 - What happens when you don't keep your side of the agreement?
 - Why is it important to keep your promises?
- Tell the children that today they are going to learn what it means to enter into a **solemn** promise or agreement with God. Explain that *solemn* means serious. Tell them that this kind of serious promise or agreement is called a *covenant*. Explain that God has made covenants with his people to help us know what is right and how to follow God together.
- Tell the group that the Old Testament in the Bible describes many of God's covenants with his people. Explain that today they will learn about a covenant God made with Abraham.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Genesis 17:1–9 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 43). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 44. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 44–45. Invite them to describe what they see in the art framing the pages.
- Invite a volunteer to read the title on page 44.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What was Abraham’s name before God spoke to him? (*Abram*)
 - What is God’s promise to Abraham called? (*a covenant*)
 - What did God promise Abraham? (*God promised to make Abraham the “ancestor of many nations” and that some of his descendants would be kings.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. obey, right; 2. covenant; 3. Abraham; 4. ancestor; 5. descendants, kings*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 45, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension. Explain that the word *nations* used here means different peoples, not necessarily countries.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - God made an agreement, or covenant, with Abram.
 - God promised that people, kings, and nations would come from Abram.
 - As a sign of this agreement, God renamed him Abraham. Abraham means “father of many nations.”
 - God kept his promises. Jesus was one of Abraham’s descendants.
- Remind the children that God always keeps his promises. Explain that he loves us and wants what is best for us. Tell the group that covenants are an important way God has shown his love for his people.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 45, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to reflect quietly for a minute on ways they can obey God today.
- Invite volunteers to suggest ways they can obey and follow God.
- Encourage the children to take another minute of silence to promise God to do their best every day.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 45.
- Invite the children to find a partner. Then ask them to work with their partners to retell the Bible reading using the images. Allow 2 minutes, and then invite volunteers to explain the images. (*Image 1 shows Abram bowing down before God. Image 2 shows the descendants of Abraham. Image 3 shows the ancestors who became kings. Image 4 shows the land of Canaan on a map.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Promise Exchange

- Distribute the index cards to the children.
- Instruct the children to write out a promise to God to work on this week. Tell them that these promises should be general ideas that anyone in class could promise to follow, such as promising to do a chore without being reminded, or promising to start the morning with a prayer. Ask the children not to write their names on their cards.
- Allow 2–3 minutes for the children to write. Then ask them to fold their cards in half so no one can see what they wrote.
- Invite them to arrange their chairs or desks in a circle and place their index cards on their chairs or desks. Then ask them to stand in a circle surrounding the chairs.
- Explain the next part of the activity:
 - We are going to play a game like Musical Chairs.
 - When I play the music, walk to your right in time with the music. Keep walking as long as the music plays.
 - When I stop the music, sit in the seat nearest you.
 - The paper on that seat is what you must promise to do this week.
 - Ready? Let's begin!
- Play the music and conduct the activity.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children to take the cards they landed on and then return to their original seats.
- Invite volunteers to read aloud their promises to the class. If you sense that a child is not comfortable with the promise he or she received, or cannot reasonably fulfill it, reassure the entire group that anyone can write his or her own promise to keep during the week.
- Conclude by explaining that just as God always keeps his promises, it is important that we keep our promises to God. God doesn't do all the work. We must do our part too.

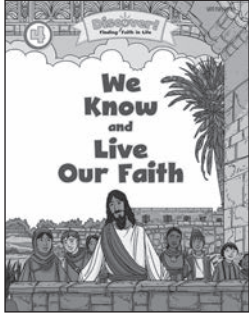
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 49 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain how a covenant is different from a promise, using these or similar words:
 - In a covenant, both sides (two people, or God and us) agree to do something.
 - It is a solemn or serious agreement that requires both sides to keep their promises to each other.
- Write the definition of *covenant* from *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 44) on the board.
- Explain why it was important that God chose a new name for Abram that means "father of many nations." (You may wish to write the definition of *ancestor* from *The Catholic Children's Bible* on the board.)
 - His new name, Abraham, signified his new purpose.
 - God was choosing Abraham to be the ancestor and leader of God's people.
- Tell the children that Abraham is our father in faith. Explain that we are all part of God's family, and we are all sons and daughters of Abraham. Tell them that we are all connected because we are part of the Church, God's people.
- Tell the children that when we follow God at all times, even when we don't always understand God's ways, that is called **faith**. Use the following points to explain further:
 - Abraham is called our father in faith because he obeyed and believed God when God asked him to—even when he didn't understand how God could keep his promises.
 - Abraham kept his own promise to believe God even when it wasn't easy. God chose Abraham to be a blessing to all nations because of his faith.
 - When God made this covenant with Abraham, Abraham and his wife did not have a son, and they were very old. They did not understand how Abraham could be the ancestor of many nations when they did not have any children.
 - Abraham had faith and believed God's promises. God kept his promise and gave Abraham and his wife Sarah a son. Because of his faith, Abraham became the father of the Jewish People.
- Explain that Jesus was a descendant of Abraham. (You may wish to write the definition of *descendant* from *The Catholic Children's Bible* on the board.)
- Remind the children that God always keeps his promises. Explain that even when we don't understand how, we can have faith that God knows what is best for us. Tell them that God will always provide for us.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How is a covenant different from just a promise? (*In a covenant, both sides make promises to each other. It is a serious agreement.*)
 - What is it called when we follow God when we don't always understand why? (*faith*)
 - What are we part of that connects us together? (*God's family, the Church*)

- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. agreement, 2. faith, 3. Canaan, 4. Jesus, 5. Church*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein), and encourage the children to say, “Saint Teresa Benedicta, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Covenant with Noah” + activity, pages 18–19
- “The Covenant with Abraham,” page 20

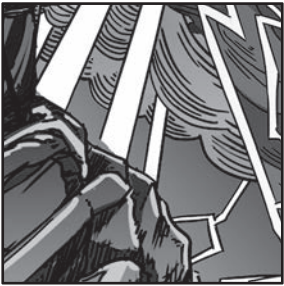
Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - A covenant is a serious agreement between God and people.
 - God made a covenant with Abraham.
 - Because of Abraham’s faith, he became the father of the Jewish people.
- Invite the children to place sticker 1 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 1

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” and allow a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1994 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and read together the Act of Faith.
- Close with the Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- none

Abraham Says (15 minutes)

- Explain to the children that the group will play a game similar to Simon Says.
- Invite the children to stand up, and explain that you will ask them to follow what you say. Explain that they should follow your instruction only when you say “Abraham Says.”
- Offer Abraham Says instructions that involve faith-filled actions, such as praying the Hail Mary together, or sharing a sign of peace. For the non-Abraham instructions, suggest actions that are not faithful, such as making faces at each other or pouting. Play a couple rounds of the game depending on class size.
- Remind the children of the importance of following God in faith, as Abraham did.
- Ask the children if anyone had trouble following along. Invite them to share what they could do to follow better next time.

Materials Needed

- construction paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- materials for decorating, such as scissors, glue, stickers, etc.

Help with Promises (15 minutes)

- Explain to the children that prayer is a conversation with God. Tell them that when we communicate with God as Abraham did, we can better prepare to follow God.
- Distribute the construction paper, drawing materials, and materials for decorating.
- Invite the children to think of some promises they can make to God. Have them compose their own prayers thanking God for loving them, making their promises to God, and then asking for his help to keep their promises. Then have them use the art supplies to create cards with their prayers.
- Invite volunteers to share their prayers with the class.
- Remind the children to take their cards home and put them in a special place. Encourage them to reread the cards when they say their night prayers.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Sons and Daughters of Abraham (15 minutes)

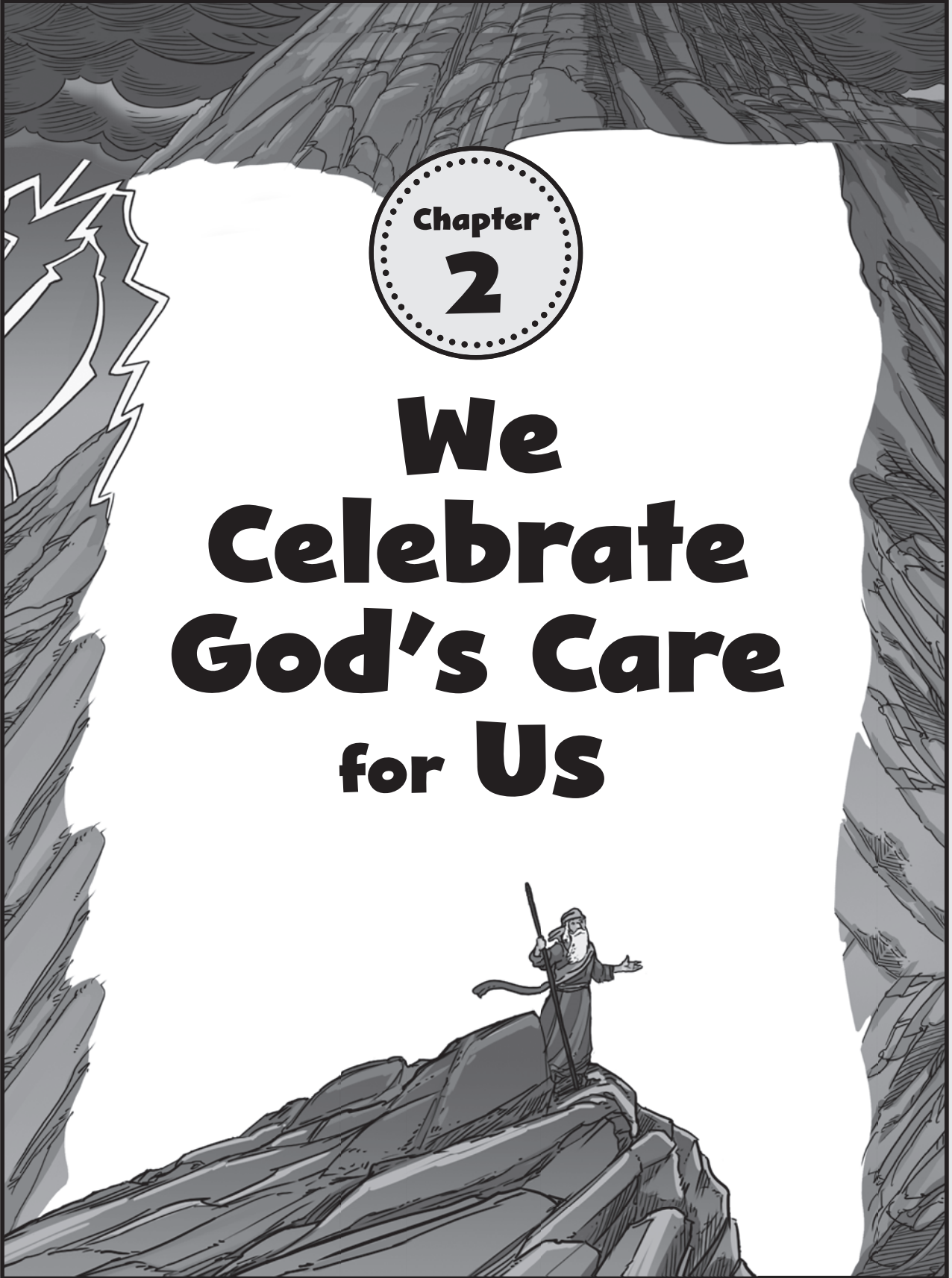
- Show the video “Father Abraham had many Sons—Kids Praise & Worship Bible Song” (YouTube, 2:54) to the group.
- Invite the children to do the motions along with the animation. You can repeat the video to give the children a chance to learn the motions and follow along better.
- Tell the children that Abraham is our father in faith. Then explain that we are all part of God’s family, and we are all sons and daughters of Abraham. We are all connected because we are part of the Church, God’s people.



Chapter

2

We Celebrate God's Care for Us




**Chapter
2**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Exodus 20:2–3, 6–8, 12–17

Lesson Goals

- to explain that God made a covenant with Moses and the Israelites
- to identify that the Ten Commandments are rules from God to help his people be safe and happy
- to state that when we obey the Ten Commandments, we are celebrating God's care for us

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

2052–2195

Key Words

worship, generation, accuse,
Ten Commandments, Israelites, Sabbath

Music Suggestions

- "One True God (2016 Egypt VBS Theme Song)," by Group's VBS (Group Publishing)
- "Lord, I Need You," by Matt Maher (Provident Label Group LLC)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 2 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Today's chapter focuses on the Ten Commandments and the promise God made with Moses and the Israelites. God wrote the Ten Commandments and gave them directly to Moses. As commandments from God, they apply to all of God's children, which includes us today! These commandments are "rules of love" that show God's care for us. By giving us the Ten Commandments, God is showing us the way to peace, happiness, and eternal life with him in Heaven.

The first three commandments, which are the focus this lesson, teach us how to love God. They teach us to believe in God and to keep God at the center of our lives. They teach us to honor God's name with reverence. They also teach us to keep the Lord's Day holy by participating in the Eucharist and by making Sunday a truly special day of the week. The last seven commandments, which are the focus of the next chapter, help us understand what it means to truly love our neighbor. By following all of the Ten Commandments, we can know the true happiness and peace for which God has created us.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 2 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Select a volunteer to read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to share some of their family rules with the class. Write some of their ideas on the board. Try to elicit several ideas for the group to review.
- Ask the group to look at the list and then consider these questions:
 - Why do you think your families have these rules?
 - What happens when you don't follow these rules? Do you feel happy or sad? Does someone else feel happy or sad?
- Tell the children that today they will learn about the covenant God made with Moses and the Israelites. Remind the group that covenants are serious agreements between two people or between God and his people.
- Explain that today they will learn about the **Ten Commandments**, which are rules that Moses and the **Israelites**—God's people, descended from Abraham—promised to follow as part of their covenant with God. Tell the group that the Ten Commandments are rules that we continue to follow today as God's people.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Exodus 19:16–20:17 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 131 and 134). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 132. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the other pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 132–133 and to describe what they see.
- Invite a volunteer to read the title on page 132.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children, or invite a volunteer to read. Explain to the group that the **Sabbath**, or the Lord's Day, is a special day of worship and rest (Saturday for Jews, Sunday for Christians) dedicated to God.

- Ask the children questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who gave these rules to Moses? (*God*)
 - What are some of the rules that God gave to his people, the Israelites? (*Answers may include any of the commandments, simply restated.*)
 - Why do you think God gave them these rules? (*Answers may vary.*)
- Invite the children to turn to page 1988 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* and review the Ten Commandments printed there. If time permits, invite a volunteer to read them.
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 3, 5, 1, 6, 2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 8*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 133 to the children.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - God gave his people the Ten Commandments to keep them safe and happy, just like your parents have rules that keep you safe and happy.
 - The first three commandments teach us how to love God.
 - The next seven commandments teach us how to love other people.
 - Following the Ten Commandments will prepare us to live with God forever in Heaven.
- Explain to the children that the Ten Commandments were part of a new covenant between Moses and God, just like, as we learned in the previous lesson, Abraham and God made a covenant. Remind the group that covenants are a way that God shows his love for his people because God loves us and always wants the best for us.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 133, or have a volunteer read it.
- Explain that there are many ways to obey each commandment. Tell them that, for example, the Fifth Commandment, "You shall not kill," also means that we must be kind to others and not say mean or hurtful things to anyone.
- Ask the children to spend a few minutes thinking quietly about ways in which they follow the Ten Commandments every day.
- Invite volunteers to share some responses aloud.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 133.
- Invite them to describe what they see in each image. (*Image 1 shows God talking to Moses. Image 2 shows the people worshipping God. Image 3 shows a boy respecting his mother by helping her.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Red Light, Green Light

- Prepare your space by clearing away any hazards that could be tripped on. Ideally you should have an open space to play this game, such as a hallway or a part of the classroom that does not have desks or chairs. An outdoor or gym space may also be used.
- Remind children of the safety rules: no running (walking and big steps are okay) and respect for others (no pushing or tripping others).
- Choose one volunteer to be the leader who will shout out the “Red light!” and “Green light!” commands.
- Have the leader face one wall of the room. Have the remaining children stand in a single line across the opposite side of the room, facing the leader.
- Instruct the leader to stay turned toward the wall when he or she shouts, “Green light!” The leader will turn around only when he or she shouts, “Red light!”
- Explain the rules to the group: Green light means “go”: the children can walk or take big steps toward the leader. Red light means “stop”: the children must immediately freeze. If the leader catches a classmate moving during a “red light,” that classmate is out and must sit down. Whoever makes it to the leader first wins.
- Play two or three rounds of the activity, depending on your class size and classroom space.

Process the Activity

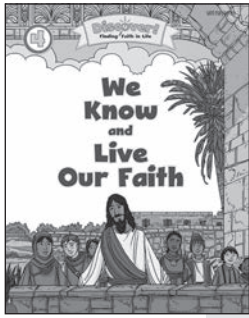
- Ask the following questions:
 - How would this game have gone if you did not know the rules? What if there were no rules? (*Everyone would not know what to do, or everyone would have made up his or her own rules. Somebody might have gotten hurt.*)
- Remind the children that when we follow God’s rules, we are able to continue moving toward God. When we disobey God’s rules we stop moving toward him, just like when someone in the class had to sit down because he or she didn’t follow the leader’s commands. Explain that God gave us *his* rules, the Ten Commandments, to keep us safe and to show his love for us.
- Invite the children to share ways in which our actions can help or hurt our relationship with God.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 57 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that in any covenant, both sides must promise to do something and must keep their promises. Write “Covenant with Moses and the Israelites” on the board.
- Explain that by giving Moses the Ten Commandments, God created a new covenant with Moses and the Israelites. Share the following points:
 - God himself gave these rules, the Ten Commandments, to Moses.
 - As part of this covenant, God promised to care for the Israelites and keep them safe and happy. Remember, because of the covenant God made with Abraham, the Israelites were very special to God. They were God’s Chosen People: his sons and daughters. Just like each family today has rules, God gave his “family rules” to Moses and the Israelites in the Ten Commandments.
 - To stay safe and happy, the Israelites promised to follow these rules. They were free to follow them and lead a good life.
- Remind the group that today we still follow the Ten Commandments. Use the following points to explain:
 - The Ten Commandments show us how to live a good life and avoid sin.
 - When we follow the Commandments, we honor, worship, and obey God, and celebrate God’s care for us.
 - We are called to follow the Ten Commandments in our everyday life.
 - The Ten Commandments prepare us to live with God forever in Heaven.
- Invite the children to review the first three commandments by reading Exodus 20:3, 6–8, on page 132. Then explain the first three commandments further:
 - The first three commandments require that we love God above all things.
 - You may be thinking, That’s easy! But is it? Today many distractions compete with our attention to God.
 - Keeping our focus on God helps us draw closer to him in holiness and true happiness, even when it seems like not following God would be more fun.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, and elicit ideas for how they can apply the first three commandments to their life:
 - Are the rules that God gave to Moses still important today? Why or why not? *(Yes, they remain important because they help us live a good life and avoid sin; they prepare us to live with God forever in Heaven.)*
 - What do we celebrate when we obey the Ten Commandments? *(We celebrate God’s care for us.)*
 - What are some ways that we can show God that he is number one in our life, following the first three commandments? *(Answers may vary.)*
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Moses the Patriarch, and encourage the children to say, “Moses the Patriarch, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Covenant with Moses,” page 21
- “The Old Law,” page 48
- “The Ten Commandments,” page 49
- “The Meaning of the Ten Commandments,” page 51
- “The First Commandment,” “The Second Commandment,” and “The Third Commandment,” pages 52–55

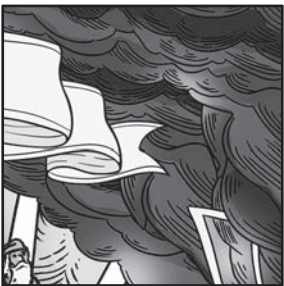
Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - God made a covenant with Moses and the Israelites.
 - The Ten Commandments are rules from God to help his people be safe and happy.
 - When we obey the Ten Commandments, we are celebrating God’s care for us.
- Invite the children to place sticker 2 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 2

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1994 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and pray together the Act of Love.
- End with the Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- construction paper
- markers or crayons
- materials for decorating, such as stickers, glue, glitter, etc.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

God Is Number One (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to spend a few minutes thinking about what God has given them.
- Distribute the blank paper, and invite the children to compose a prayer thanking God for his gifts to them. In their prayers, the children should show how God is number one in their lives.
- Distribute the construction paper, drawing materials, and materials for decorating. Instruct the children to write their prayers on the construction paper and then decorate their prayer cards.
- Invite volunteers to share their prayers with the class.
- Remind the children to put these cards in a special place and use them in their prayers at home.

Put God First! (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Kids' Survival Tip #1—Put God First" (YouTube, 3:05) to the group.
- Discuss the experiment that the video features, and explore with the group how the experiment shows us how God should be first in our lives.
- Ask the children some questions for review, such as the following:
 - What happens when the kid in the video tries to put the big stuff in the bowl last?
 - What happens when he puts the big thing in first?
 - Why is it important to make room for the big things first?
- Invite the group to recall the three things we need to do to make it through every week, according to the video.

Sing and Dance Along: No Other God (15 minutes)

- Show the video "No Other God" (YouTube, 3:33), published by Mike Bradshaw, to the group. Encourage the children to dance along with the song.
- Ask the children what they thought of the video and what lesson they learned. Help them realize that the video is saying to put God first.
- Have the children share some ways in which God is first in their lives.
- Ask the children how the dance moves in the video showed the meaning of the song. Remind the children that our actions also speak louder than our words: we say what we mean and we do what we believe.

Chapter

3

God's People Promise to Live the Covenant




**Chapter
3**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Exodus 24:4–7, 12

Lesson Goals

- to review that God promised to be the God of the people of Israel
- to state that the people of Israel promised to obey the Ten Commandments
- to explain that we are part of this covenant with God

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

2196–2557

Key Words

altar, sacrifice, covenant

Music Suggestions

- “Soul on Fire,” by Third Day (Provident Label Group, LLC)
- “This Little Light of Mine,” by Rend Collective (Sparrow Records)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 3 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The last lesson presented the covenant between God and the Israelites by introducing the Ten Commandments and their function as “family rules.” This lesson now focuses on how God and his people agreed upon this covenant. Because a covenant is a solemn agreement between two sides, both sides must agree to it. To signify this agreement, an outward, visible action is needed.

In the case of the covenant in Exodus 24:1–12, God and the Israelites ratified their agreement by sacrificing an animal. This sacrifice prefigures (or looks ahead to) the saving sacrifice that Christ ultimately made, by giving up his life for us on the cross. Throughout these covenants with his people, God constantly gives hints and clues to prepare for the coming of Christ.

As we learned in the previous lesson, we are called to live out these Ten Commandments today. We are part of this covenant with God.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 3 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Recall what the group learned in the last two lessons by asking the children to share what they remember about covenants. Ask questions such as the following to help recall information:
 - What is a covenant? (*It is a serious agreement between two sides, or between God and his people.*)
 - How are covenants like a promise? How are they different? (*In a covenant, both sides exchange serious promises or agreements. It is more serious than a simple promise that one person makes to another.*)
 - Is a covenant one-sided or two-sided? Do both sides have to agree? (*It is two-sided. Both sides must offer solemn promises as part of the agreement.*)
- Ask the children to take a minute to remember some of the commandments. Invite volunteers to share the ones they remember. Write these on the board.
- Tell the children that today they will continue to learn about the covenant God made with the Israelites when he gave them the Ten Commandments. Today they will learn more about what this covenant meant to the Israelites and what it still means to us today.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Exodus 24:1–12 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 138–139). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 140. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 140–141.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did Moses build after he wrote down God's commands? (*Moses built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and he set up twelve stones.*)
 - What was written in the book of the covenant? (*the Lord's commands*)
 - What did the people of Israel promise to do? (*to obey the Lord and do everything that he commanded*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. altar, twelve; 2. sacrifices; 3. covenant; 4. obey, everything; 5. tablets*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 141, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension. Explain to the children that the Twelve Tribes of Israel were the twelve family groups descended from the sons of Jacob, the grandson of Abraham.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - When a covenant is made, special actions or words are used.
 - To symbolize the covenant between God and the Israelites, Moses built an altar with twelve stones. The twelve stones symbolized the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The Israelites offered sacrifices on this altar to God.
 - The Israelites accepted the Ten Commandments and promised to obey them.
 - By making this covenant, God became the God of the Israelites, and they became his people.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 141, or have a volunteer read it.
- Explain to the children that going to Mass is one way that we renew and celebrate our covenant with God today. Tell them that we remember how Jesus sacrificed his life for us, and we also offer our lives to God.
- Invite the children to suggest ways they can participate more fully in the Mass.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 141.
- Invite the children to find a partner. Invite them to retell the story to each other using the images. (*Image 1 shows Moses writing down the Lord's commands. Image 2 shows a burning sacrifice. Image 3 shows Moses reading the Lord's commands to the people. Image 4 shows the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Obey/Disobey Freeze Tag

- Ask the group to help prepare the space by clearing any hazards that could be tripped on. Ideally you should have an open space to play this game.
- Remind the children to tag gently and respectfully. You may also want to specify a no-running rule (unless you use an outside space). The children can walk or skip instead.
- Invite the group to play Obey/Disobey Freeze Tag. Invite two volunteers to be “It” to freeze people. Explain that to freeze someone, the two players who are “It” touch a child and say, “Disobey!” Any player who is not frozen can unfreeze another player by tagging that player and saying, “Obey!”
- Play the game for 2 minutes. Then invite two more volunteers to become the new “It” players, and continue the game for 2 more minutes.

Process the Activity

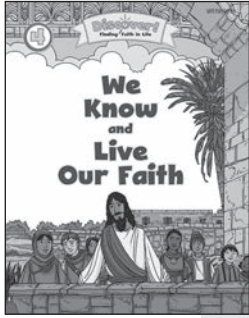
- Ask the children the following questions:
 - Do we usually think of obeying as making us more free or less free? (*Our culture usually thinks of obeying as making us less free—less free to follow our own wishes, for example.*)
 - How did this game turn that idea around? (*The “disobey” command froze people. The “obey” command unfroze them and they were free to move.*)
- Explain to the children that following God’s rules makes us free to grow in holiness, just like in the game. When we don’t follow God’s commands, we “freeze” and cannot grow in holiness.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 65 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Review the steps of a covenant in the Old Testament with the group. Explain that, first, both God and his people agree to do their part, and then they carry out some action that symbolizes this agreement. You may wish to remind the children that one of the things that symbolized the covenant with Abraham was that God changed Abraham's name from Abram to signify his new purpose.
- Ask the following questions:
 - What actions did the Israelites take to seal this covenant with God? *(They made sacrifices on the altar Moses built.)*
 - What did the Israelites agree to do? *(They promised God that they would obey everything he commanded.)*
- Tell the children that in this covenant with Moses and the Israelites, God first established that he was their God, and they were his people. Explain that he gave them the Ten Commandments as "family rules" to prepare his people to see him as their Father and to see themselves as his children. Tell the group that today we still follow the Ten Commandments because we are sons and daughters of God. We are part of this covenant with God.
- Have the children turn to page 1988 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*, and invite volunteers to read the last seven commandments.
- Remind the children that the first three commandments require love of God. Ask them what they think the last seven commandments require. *(They require us to love our neighbor.)*
- Take some time to explain how the Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth Commandments can be lived by children. Invite the class to share their ideas. Explain that the Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Commandments will be discussed in a later chapter.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did God promise in his covenant with the Israelites? *(God promised to be the God of the people of Israel.)*
 - What did the people of Israel promise as part of this covenant? *(They promised to obey God and do everything he commanded.)*
 - Why do we still follow the Ten Commandments today? *(Because we too are sons and daughters of God; the God of the Israelites is our God too.)*
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint Joseph, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Joseph, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Fourth Commandment” and “The Fifth Commandment,” pages 55–56
- “The Seventh Commandment” and “The Eighth Commandment,” pages 58–60

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - God promised to be the God of the people of Israel.
 - The people of Israel promised to obey the Ten Commandments.
 - We are part of this covenant with God.
- Invite the children to place sticker 3 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 3

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” and allow a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to pray the Act of Love, on page 1994 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- slips of paper with the text of the Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth Commandments (one commandment per slip)

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- *The Catholic Children's Bible*

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Commandment Skits (15 minutes)

- Divide the group into four small teams. Assign the teams the Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, or Eighth Commandments by handing each team a slip with one of those commandments printed on it.
- Ask the teams to develop a brief skit that acts out a way to follow the commandment they were assigned. Allow 5 minutes for the teams to work.
- Conclude by having each pair or team perform their skit for the class.

Examination of Conscience (15 minutes)

- Remind the group that God gave us the Ten Commandments so we can live a good life and put our faith into action. Explain that we are all accountable to God for our actions, starting with how well we follow the Ten Commandments.
- Tell the children that what we learn about our faith here in class and at home has to be lived in our lives. Explain that an examination of conscience is one way to reflect on how well we have been obeying what God wishes for us and following the Commandments.
- Lead the children in a reflective examination of conscience, such as the video "10 Commandments - A Confession" (YouTube, 2:45)
- Conclude with the Act of Contrition found on page 1993 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*.

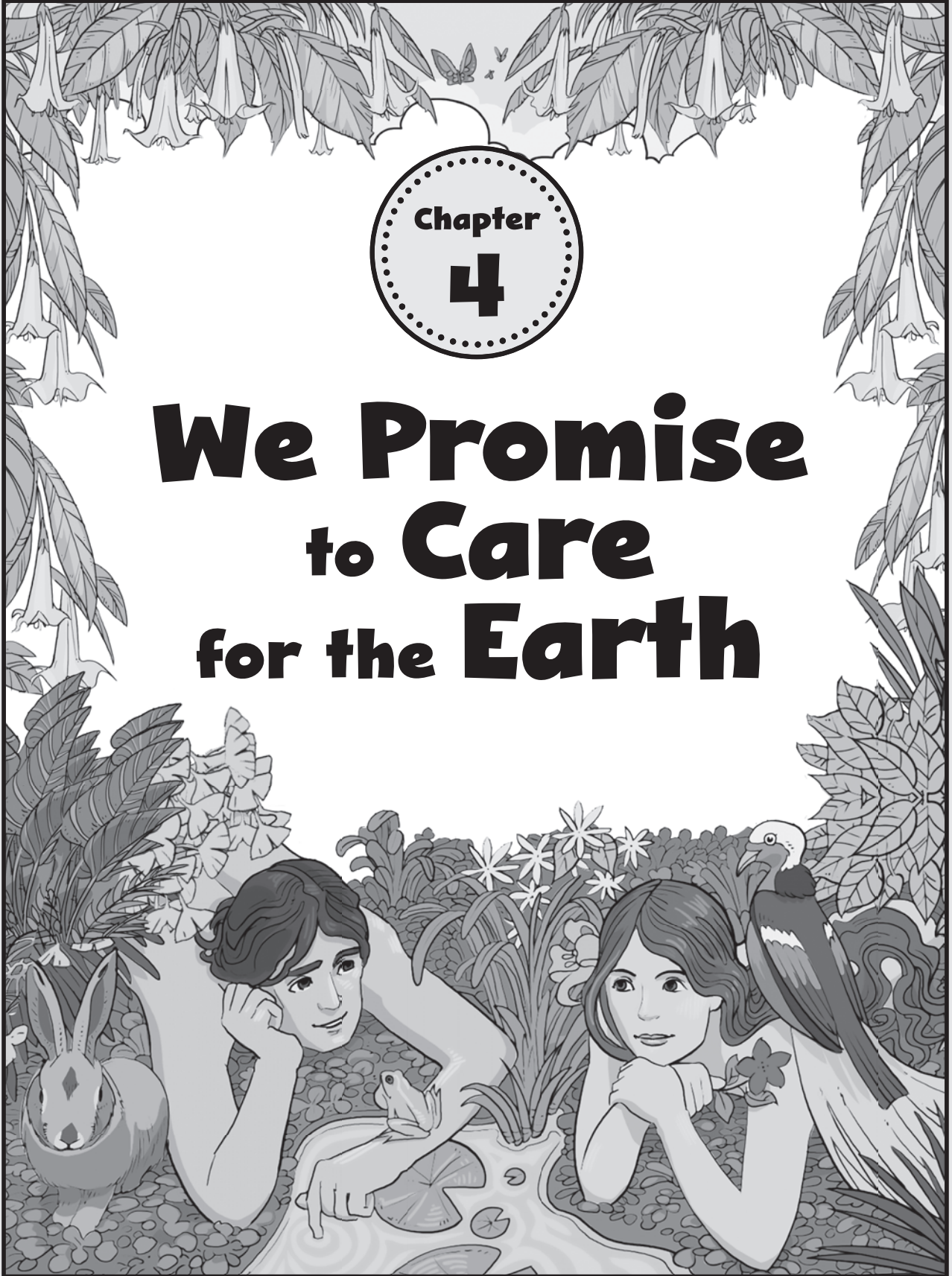
Sing and Dance Along: Follow God (15 minutes)

- Show the video "I'm All In | Cave Quest VBS Music Video | Group Publishing" (YouTube, 2:55) to the group. Invite the children to sing and dance along. You may want to play it twice.
- Ask the children to share their thoughts about what the song says.
- Explore with the children how it can be challenging, at times, to follow and obey God. Invite them to share some examples of when they think it might be difficult to obey God.
- Remind them that the whole Church shares in a covenant with God, so we can rely on others to help us when we might be tempted not to follow God. Tell them that if we make mistakes, we can always start again.

Chapter

4

We Promise to Care for the Earth




 Chapter
4

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Genesis 1:26–31

Lesson Goals

- to review that God made the Earth, and us, out of love
- to identify that God placed human beings in charge of caring for the Earth
- to state that God asks us to care for the Earth, and we agree to do our part

Catechism References

299, 306–307, 337–344

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Care for God's Creation

Key Words

created, descendants, steward, dominion, stewardship

Music Suggestions

- "God's Creation," by Deep Blue Kids (Dennis Scott Productions)
- "All Part of God's Creation," by Drew Lane and Friends (Butterfly Music)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 4 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- three different types of objects, at least ten of each item
- three baskets
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Many children are familiar with the ideas of cleaning up, recycling, and taking care of the Earth. Today's lesson approaches these ideas from our faith perspective. God created us and the entire world out of his love. When we make something that we love, we also make plans to take care of that thing. God did the same in entrusting the care for his creation to us.

Everything God created has its own goodness and perfection because it has come from God's goodness and perfection. We must respect this goodness in each thing he created. We must be careful not to abuse creation or use it in a way in which God did not intend. As his stewards, we must make good choices to take care of what God has given us.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 4 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to brainstorm a list of chores or other responsibilities they have at home, at school, or at other activities. Record their answers on the board. Suggest some examples to start, if the group needs help, such as feeding pets, folding laundry, emptying the dishwasher, taking out the trash, making a bed in the morning, sweeping the floor after class, and studying for a test.
- Ask the children why it is important for them to help with chores and take responsibility for their actions. (*Answers should reflect how we each play a part in taking care of our house, school, or activity space.*)
- Ask the children what might happen if they forget or neglect their chores. (*Answers should reflect that if we neglect our chores or responsibilities, we are hurting others in our family and community by causing more work or creating a mess.*)
- Tell the children that today they will learn what it means to care for God's creation and to be a good **steward** of the Earth. Write the word *steward* on the board along with the definition: "a person who is responsible for taking care of something." Explain that just as we have responsibilities at home and at school, we must all do our part to care for God's creation.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Genesis 1:1–2:3 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 21 and 24). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 22. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 22–23. Invite them to share observations of the artwork and what they think they might discuss today.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children or invite a volunteer to read. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did God put human beings in charge of? (*fish, birds, and all wild animals*)
 - What did God provide for human beings to eat? (*all kinds of grains and fruit*)
 - What was God's reaction to everything he created? (*God was very pleased.*)
 - On what day of Creation did God create human beings? (*the sixth day*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. T, 2. T, 3. F, 4. F, 5. F, 6. T, 7. T*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 23, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Once there was only God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are the three Persons of the Trinity.
 - God wanted to share his life and love, so he created the universe and human beings.
 - God made each of us out of love, too.
 - God gave us powers like he has. We can think, we can make our own choices, and we can love God and others.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 23, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to take a minute to think of things found in creation that they can praise God for.
- Continue the prayer of praise in the Live It! by asking volunteers to share their ideas with the class.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 23.
- Invite the children to find partners and retell the Bible reading to each other using the images. (*Image 1 shows the plants and animals God created. Image 2 shows Adam and Eve, whom God put in charge of all the animals. Image 3 shows God saying, "I am very pleased."*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Race to Responsibility

- Prepare in advance by gathering three groups of different objects, at least ten of each type. Use whatever you have around, such as paper towel tubes, crumpled paper, blocks, balls, and so on. Bring the items in three baskets.
- Ask the children to clear an open space in the room. Scatter the different items across the room in a messy way.
- Have the children form three groups, and give each group a basket. Assign each group one of the objects they must pick up and put in their basket. For example, if one group is assigned blocks, that group must find all the blocks in the room and put them in their basket. The first group to complete the activity by gathering all its items wins.
- Repeat the game, if time allows, and keep track of which group gathers their items the fastest each time.

Process the Activity

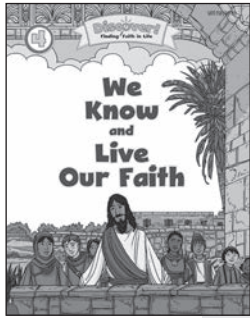
- Ask the children what they saw before they began to pick up the objects. Steer them to describe the room as messy.
- Ask the group how everything became tidy and organized.
- Invite the children to reflect on how everyone worked together to clean up the room. Ask the following questions:
 - Why was it important that everyone do their part?
 - What if one team hadn't participated?

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 73 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that God made us and all creation from his love. Explain that he loved us so much that he provided for us by giving us everything on Earth.
- Tell the children that God gave **dominion** over everything on Earth to humans. Write the word *dominion* on the board. Ask for volunteers to guess what the word means, and acknowledge and affirm appropriate answers.
- Explain that *dominion* means that we have the responsibility to care for God's creation. Emphasize that we do not abuse creation or use it in a way that causes harm.
- Write the word **stewardship** on the board, and explain that it means protecting and caring for God's creation through responsible action. Use the following points:
 - When we act as stewards for God's creation, we treat everyone and everything with respect.
 - We participate in God's plan for creation when we take our responsibility as stewards seriously. We agree to do our part to care for the Earth.
- Invite the children to discuss specific ways we care for plants and animals, from the smallest to the largest. Consider introducing the following examples from the life of Saint Francis of Assisi:
 - Saint Francis was a great example of stewardship because he always saw a purpose for all creation.
 - Saint Francis used to move worms off the road so that they would not be crushed.
 - Why would he care about the worms, when they are so small? *(They are made and loved by God. They keep the soil aerated and fertile so that plants may grow.)*
 - Every plant and animal is created for some purpose and is important in some way.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why did God make us? *(God made us to love and to be loved.)*
 - When we say that God put human beings in charge, does that mean we get to do whatever we want? *(No, we must be responsible in our actions and take care of God's creation.)*
 - What are we called when we take care of God's creation? *(We are stewards.)*
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Pope Francis, and encourage the children to say, "Help us, God, to respect the environment as Pope Francis teaches us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “We Are in Charge,” page 71

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - God made the Earth, and us, out of love.
 - God placed human beings in charge of caring for the Earth.
 - God asks us to care for the Earth, and we agree to do our part.
- Invite the children to place sticker 4 in the appropriate space on their folder.

Chapter 4



Sticker 4

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the activity booklet and pray the prayer together.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- dough or clay, a handful for each child

Sculpting Out of Clay (15 minutes)

- Distribute a handful of dough or clay to each child.
- Invite the children to create anything they would like with the clay. Allow 7–10 minutes for them to work.
- Invite volunteers to explain what they made. Ask them the following questions:
 - What would you say to someone who asked to borrow your creation?
 - What would you think if that person does not take care of it?
- Remind the children that God loves all of his creation and has given it to us to enjoy and to take care of.

Materials Needed

- none

Role-Playing Stewardship (15 minutes)

- Arrange the children into groups of three or four.
- Ask the groups to come up with a scenario of caring for some aspect of God's creation. Allow them several minutes to rehearse their scenarios as skits.
- Invite each group to perform its skit for the class. Then have the rest of the children reflect on what each skit taught the whole group.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Sing and Dance Along: God's Glorious Creation (15 minutes)

- Show the video "I Sing the Mighty Power of God | Everest VBS Music Video | Group Publishing" (YouTube, 2:41) to the group.
- Invite the children to sing and dance along with the video. Consider playing the video two or three times so the group can learn some of the dance moves in the video.
- Discuss with the children what this video is saying about God and his creation.

Chapter

5

We Are Part of a New Covenant




 Chapter
5

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Mark 14:22–24

Lesson Goals

- to identify that God promised to send us a savior, Jesus
- to explain that Jesus gave us his Body and Blood and made a New Covenant with us
- to state that every Mass is a celebration of the New Covenant

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

1, 73, 578–580, 610–611

Key Words

disciple, covenant, institute

Music Suggestions

- “Here I Am to Worship,” by Cedarmont Kids (Cedarmont Music, LLC)
- “Open the Eyes of My Heart,” by Cedarmont Kids (Cedarmont Music, LLC)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 5 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The covenants God made with Abraham and Moses help tell the story of our salvation. They provided God’s people with hints of what was to come in Jesus Christ. Throughout history, God slowly revealed his plan of salvation to his people through the Old Covenant, while, at the same time, he prepared us for the coming of the Savior.

The Old Covenant was not perfect. Humans failed to listen and obey. Yet God was always there, waiting for them to respond. Only Jesus, the Son of God, could establish a perfect covenant with God. In this New Covenant, he showed us that we must act on our belief, not just say that we believe.

At the Last Supper, Jesus gave us the Sacrament of the Eucharist as part of this final, perfect covenant with God. Just like the Old Covenant, this New Covenant that Jesus Christ made with his Church needs us to do our part. We say yes to Jesus in the Eucharist, and act out our yes every day of our lives.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 5 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Write the word *covenant* on the board and review the definition (found on page 1560 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*).
- Invite the children to recall the covenants God made with Abraham and Moses. Ask them what they remember, and steer them toward the answers as needed. (*God reminded them that he was their God and that he would take care of his people. He gave them rules to follow as part of their covenant. He was preparing them for the Savior, etc.*)
- Tell the children that today they will learn about the Last Supper and the New Covenant that Jesus came to establish with everyone.

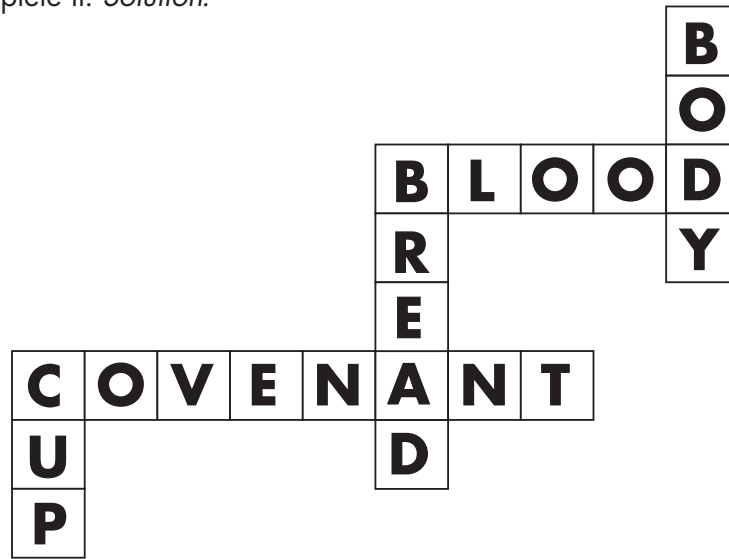


Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Mark 14:12–26 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1559 and 1562). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1560. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1560–1561. Ask volunteers to describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did Jesus say when he offered the piece of bread to his disciples? (*"Take it . . . this is my body" [verse 22].*)
 - What did Jesus say when he handed the cup to his followers? (*"This is my blood" [verse 24].*)
 - What did Jesus say would seal God's covenant? (*He said the covenant would be sealed by his blood, "poured out for many" [verse 24].*)

- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1561, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - At the Last Supper, Jesus gave us the Sacrament of the Eucharist.
 - In the Mass, Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. He comes to us as food—his Body and Blood that still look and taste like bread and wine—so that he can become one with us.
 - When we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we grow closer to him and one another. We receive the strength to follow Christ more closely.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1561, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to take a moment to think about some ways that they can pray after receiving the Eucharist next Sunday.
- Ask for volunteers to share their suggestions, and write them on the board.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1561. (*Images 1 and 2 show Jesus taking and breaking the bread. Images 3 and 4 show Jesus taking and offering the cup.*)
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story in their own words.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Follow the Leader

- Ask the children to clear an open space, enough for the group to stand in a circle.
- Choose one child to be the leader. Instruct the group that the leader can perform any appropriate action (such as dance moves, silly faces, or sounds), and explain that, one by one, starting on the leader's right, each child must imitate the leader.
- Tell the children that each child will take a turn imitating the leader, going around the circle. Explain that as soon as the action comes around the circle back to the original leader, the child on the leader's right will become the new leader. Tell the group that the new leader may then choose a new action, and the imitation will continue.
- Encourage the children to go as fast as they can so the action is repeated quickly around the circle with no pauses.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance to lead or as time permits.

Process the Activity

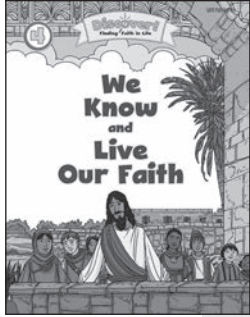
- Invite the children to give their feedback on the game. Ask them to suggest what could happen if there were no leader. Ask the children to discuss what makes it difficult and what makes it easy to follow a leader.
- Explain that in the Old Covenant people found it hard to follow their leaders and keep their promises to God.
- Tell the group that being Christian means saying yes to Jesus, our leader, and following his example through our actions and our words.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 81–82 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Divide the board into two columns. Write “Old Covenant” at the top of the left column, with “Abraham” and “Moses” below it. Write “New Covenant” at the top of the right column, with “Jesus” below it.
- Explain that the Old Covenant was not perfect because God’s people did not keep their promises to God. Remind the children that God’s people made many mistakes and did not always listen to what God told them.
- Ask the children what they remember about the covenants with Abraham and Moses. Ask volunteers to remind the class what each covenant set out to do. Steer the discussion to the following points, and write them on the board under the “Old Covenant” column.
 - God’s covenant with Abraham united his people in faith.
 - In the covenant made through Moses, God showed us the right way to live by giving us the Ten Commandments.
- Explain to the children that Jesus gave us the New Covenant, a perfect covenant. Make the following points:
 - As part of the Old Covenant, God always promised to send a savior to the people of Israel. He sent Jesus as our Savior. Jesus fulfilled all the promises God made through the Old Covenant.
 - To establish the New Covenant, Jesus instituted the Eucharist, his Body and Blood. To **institute** means to set up something and give instructions to others to hand it on.
 - We celebrate this New Covenant every Sunday at Mass! Jesus is truly present in the bread and wine when they become his Body and Blood.
 - When we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we are strengthened to follow him. It is not enough to say yes to him at Mass. Our actions must speak louder than our words in our everyday lives.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - As part of the Old Covenant, whom did God promise to send the people of Israel? (*He promised to send them a savior. Jesus was that Savior.*)
 - What did Jesus give to us to establish the New Covenant? (*He gave us the Eucharist, his Body and Blood.*)
 - How do we participate in this New Covenant? (*We say yes to Jesus by participating in the Eucharist and by following him in our daily lives.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Mark, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Mark, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Ark of the Covenant” (second paragraph), page 17

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - God promised to send us a savior, Jesus.
 - Jesus gave us his Body and Blood and made a New Covenant with us.
 - Every Mass is a celebration of the New Covenant.
- Invite the children to place sticker 5 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 5

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1993 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and pray “A Prayer to Jesus.”
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Sing and Dance Along: Follow Jesus (15 minutes)

- Show the video “I Have Decided | Cave Quest VBS Music Video | Group Publishing” (YouTube, 3:04) to the group.
- Invite the children to sing and dance along. Consider playing it twice.
- Ask the children to reflect on the song. Invite them to share what the song is saying.
- Invite several volunteers to summarize what it means to follow Jesus. Ask them to give some specific examples of how we are called to act in the world.
- Encourage the group to share their thoughts about what they should do if following Jesus becomes difficult.

Materials Needed

- none

Covenant Keepers (15 minutes)

- Explain that the group will play a game called Covenant Says. Explain that it is similar to Simon Says, but with a twist: the leader (you) will give three actions to follow in sequence, not just one action at a time. Tell the children they have to follow what you *do*, not what you *say*. (Consider practicing how to lead this activity beforehand.)
- Invite the group to stand, and lead the children in an example. Say, “Covenant says: Touch your cheek, then your toes, then your knees,” but act out the motions in a different order. Explain that the children who followed what you *said* but not what you *did* must sit down.
- Invite all the children to stand again and conduct the activity with several three-action directions. You can perform the actions in sequence or out of sequence, perform incorrect actions, or just say the directions without any accompanying actions. Ask the children who follow what you *say* and not what you *do* to sit down.
- Conclude the game by having the children reflect on how they felt during the activity. Ask the following questions:
 - What happened when I gave directions but performed different actions?
 - What happened when I gave directions but didn’t perform any actions?
 - What happened when my words and actions agreed?
- Ask the group to apply this experience to what it means to follow Jesus every day. Use the following questions to spark discussion:
 - If we say we believe in Jesus, but our actions don’t follow what he taught us, what are we saying to the world? What are we saying to Jesus?

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

God Is Faithful (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to recall the covenants God made with Abraham, Moses, and all of Israel. Have them share what they remember, and affirm correct responses.
- Explain to them that they are going to watch a short video that summarizes the covenants God made in the Old Testament and the New Covenant made by Jesus. The video mentions a covenant God made with King David. Assure the children that they will learn more about King David in a future lesson.
- Show the video "The Covenant - Bible Project" (YouTube, 5:14) to the group through time marker 5:11.
- Invite the children to share some of the key points they noticed in the video. Encourage them to share what they already knew and what new points they may have discovered.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Unit 2

Jesus Is the New Covenant

Chapter 6

The Passover Lamb 84

Chapter 7

Jesus Gives His Life for Us 92

Chapter 8

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Our Covenant Includes Others 108

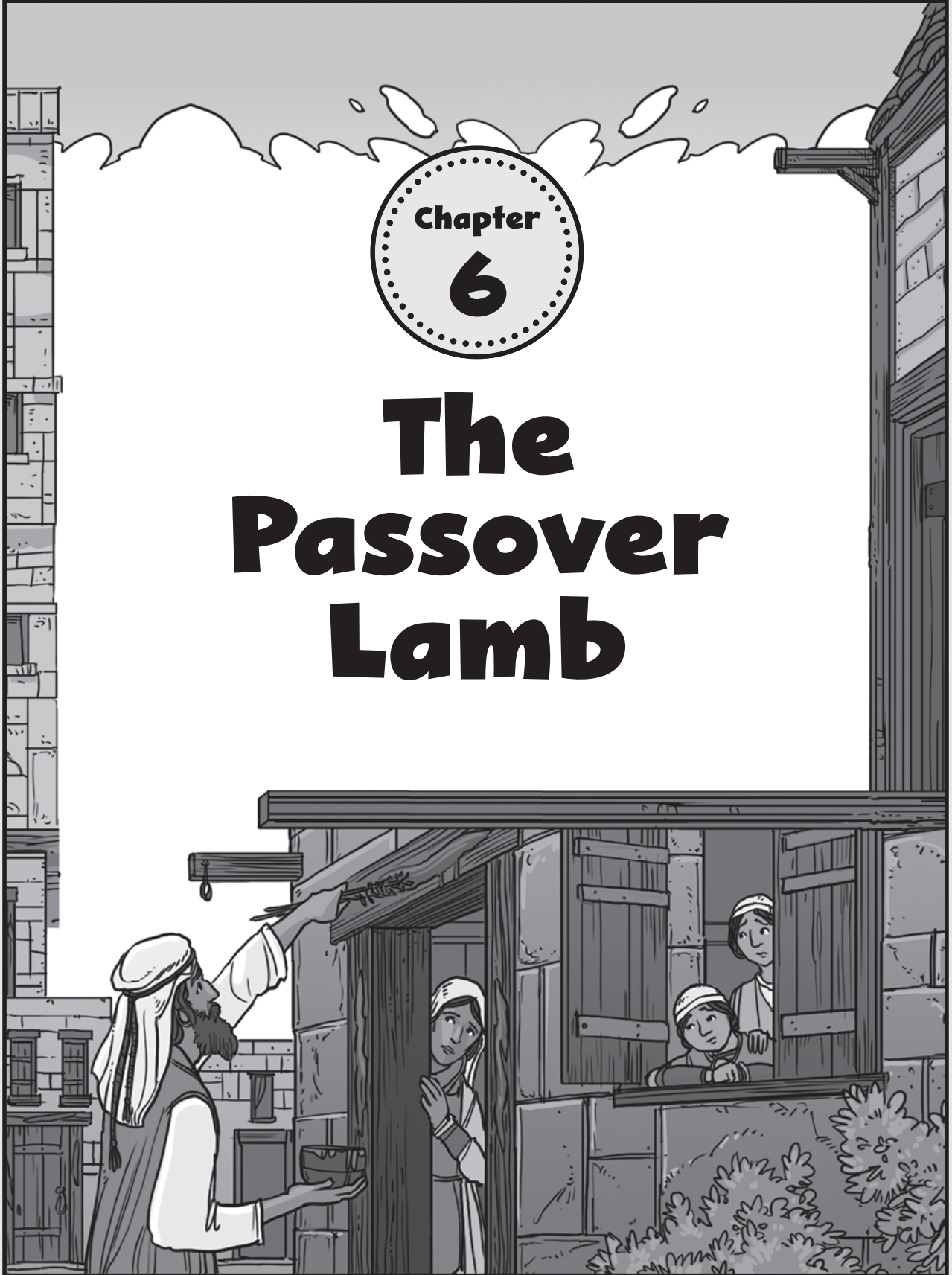
Chapter 10

Jesus Is Our King 116

Chapter

6

The Passover Lamb



Chapter

6

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Exodus 12:21–23

Lesson Goals

- to explain that the Israelites were spared from death because their doorways were marked with the blood of a lamb
- to identify Jesus as “the Lamb of God” who saved us from sin and death
- to state that we receive the Lamb of God at Mass in the Body and Blood of Christ

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

517, 608, 1094, 1329, 1340, 1363

Key Words

Passover, sprig, hyssop, Lamb of God

Music Suggestions

- “Behold the Lamb,” by Christ Music Kids (Catapult)
- “Lamb of God—Peace Medley,” by Carey Landry (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 6 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- ten plastic bowling pins
- ten foam balls or tennis balls
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Throughout the lessons so far, we have seen how God always protects his people. Today’s lesson focuses on the first Passover, when God spared the Israelites from the tenth plague—the death of the firstborn sons. To protect his people, God commanded them to prepare a special meal and mark their doorways with the blood of the lambs killed for that meal.

As we learned in the last lesson, Jesus established a new and perfect covenant. The sacrifice of the lamb in the Passover meal foreshadows Christ’s own sacrifice under the New Covenant. We call Jesus the “Lamb of God” because he poured out his blood for our salvation. By his sacrifice, he took away our sin and freed us from darkness. Only Jesus could establish this perfect covenant with God and open the way of salvation. We receive the Lamb of God at Mass when we receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 6 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to think of times when they relied on the protection of others. Ask the following questions, and record the children's answers on the board:
 - When you are scared, whom do you turn to? *(Answers might include parents, teachers, and friends.)*
 - What do you trust that these people will do when you ask them for help? *(We trust that they will be there for us, love us, protect us, and rescue us from harm.)*
- Explain to the children that today they will learn that God showed his love and concern for us by sending Jesus to save and protect us.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Exodus 12:21–28 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 115 and 118). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 116. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 116–117. Choose some volunteers to describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did Moses ask each family to choose and kill? *(a lamb or young goat)*
 - What did he ask the families to celebrate? *(Passover)*
 - What were the families to do with the blood of the lambs? *(They were to use the blood to mark the beams and doorposts of their houses.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Israel, lamb, families, Passover, doorposts, door, Egypt, beams, Angel of Death*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 117, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - The blood of lambs saved God's Chosen People.
 - The Jewish people still celebrate the Passover meal every year to remember how God rescued them.
 - Jesus is our Lamb, whose blood saved us from death.
 - At every Mass, we celebrate that Jesus saved us, and we receive him in the Eucharist.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 117, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to find partners and ask them to share with their partner who keeps them safe.
- Ask the children to report to the group what they heard from their partners.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 117.
- Invite volunteers to retell the Bible reading using the images. (*Image 1 shows Moses giving instructions to the leaders of Israel. Image 2 shows a person selecting a lamb. Image 3 shows people marking their doorframes with the blood of the animals. Image 4 shows the Angel of Death passing by the marked doors.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Protecting from Attack

- Prepare by having the group clear an open space. Set up ten plastic bowling pins, either in one line, or throughout the room.
- Split the group into two teams: the attackers and the defenders. Give the attackers the ten balls.
- Explain that the attackers will try to knock down the pins by rolling the balls, while the defenders are to position themselves to protect the pins from being knocked down.
- Review the safety rules: no throwing balls, no pushing, and no shoving. Tell the group that defenders can block the balls with their bodies, but attackers cannot target defenders directly.
- Begin the game and allow it to continue for 5 minutes or until all the pins have been knocked down, whichever happens first.

Process the Activity

- Invite the children to reflect on the game. Ask them to share how the defenders tried to protect the pins, and ask the attackers how they decided which pins to target.
- Encourage the children to draw connections to how God protects us. Remind them that God is our perfect protector. Tell them that sometimes as humans we fail, just like the defenders couldn't always protect the pins. Remind them that God protects us, even in the hardest times.

Additional Activity Options

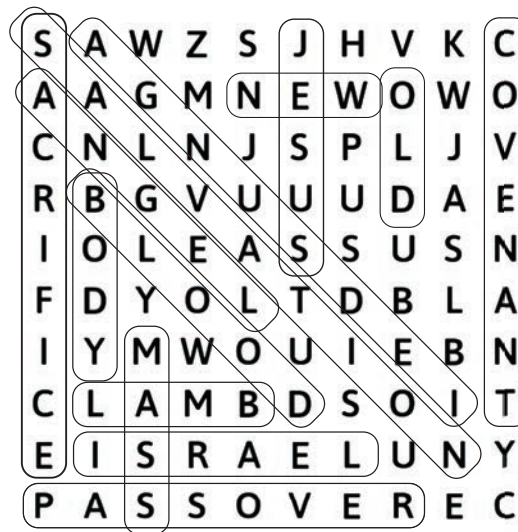
If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 90–91 in its place.

Core Teaching

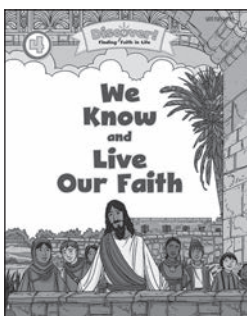
- Remind the children that the Israelites were spared from death because they marked their doorways with the blood of the lambs. Tell them that today Jewish people still celebrate this event with a special Passover meal.
- Remind the group that in the last lesson they learned how Jesus established a New Covenant at the Last Supper. Explain that the Last Supper was a Passover meal to commemorate the first Passover that we read about in today's Scripture passage from Exodus. Continue with the following points:
 - When Jesus offered his disciples bread and wine, he told them these were his Body and Blood.
 - He was telling his disciples that he was the new sacrificial lamb. Jesus sacrificed himself and poured out his blood for us.
 - We call Jesus the **Lamb of God** because he sacrificed himself to save us from sin and death.
- Tell the children that at Mass, when we receive Jesus' Body and Blood in the Eucharist, we are receiving the Lamb of God. Remind them that we say or sing the "Lamb of God" right before Communion at Mass. Share the words of this litany:
 - Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
 - Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
 - Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

(Roman Missal)

- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What meal did Jesus celebrate with his disciples at the Last Supper? (*Jesus and his followers celebrated the Jewish Passover meal.*)
 - Why is it called a Passover meal? (*The Angel of Death “passed over” the Israelites without killing their firstborn sons as part of the final plague.*)
 - Under the New Covenant, Jesus sacrificed himself for us. What is another name for Jesus that reminds us of this sacrifice? (*the Lamb of God*)
 - What do we receive at Mass in Communion? (*the Body and Blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Agnes, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Agnes, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Jesus, the New Covenant” + activity, pages 24–26

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Israelites were spared from death because they marked their doorways with the blood of the lambs.
 - Jesus is the “Lamb of God” who saved us from sin and death.
 - We receive the Lamb of God at Mass in the Body and Blood of the Eucharist.
- Invite the children to place sticker 6 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 6

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” and allow a few seconds of silence.
- Pray the Our Father together.
- Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Drawing in the Dark (15 minutes)

- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials. Ask the children to draw a picture of any object they choose.
- Direct the children to turn over their pages and close their eyes. Then ask them to draw the same picture with their eyes closed and without peeking.
- Have them compare their pictures. Then ask volunteers to discuss which of their pictures was better, and why.
- Explain that before Jesus, people had not yet been saved from the darkness of sin. Tell the children that people tried to do what was right, but sometimes it was like drawing in the dark—they couldn't see clearly and couldn't get it right.
- Help the group understand that when Jesus came to save us from sin and death, he brought light. Explain that he showed us the way so that we could see clearly; he saved us from the darkness of sin.

Materials Needed

- several rolls of toilet paper

Freed from Sin (15 minutes)

- Invite six children to volunteer for this activity. Have them stand in front of the larger group in two separate groups of three. Explain that one person in each group will be wrapped with toilet paper and the other two will do the wrapping.
- Give each of the four wrappers a roll of toilet paper, and tell them that they should wrap two to three layers of toilet paper just around the arms and torso of the person they are wrapping (not the whole body). Invite them to start. Then ask the wrapped volunteers to break free on the count of three.
- Encourage the teams to begin again, this time wrapping the volunteer as many times as they can in several minutes. Keep time and count down to make this more exciting.
- Ask the wrapped volunteers to break free again on the count of three. Ask them if it was easier or harder to break free the second time.
- Invite the children to compare the layers of toilet paper to sin and how it binds us. Remind them that Jesus came to save us from sin and death.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Sing and Move Along: Honor Jesus (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to listen to the song "You are my all in all—Hillsong kids with lyrics" (YouTube, 4:01). Consider playing it two or three times so the children can learn some of the words.
- Explain that when the song says "worthy is your name," this is a way of saying that Jesus deserves honor and respect because of who he is.
- Invite a small group of children to come up with hand motions for the words, "You are my all in all." Have the rest of the group come up with hand motions for the refrain.
- Play the video several times for practice, then play it from start to finish using the hand motions the group came up with.

Chapter

7

Jesus Gives His Life for Us




 Chapter
7

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 27:50–54

Lesson Goals

- to recognize that Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross for us
- to state that through his death and Resurrection, Jesus brought us back to God
- to identify the Mass as a celebration of Jesus' death and Resurrection

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

601, 611–613, 616, 1356–1369

Key Words

Temple, Holy City, Paschal Mystery, redemption

Music Suggestions

- "You Gave," by GroupMusic (Group Publishing)
- "What More Could He Give?" by Brother Francis (Herald Entertainment)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 7 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- plastic fillable Easter eggs, one for each child
- strips of paper with parts of the Mass printed on them, one strip for each Easter egg
- music for Musical Chairs
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Saint Rose of Lima once said, "Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*). Today's Scripture from Matthew reminds us that Christ died on the cross for our sins. His death and Resurrection are so important because they brought us back to God. Through the death and Resurrection of his Son, God showed his love for all of us and saved us from sin and death.

At every Mass, we celebrate Christ's death and Resurrection. We remember Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which established the New Covenant between God and all humanity. We have never been given a greater gift: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life" (John 3:16). We celebrate this gift at every Mass.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 7 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to think of someone they love and then to contemplate how much they love that person. Ask them the following questions, and write their answers on the board:
 - What do you do for people you love?
 - How do you show your love for them?
 - Is there a limit to your love? Is there something that you would not do for them?
- Tell the children that today they will learn about how much Jesus loves us. Explain to them that Jesus gave us the ultimate example of love when he died for us, and that his death on the cross saved us from sin.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 27:32–56 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (pages 1518–1519). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1516. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the other pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1516–1517. Ask volunteers to describe what they think they will be learning about today, based on the artwork.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What happened to the curtain hanging in the Temple when Jesus died? *(It was torn in two.)*
 - What else happened after the curtain was torn in two? *(The Earth shook, rocks split, graves opened, and dead people came back to life and went into the city.)*
 - What did the soldiers say when they saw the earthquake and other strange events? *(They said that Jesus really was the Son of God.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. c, 2. g, 3. h, 4. a, 5. b, 6. d, 7. e, 8. f*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1517, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - The cross is a sign of the Christian faith. The cross is important because Jesus died on the cross to save us from sin and death.
 - The tearing of the Temple curtain, the earthquake, and the dead people walking around all show us that something new was happening because of Jesus' death.
 - God loves us so much that he sent his Son, Jesus, to die for us.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1517, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the group to spend some time in silent prayer thanking Jesus and telling him that they love him.
- Invite the children, if time permits, to discuss with a partner what kind of deed they can do for others to show their love for Jesus.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1517.
- Invite them to take turns with a partner retelling the story in their own words. *(Image 1 shows Jesus dying on the cross. Image 2 shows the Temple curtain tearing apart. Image 3 shows the Earth quaking and splitting apart. Image 4 shows the soldiers realizing that Jesus truly is the Son of God.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Easter Egg Musical Chairs

- Prepare one Easter egg for each child. Make, print, and cut apart strips of paper that name parts of the Mass (for example, Penitential Act; Gloria; First Reading; Responsorial Psalm; Second Reading; Gospel; Homily; Nicene Creed; Holy, Holy, Holy; Our Father; Lamb of God; Eucharistic Prayer; Consecration; Communion; and Sending Forth). Place one strip in each Easter egg.
- Have the group arrange their chairs in a circle. Make sure the circle leaves enough room for the children to move around comfortably. Place an Easter egg under each chair.
- Invite the children to sit on the chairs in the circle. Explain that when the music begins the children must walk around the circle clockwise. Tell them that when the music stops, they must take the seat closest to them.
- Play the music while the children walk, and have them sit in the chair closest to them when the music stops playing. Invite the children to open the Easter egg under their chairs. Have each child read his or her slip to the class, but don't tell the group what all the slips have in common.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children to guess what all the slips have in common. Invite volunteers to share their guesses. Lead them to understand that the slips all name parts of the Mass.
- Invite volunteers to read their slips again, and have the group recall what they remember about those parts of the Mass. Offer a few points about parts of the Mass they may not be as familiar with.
- Mention how the Easter eggs used in this activity remind us that Jesus' death was not the end—he rose again.
- Tell the group that every Mass celebrates Jesus' death and Resurrection.

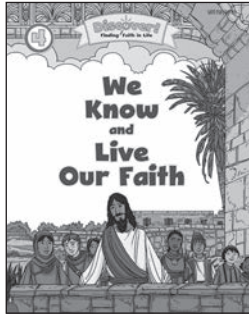
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 99 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Ask volunteers to remind the class what a covenant is.
- Explain to the children that God sent his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to save us from sin and death. Use the following points to explain further:
 - In the Old Covenant God was preparing his people for the coming of the Savior.
 - Jesus came to save God's people and fulfill the Old Covenant that God had made with the Israelites.
 - Through his death and Resurrection, Jesus established the New Covenant, which brought us back to God.
 - At Mass we celebrate Jesus' death and Resurrection. We celebrate the greatness of our Savior, Jesus, who loved us so much he died for us.
- Help the children understand that the Mass is both a sacrifice and a meal, just like the first Passover. Share the following points:
 - In the previous lesson, we learned that a lamb was the sacrifice at the first Passover. The Jewish people celebrate the Old Covenant even today with a Passover meal.
 - Jesus made a New Covenant between us and God. In his sacrifice of himself, Jesus showed us that he is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
 - We celebrate the New Covenant at Mass with a meal, the Eucharist: the bread and wine that have become Jesus' Body and Blood.
- Explain to the children that in the Mass we celebrate the **Paschal Mystery**: our **redemption** through the Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ. Write the terms *Paschal Mystery* and *redemption* on the board. Explain these terms with the following points:
 - *Paschal Mystery* refers to Christ's death and Resurrection, which brought us back to God. *Paschal* is another word for *Passover*, reminding us that Jesus is like the Passover lamb.
 - *Redemption* refers to Jesus' death on the cross, which redeemed, or saved, us from sin and brought us back to God.
 - Jesus' death was not the end. He rose on the third day and conquered death! We celebrate this truly remarkable event at every Mass, and we celebrate it in a special way every Easter.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who came to establish the New Covenant? (*Jesus*)
 - God loves us so much that he sent us his Son. What did his Son do for us? (*Jesus died on the cross for us.*)
 - What did Jesus' death and Resurrection do for us? (*Jesus' death and Resurrection freed us from sin and brought us back to God.*)
 - When do we celebrate Jesus' death and Resurrection? (*at every Mass and in a special way at Easter*)

- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Óscar Romero and encourage the children to say, “Saint Óscar Romero, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Death of Jesus,” page 27
- “The Resurrection of Jesus” + activity, pages 28–29

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross for us.
 - Through his death and Resurrection, Jesus brought us back to God.
 - Mass is a celebration of Jesus’ death and Resurrection.
- Invite the children to place sticker 7 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 7

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” and allow a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to join hands and pray the Our Father together.
- Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Materials Needed

- Four slips of paper, one for each of the following stations:
 - Station 12: Jesus dies on the cross.
 - Station 13: Jesus is taken down from the cross.
 - Station 14: Jesus is buried in the tomb.
 - Station 15: Jesus rises from the dead.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Singing God's Love (15 minutes)

- Show the video "No Greater Gift | HLA Rome | Group Publishing" (YouTube, 2:19) to the group.
- Encourage the children to sing, dance, and follow along with the movements in the video. Consider playing the video two or three times so the children can learn the song.
- Ask the children to reflect on the song with the following questions:
 - What gift are the children in the video describing? Why is there no greater gift?
 - Why is it important that Jesus died for us?
- Ask the children to take a few quiet minutes to write down words they might use to describe what God's gift means to them. Then invite volunteers to share what they wrote.

Stations of the Cross Tableaus (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance four small slips of paper, each with one of the twelfth through fifteenth Stations of the Cross written on it.
- Tell the children that one way people spend time praying about Jesus' suffering, death, and Resurrection is by meditating on the Stations of the Cross. Explain that the group will spend time with four of the stations in this activity.
- Have the children form four groups, and give one slip to each group. Ask the groups to develop skits or still-life scenes to depict the Station of the Cross written on the slip of paper they received. Allow the groups 5 minutes to rehearse.
- Invite each group to share its skit or scene with the rest of the children, in order. Allow a few minutes for the large group to meditate on the depiction offered by each group.

Jesus' Perfect Sacrifice (15 minutes)

- Show the video "The Story of Easter (Jesus' Sacrifice)" (YouTube, 5:22) to the group.
- Ask the children how they felt viewing the different scenes in the video, using the following questions:
 - What scenes amazed you or made you happy?
 - What scenes did you find difficult to watch? What do we learn from those scenes?
 - How did the video show us that Jesus' death was not the end?
- Ask the children to offer a silent prayer to Jesus for his sacrifice, which he made to bring us back to God. Allow a few minutes for this prayer.

Chapter

8

The Great Commandment




 Chapter
8

Lesson at a Glance

Chapter 8

Scripture Focus

Mark 12:28–31

Lesson Goals

- to summarize the Great Commandment as the commandment to love God and others
- to identify that Jesus taught the Great Commandment as part of the New Covenant
- to explain that if we love God and others, we will be keeping all the other commandments as well

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

1822–1829, 1970, 1972–1974, 2055

Music Suggestions

- “They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love,” by Jars of Clay (Provident Label Group, LLC)
- “Love Your Neighbor,” by The Wonder Kids (Wonder Workshop)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 8 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- red construction paper, one piece for each child
- several pairs of scissors
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Today’s lesson focuses on love as the most important part of the New Covenant. As part of the New Covenant, Jesus calls us to love both God and our neighbor, not just one or the other. We must keep Jesus’ words in the front of our minds: love God with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength; and love our neighbors as ourselves. We must also love ourselves with proper, but not narcissistic, self-esteem. Our true value is measured by the depths of God’s love for each one of us. We have seen all too often that those who lack proper self-esteem and appreciation for themselves often lash out in anger and resentment toward others.

We must love God and our neighbors even when we don’t feel like it. Our actions must always be consistent with what we believe. When we follow the Great Commandment to love God, ourselves, and our neighbors, we keep all the commandments that God gave us. In this way, we participate in the New Covenant of Christ.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 8 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Draw a heart on the board and invite volunteers to guess what they will be learning about today. (*love*)
- Invite the children to brainstorm ways they show their love for others and for God. Record their answers on the board.
- Challenge the children to brainstorm ways they show love for themselves in a proper and not a selfish way. (*Responses might include: follow rules to stay safe, eat healthy food, wash hands and brush teeth, try to learn new things, thank God for gifts and talents.*)
- Tell the children that today they are going to learn what Jesus taught us about love in something called the Great Commandment.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Mark 12:28–34 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1554–1555). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1556. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1556–1557. Invite them to describe what they see and predict what the story may be about.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did Jesus say is the most important commandment? (*to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength*)
 - What did Jesus say is the second most important commandment? (*to love our neighbor as we love ourselves*)
 - What commandment is more important than these two commandments? (*No other commandment is more important than these two commandments.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Israel, only, Love, heart, soul, mind, strength, second, neighbor, love, important, two*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1557, or invite a volunteer to read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - God is not concerned with how much money we make or how popular we are. He wants us to love.
 - We are called to love God and others.
- Explain that when we love other people, we should love like God does. We can ask God to fill our hearts with love for him and for all people.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1557, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the red construction paper to each child and hand out the scissors to share.
- Ask the children to follow the instructions in the Live It! by cutting out two hearts. Tell them to write one idea for loving God more on one heart and one idea for loving their neighbor more on the other heart. Allow a couple minutes for the children to work.
- Tell the children to take the hearts home and place them on their dresser, nightstand, or some other place where they can see them in the morning and evening.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1557.
- Invite volunteers to describe what is occurring in each image. (*Image 1 shows the teacher asking Jesus about the greatest law. Image 2 shows Jesus telling him to love God. Image 3 shows Jesus telling him to also love his neighbor.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Divided Actions

- Ask the children to stand in a circle at a comfortable distance from one another. Make sure they can move their arms and legs without bumping other children.
- Ask the children:
 - Have you ever tried to do two separate things at once?
 - What happens when you try to do two separate things at the same time? Can you do both of them perfectly?
- Tell the children to move their right leg up and down. Tell them next to move their right arm up and down.
- Ask the children to move both their right arm and their right leg up and down at the same time.
- Ask the children to stop. Ask them next to move their right arm up and down while also moving their right leg side to side.
- Invite the children to think of other motions to try to do at the same time (such as patting their head and rubbing their belly). Invite them to try each suggestion. Continue taking suggestions as time permits.

Process the Activity

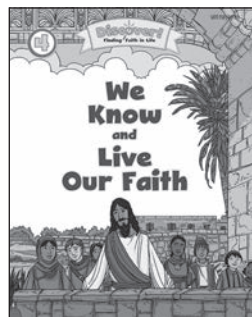
- Ask the children to share how difficult or easy it was to do two different things at once.
- Explain that in today's Scripture Jesus asks us to do two things: love God and love our neighbor as we love ourselves.
- Ask the children if they think they can do these two things at the same time.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 107 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Invite a volunteer to recall the two commandments. (*love God and love our neighbors as ourselves*) Explain to the children that these two commandments together are called the Great Commandment. Tell them that the Great Commandment is an important teaching of the New Covenant that Jesus gave us.
- Explain that following the Great Commandment doesn't mean that we ignore all the other commandments. Tell them that it means that we follow them all.
- Ask the children to turn to page 1988 and look at the list of the Ten Commandments. Briefly describe how each commandment can be kept by following the Great Commandment. Recall with the children that the first three commandments are about loving God; the last seven commandments are about loving our neighbor. If we love God and others, we will be keeping all of the other commandments as well.
- Tell the children that when we love God with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength, we practice our faith through our attitudes, thoughts, prayers, and actions—not just our words.
- Remind the children that in the second part of the Great Commandment Jesus says we must also love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Explain that we live out our love for God by how we act toward our neighbors here on Earth.
- Invite volunteers to guess what “love ourselves” means. Lead the children to the following points:
 - Loving ourselves does not mean being selfish. It means taking care of ourselves so that we can be the best God wants us to be.
 - We are children of God, created in his image. God wants us to take care of ourselves by making sure that we are healthy, strong, and safe.
 - When we love others as we love ourselves, we show others the same kindness we show ourselves to stay healthy, strong, and safe.
- Ask the children if they recall which sacrament can help us when we fall short of loving God, our neighbor, or ourselves. (*the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation*)
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is the Great Commandment? (*The Great Commandment says to love God and to love our neighbor as ourselves.*)
 - Can we love God but be mean to our neighbor? Why or why not? (*No. We live our love for God by how we act toward our neighbors here on Earth.*)
 - What help does God give us when we fall short of loving God or others? (*God helps us in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, where we receive forgiveness and strength to do better.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist, and encourage the children to say, “Saint John, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Church,” pages 30–31
- “The Moral Law,” page 47

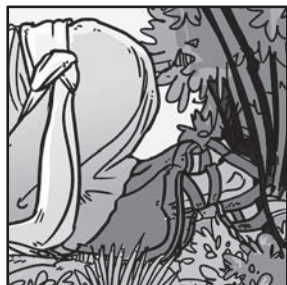
Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Great Commandment is the commandment to love God and others.
 - Jesus taught the Great Commandment as part of the New Covenant.
 - If we love God and others, we will be keeping all the other commandments as well.
- Invite the children to place sticker 8 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 8

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1994 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and pray the Act of Love.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a beach ball

Beach Ball Toss-Up (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to gather in a circle.
- Tell the children that they will pass a beach ball around the circle. Explain that as each child passes the beach ball, he or she must name one way to show love for God and love for neighbor.
- Have the children take turns passing the beach ball until everyone has had one turn.
- Invite the children to share how loving God and loving neighbor are connected. Say:
 - Does it make sense for someone to say, “Pray to God and say mean things about your neighbor”?
 - This wouldn’t make sense because if we love God, we must act like he wants us to act by loving our neighbor. He wouldn’t want us to do anything to hurt those around us.

Materials Needed

- construction paper
- stickers
- markers or crayons

Composing a Prayer of Love (15 minutes)

- Tell the children that you will read a Scripture passage about love that they may have heard before. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4–7 aloud to the class, and tell them it is from a letter from Saint Paul to the Corinthians.
- Ask the children to name the qualities of love they heard in the passage.
- Remind the group that love is so important in the New Covenant that Jesus gave us the Great Commandment: to love God and to love our neighbors.
- Distribute the construction paper, stickers, and drawing materials. Invite the children to use these art supplies to compose and decorate their own prayers of love.
- Invite volunteers to share their prayers. Then ask the children to take their prayers home and pray them before bed every night in the next week.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Sing and Dance Along: The Great Commandment (15 minutes)

- Show the video “Hillsong Kids Jr.—The Great Commandment (Crazy Noise)” (YouTube, 2:13) to the group. Invite the children to sing and dance along, perhaps playing the video a few times so the children can learn the dance movements.
- Ask the children to explain how the dance movements went along with the words of the song.
- Invite volunteers to share what the song made them think. Ask the children to brainstorm ways to love God and their neighbor in their lives.

Chapter

9

Our Covenant Includes Others



Chapter

9

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Ephesians 4:1–6

Lesson Goals

- to identify that keeping the covenant includes treating others with kindness and respect
- to indicate that we care for others because we are all children of God with equal dignity
- to recall that the last seven commandments are about loving others

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catechism References

1691, 1698, 1700–1702

Key Words

humble, tolerant, preserve, unity, dignity

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Music Suggestions

- “With God’s Love,” by Brother Francis (Herald Entertainment)
- “The Golden Rule,” by GroupMusic (Group Publishing)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 9 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

When God created humans, he created everyone with equal dignity. No matter what any of us do, we will always have that dignity as children of God. Because of this, we are called to treat everyone with kindness and respect.

We can find this obligation difficult when others don’t act the same way toward us—but this should not change how we act. We are called to love God through loving our neighbor, even when we feel that it is hard to do.

Let us always remember to turn to Jesus’ example of love and to pray for the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit as we seek to treat everyone with kindness and respect.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 9 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to recall what they learned last week about the Great Commandment, and invite them to suggest ways we can show God's love to others. Record their answers on the board.
- Ask the group to brainstorm what they remember of the last seven commandments. Do not worry about covering all seven thoroughly at this time; the group will review them later in the lesson.
- Explain that today they will learn more about what it means to love others, following the Ten Commandments, the Great Commandment, and the Golden Rule.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Ephesians 4:1–6 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1844–1845). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1846. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1846–1847.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How does this passage describe how we should always act? (*We should be humble, gentle, patient, and tolerant. We should seek to preserve our unity.*)
 - What are we called to protect or preserve? (*unity*)
 - How many faiths, baptisms, and gods does this passage say there are? (*"There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and "one God and Father of all" [verse 5].*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: patient, humble, tolerant, gentle, preserve unity*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1847, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - When you fight with someone or are mean to someone, you are not at peace with that person, and he or she is not at peace with you.
 - This story from Ephesians teaches us that we keep peace when we are kind and gentle.
 - Sometimes it's hard to be kind.
 - The Holy Spirit helps us to make peace with others and repair any hurts we have caused.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1847, or have a volunteer read it.
- Encourage the children to take a few minutes of silence to pray this prayer. Invite them to ask Jesus to enter into their heart and to help them grow in kindness.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1847.
- Encourage the children to retell the story in their own words with a partner, using the illustrations to guide them.
- Invite volunteers to share their descriptions with the class. (*Image 1 shows a grown-up being gentle and patient with an upset child. Image 2 shows two people demonstrating unity and peace. Image 3 shows Jesus embracing the world with love.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Circle of Kindness

- Prepare a space large enough for the group to stand in a circle. Invite the children to form the circle, and ensure they can stand at a comfortable distance from each other.
- Explain that the group will play the “last letter” game where the theme is kindness. Share the following rules:
 - To play this game, one person will say a word or phrase that describes how to be kind to and respectful of others.
 - The person next to them (going clockwise) will add a word or phrase about kindness. The new word or phrase must begin with the last letter of the previous word or phrase.

- For example: I will begin the game by saying the word “kindness.” “Kindness” ends with *S*, so the person to my left needs to say something about kindness that begins with *S*—like “serving others.”
- Each person will have 10 seconds to think of a word or phrase. If you cannot think of a word or phrase after that time, you can ask someone to help out.
- Conduct the activity. Encourage the children to be original in their answers and avoid repeating a word or phrase that another child said.
- Continue until you have gone around the circle one time.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children what they learned from the activity. Invite them to brainstorm the ideas that most stayed with them, and write these on the board.
- Explain that the circle also represented how we all work together to be kind and respectful to others—we can’t do it all alone.

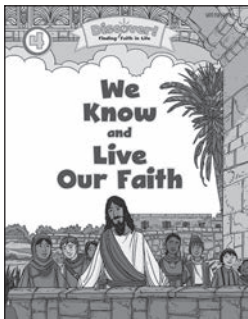
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 115 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Ask the children to recall the story of Creation, and invite volunteers to share with the class what they remember about caring for God’s creation. Lead the group to recall that as stewards we must treat God’s creation with respect and kindness.
- Remind the children that humans were created in the image of God. Explain that we are all part of God’s creation, so we all have a responsibility to take care of others and to love everyone as God loves us.
- Ask the children to recall the Great Commandment from the last lesson. Summarize it on the board: “Love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.”
- Explain to the children that when we treat others with kindness and respect, we are keeping the New Covenant that Jesus gave us. (*Note:* If questions about bullying arise, assure the children that bullying is never okay. Treating others with respect doesn’t mean that we think bad behaviors are okay or that we ignore bad treatment. Being respectful means that we never return unkindness with unkindness. Instead, respect may mean walking away and telling a teacher or parent what is happening so an adult can help.)

- Explain that because every human being was made in God’s image, we each were created with **dignity** that is special to humans. Describe *dignity* with the following points:
 - Dignity means that each of us is worthy of respect because we were made in God’s image.
 - We must always be kind and work for peace, even if it is hard.
 - No matter what someone does or says to hurt us, we must always remember that God made that person in his image and with dignity.
 - Everyone is always worthy of respect.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1988 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and to look over the last seven commandments. Remind them that the last seven commandments are about loving others.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is dignity, and why do we have it? (*Dignity means each of us is worthy of respect. This is because God made us in his image.*)
 - What are the last seven commandments about? (*The last seven commandments are about loving others.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Elizabeth, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Natural Law,” page 71

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Keeping the covenant includes treating others with kindness and respect.
 - We care for others because we are all children of God with equal dignity.
 - The last seven commandments are about loving others.
- Invite the children to place sticker 9 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 9

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Have the children read the Live It! prayer together.
- Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- list of acts of kindness
- a board or posters to write on

Draw It! Acts of Kindness (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance a list of simple acts of kindness, such as saying a kind word, smiling, donating money, praying for someone, etc.
- Divide the class into two teams, and explain that each team must send a team member to the board to draw an act of kindness that you give him or her. Tell the children that the rest of the team must guess what their team member is drawing within one minute to get a point.
- Whisper an act of kindness to the chosen member of one team. Have the team member begin drawing, and allow the team one minute to guess what is being drawn. Give the team one point if they guess correctly within the time limit.
- Switch to the other team and repeat the activity. Go back and forth between teams an even number of times.
- Invite the children to discuss which acts of kindness they found inspiring today.

Materials Needed

- construction paper
- markers
- several pairs of scissors
- stickers and other art supplies

Service Coupons (15 minutes)

- Distribute a sheet of construction paper and a marker to each child. Have them cut their sheets of paper into four horizontal strips.
- Ask the children to create service coupons, one for each strip. Explain that these should be services they can do at home or at school, such as “one chore without being asked” or “one hug.” Encourage the children to be creative.
- Distribute the art materials, and have the children decorate their coupons. Encourage them to give the coupons out at home or school.

Materials Needed

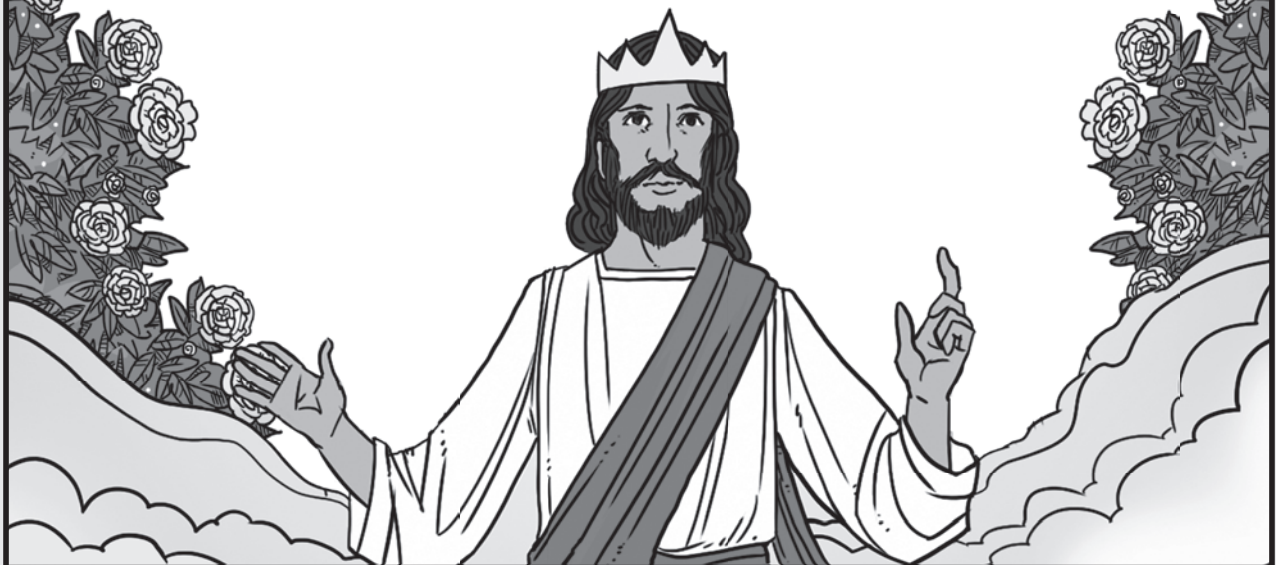
- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Always Treat Others Right (15 minutes)

- Show the video “Survival Tip #3—Treat Others Right” (YouTube, 2:38) to the group.
- Invite the children to share their thoughts after the video. Ask the following questions:
 - What are some ideas we learned from the video? Which ones are silly? Which ones are more serious for the real world?
 - What ideas would you add?
 - How should we treat others when they are present, compared to when they are not present?
 - Why should we always treat others right?

Chapter
10

**Jesus
Is
Our King**




 Chapter
10

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Isaiah 9:6–7

Lesson Goals

- to identify Jesus as the royal son foretold by Isaiah
- to describe the meaning of some of the titles of the special king
- to summarize the meaning of “Jesus the King” as the one who cares for us always

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

786, 908, 2305

Key Words

counselor, eternal, successor, determined, triumphed

Music Suggestions

- “He Reigns,” by Cedarbmont Kids (Cedarbmont Music, LLC)
- “King Jesus Is All (90),” by Stichting Opwekking (Stichting Opwekkingslectuur)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 10 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

This lesson focuses on Christ the King. In the time before Christ, Isaiah the prophet spoke of a great and wondrous ruler, a successor of King David, who would be powerful and just. Isaiah said this ruler would take the people out of darkness and bring them to the light, enabling them to rejoice and be happy.

We know now that this ruler is Christ. He was not an earthly king—he is the King of Heaven. He brought us from darkness to light by establishing the New Covenant and freeing us from sin. He opened the door of salvation and showed us how to live. His many titles show us how great he is. We sing praises to Christ our King!



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 10 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Draw a crown in the middle of the board.
- Use the crown as the center of a mind map, and invite the children to brainstorm what a crown symbolizes (such as kings or queens, royalty, and power). Draw lines from the crown to record their answers on the mind map.
- Tell the children that today they will learn about different titles that we give Jesus, including calling Jesus our King, a kind and loving king.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Isaiah 9:2–7 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1101). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1102. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1102–1103 and describe things that stand out to them.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What names does Isaiah say we will call the child to come? (*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace*)
 - Whose successor will this child be, and what does this make him? (*The child will rule as King David's successor. That means he will also be a ruler or king.*)
 - On what will he base his power? (*He will base his power on right and justice.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: darkness, light, shadows, shining, joy, happy, rejoice, harvest*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1103, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - The names of kings tell us what they were like.
 - Isaiah gave the king to come many names to tell us that he would be a king to care for the world forever.
 - Isaiah said this new king would be wonderful, give good advice, and be a prince of peace.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1103, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials, and invite the children to draw their pictures of Jesus as a Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, or Prince of Peace. Allow a few minutes for the children to work.
- Invite volunteers to share their pictures with the group.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1103.
- Invite volunteers to describe each image. (*Image 1 shows the child Isaiah predicted: the infant Jesus in the manger. Image 2 shows Jesus crowned as king. Image 3 shows that Jesus reigns in Heaven.*)

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity****Crown the King**

- Tell the group that this activity is a variation of Pin the Tail on the Donkey.
- Draw a king on the board (a stick figure is fine).
- Invite a volunteer to try to draw a crown on the king while blindfolded. (Consider having two or three pictures of kings, with children working on each at the same time, in the interest of time.)
- Allow the group to call out suggestions to the child or children who are drawing. Allow each child to draw for a minute before looking at his or her results. Then erase the king, draw a new one, and invite another child to take a turn.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children how it felt to try to draw without seeing. Ask whether the instructions called out by the other children were helpful or unhelpful, and why.
- Explain that the Israelites sometimes felt this way before Christ came. Use the following points:
 - They could describe him, but they didn't really know or understand what he would be like.
 - It was like trying to describe him while blindfolded.
- Tell the children that today they will learn more about Jesus our King.

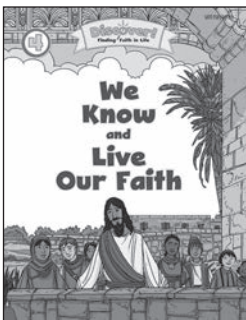
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 123 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Tell the children that before Jesus, people did not completely understand God's plan for them. Remind them that the prophet Isaiah foretold the coming of Jesus by describing the coming child as a wonderful ruler and king. Jesus is truly the royal son foretold by Isaiah!
- Explain what the titles of Jesus mean by writing these on the board:
 - Wonderful Counselor: Jesus gives advice, or counsel, and shows us how to live.
 - Mighty God: Jesus conquered death and brought us life.
 - Eternal Father: Jesus lives forever.
 - Prince of Peace: Jesus shows us how to treat others and live in peace.
- Explain the difference between the Israelites' understanding of a king and the kind of king Jesus is, using the following points:
 - The Israelites thought their savior would be an earthly king—someone who would rule the kingdom like King David.
 - Jesus lived a humble life, but we know that Jesus is more than a king could ever be on Earth.

- Jesus gave us the greatest gift when he died for us on the cross and rose again. Jesus our King freed us from darkness when he **triumphed**, or won, over sin and death itself. No earthly king could ever do that!
- Recognizing Jesus as our King is so important that on the last Sunday of the Church year—right before Advent—the Church celebrates the Feast of Christ the King. Every year this celebration reminds us that Jesus loves us and cares for us always. He wants us to be with him in Heaven, and he gives us the help we need to get there.
- Tell the children that when we pray to Jesus, we have many different titles or ways to describe how wonderful he is and how much he cares for us. Explain that prayer to Jesus the King reminds us that he cares for us always and watches over all of us.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What kind of king were the Israelites expecting? (*an earthly king like King David*)
 - What kind of darkness did Jesus free us from? (*the darkness of sin and death*)
 - What is the name of the feast day when the Church celebrates Christ's kingship? When is it celebrated? (*We celebrate Christ's kingship on the Feast of Christ the King, the last Sunday of the Church year, the Sunday before Advent.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Mary, Queen of Heaven, and encourage the children to say, "Mary, Queen of Heaven, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Vocal Prayer and Meditation," page 77

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Jesus is the royal son foretold by Isaiah.
 - As our special king, Jesus has many titles that show how he helps us.
 - The title “Jesus the King” means he cares for us always.
- Invite the children to place sticker 10 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 10

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in a meditative prayer. Explain that you will say one of Isaiah’s names for the coming Savior, and then allow a moment of silence for the children to develop a picture in their minds to go with that title.
 - Wonderful Counselor
 - Mighty God
 - Eternal Father
 - Prince of Peace
- Invite the children to turn back to page 1 of the chapter 10 activity booklet and to say the prayer aloud together.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a prepared script for the guided meditation (*optional*)

Guided Meditation (15 minutes)

- Lead the group through a guided meditation, inviting them to first relax and close their eyes.
- Create a guided meditation by speaking slowly and, after every sentence, giving the children some time to use their imaginations.
- Develop a scene in a beautiful place where the children meet Jesus and begin to share their joys and sorrows with him. Encourage the children to listen to what Jesus says to them in response.
- End the meditation by inviting the children to thank Jesus for being our King, caring for all of us and showing us the way.
- Invite volunteers to share what they imagined and what Jesus said to them in the meditation.

Materials Needed

- none

The King Says (15 minutes)

- Play a version of the game Simon Says, using the phrase “The King Says.”
- Explain the rules and remind the children that if they do an action without hearing “The King Says” before it, they must sit down until the end of the round.
- Lead the children in a round of The King Says, mixing up using the phrase “The King Says” before a command with just shouting out a command on its own. Try to go faster and faster to make it more challenging.
- Invite volunteers, as time allows, to become the “King” and to give the commands for actions.
- Explain to the children that Jesus is a good king, so we are always trying to follow what he asks of us. Remind them that Jesus the King never tries to trick us like the “King” did in the game. He always asks us to do things that show love and kindness to others.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Sing and Move Along: Praise to the King of Kings (15 minutes)

- Show the video “King of kings Lord of lords Hallelujah Kids Praise youth worship sing along dance” (YouTube, 1:35) to the group.
- Play the video several times until the children can comfortably sing it on their own.
- Invite the children to create different hand motions to the song if there is time.
- Remind the children that singing is a form of prayer. Ask the children to discuss how this song is a prayer praising Jesus as our King.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Unit 3

Others Help Us Keep the Covenant

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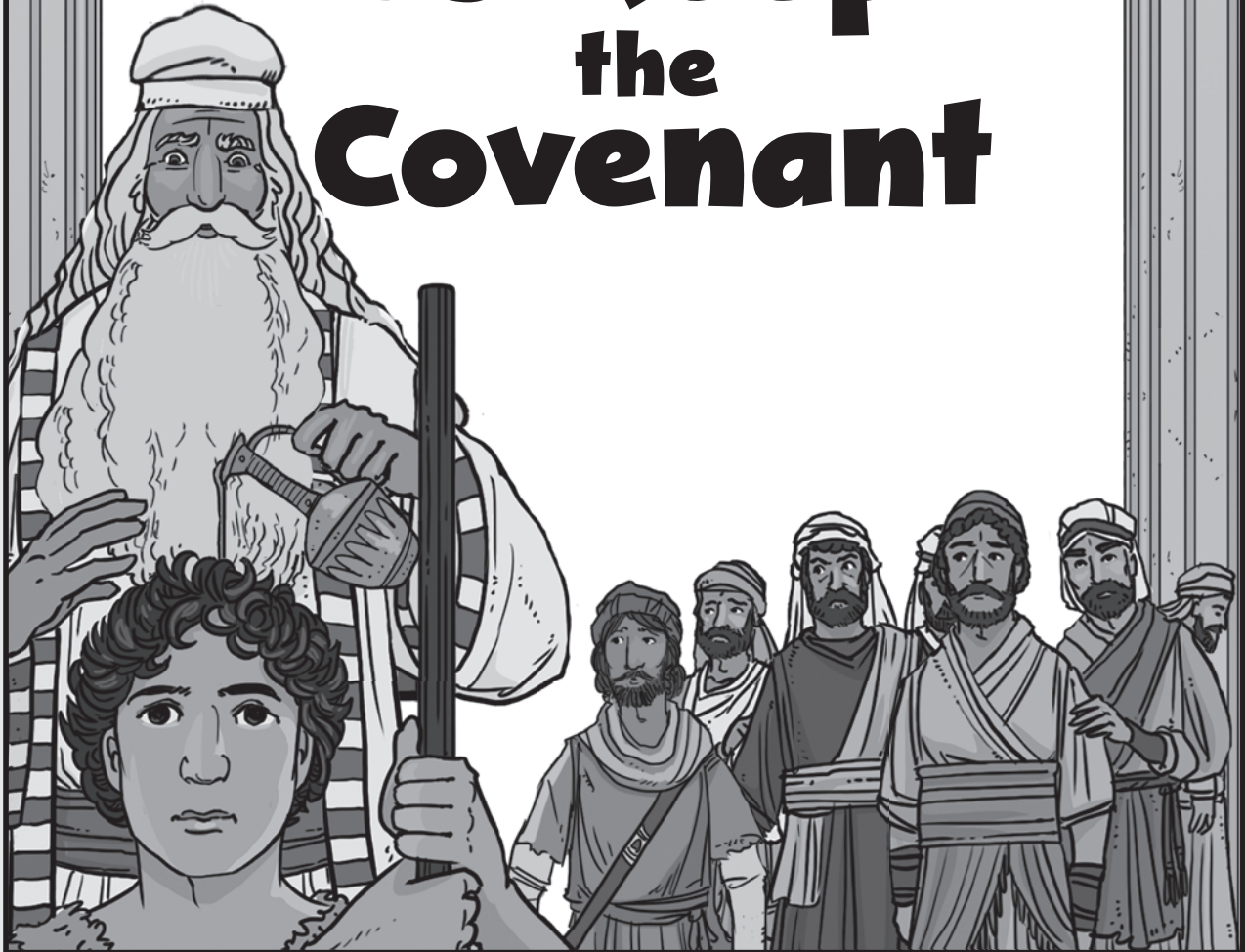
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We Renew Our Baptismal Promises 160

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11

Good Leaders Help Us Keep the Covenant




 Chapter
11

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

1 Samuel 16:10–13

Lesson Goals

- to explain that Samuel anointed David as leader of the Israelites in the Old Covenant
- to identify the Church and its leaders as the community that helps us keep the New Covenant
- to state that God gives us certain gifts to help one another keep the New Covenant

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

897–913, 1142–1143, 1548–1551, 2179

Key Words

anoint, obedient

Music Suggestions

- “Anthem,” by Tom Conry (OCP)
- “Shepherd Boy,” by Ray Boltz (Ray Boltz Music)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 11 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Accepting authority can be hard. But just as rules keep us safe, good leaders also keep us safe and remind us to do what is right. The Old Testament tells us that God’s people were ruled by kings and leaders whom God guided to keep his people safe. The prophet Samuel anointed David to be a great king who could help God’s people keep the Old Covenant. Jesus, a descendant of David, continues to lead us in the New Covenant through his Church.

Today our Church leaders and Church community keep us on the right path. The Pope, along with his bishops and priests, guides us in keeping the New Covenant with God. But God has not called them alone. He has given each of us certain gifts to share with the Church, our communities, and the world. God calls us to trust in him and to do what we can—just as David, a humble shepherd boy, trusted in God’s plan and became a great king and leader.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 11 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to think of some leaders who help keep them safe and teach them what is right.
- Share their answers by writing them on the board. If the pastor, bishop, and Pope were not mentioned previously, write their full names on the board.
- Ask the children why they think leaders are important. Then invite them to share what they consider to be important qualities of a good leader. Point out that being a good leader means doing what is best for others. Note that leaders cannot do everything themselves; they need other people to share their gifts and talents in order to get things done.
- Tell the children that they will learn that God gives us leaders to help us today. Explain that they will first read about David, a shepherd boy whom God called to be king of Israel and to help lead his people.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find 1 Samuel 16:1–13 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 388–389). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 390. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 390–391. Invite them to describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Did God choose one of Jesse's oldest sons? (*No, Samuel said God didn't choose any of them.*)
 - Where was David when Samuel came? (*out taking care of the sheep*)
 - What did God tell Samuel about David? What did Samuel do? (*God told Samuel to anoint David. Samuel anointed David immediately, in front of his family.*)

- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. Tell them that you are going to time them to see how quickly they can finish. *Answers: seven, Samuel, Lord, sons, sheep, anoint*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 391, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - God sent Samuel to meet the sons of Jesse and anoint the next king of Israel.
 - No one thought David was important, so he was not presented to Samuel until the prophet asked to see him.
 - God chose David.
 - God sees into our hearts. We might be surprised by the people God chooses to do great things.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 391, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask volunteers to list some gifts they have for serving God. Affirm all appropriate answers and point out some gifts that the children can use immediately to serve God.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 391.
- Invite the children to share what is being shown in each image and how it relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows Samuel telling Jesse that the Lord has not chosen any of Jesse's first seven sons. Image 2 shows David caring for the sheep. Image 3 shows Samuel anointing David.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Good Leadership or Selfish Leadership?

- Prepare in advance by brainstorming a list of good leadership qualities and selfish leadership qualities. You can build on the following suggestions:

Good Leadership

- kind
- thoughtful
- listens to everyone
- shares God's love
- treats others how they want to be treated

Selfish Leadership

- only does what he or she wants
 - thinks he or she is the best and doesn't need anyone else
 - lies to get his or her way
 - bosses others around
 - only listens to friends
 - only pays attention to people who give him or her money
- Clear enough space for the children to sit, stand, and jump while in a circle.
 - Invite the group to stand in a circle. Tell the children that you will call out qualities of good leadership and selfish leadership. Explain that when they hear a good leadership quality, they should stand up and jump. Tell them that when they hear a selfish leadership quality, they should sit down and be still.
 - Invite volunteers to suggest their own qualities, and have the group jump or sit accordingly. Allow several children to take a turn. Affirm how well the rest of the group has listened.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children to share their thoughts on the activity. Invite them to share the different qualities that they heard. Ask them if there were any qualities the children weren't sure about.
- Remind the children that to be a good leader, a person first has to be a good listener.
- Tell them that God knows best and sometimes he calls us to lead, while at other times he calls us to follow.

Additional Activity Options

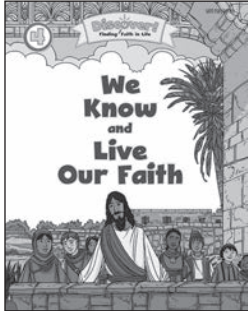
If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 133 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Tell the children that the reading for today's lesson described how David was anointed as king to lead the Israelites in keeping the covenant.
- Provide the children with some further background about Israel. Share the following points:
 - When Samuel visited Jesse, Israel already had a king named Saul.
 - Saul had decided to turn against God and do what he wanted to do, not what he should do for the people of Israel.
 - God needed a leader who would listen and help the Israelites keep the Old Covenant.
 - That is why God chose David, who didn't look important to anyone else. God knew his heart. God knew that David would be the leader Israel needed. So Samuel anointed David as leader of the Israelites.

- Remind the children that God is always watching out for us, even when we don't understand his plan.
- Tell them that God gave the Israelites of the Old Testament a king, David, to keep them safe. Explain that God sent Jesus, his only Son, to be our King and that Jesus was descended from David.
- Emphasize that Jesus established the Church and gave us leaders to help us keep the New Covenant.
- Explain, using the following points, that our Church leaders have also been chosen by God, using the following points:
 - The Pope is the leader of our Church. Our bishops help him, and our priests help the bishops. Together they look out for us and teach us to make the right decisions.
 - The Pope, bishops, and priests have been anointed with holy oil, just as Samuel anointed David. They are anointed because they were chosen by God to lead his people in the New Covenant.
 - Our Church leaders must listen to what God wants them to do, not what they want to do.
 - Good leaders cannot do everything on their own. They need our help, too. We must be **obedient** to our leaders. That means we must listen to and respect our leaders.
- Write the names of the Pope and your local bishop and pastor on the board. Next to each, write what they are in charge of, filling in the blanks with the correct information:
 - Pope: Responsible for the Catholic Church throughout the world.
 - Bishop: Responsible for the (Arch)Diocese of *(city and state)*.
 - Pastor: Responsible for *(name of parish)* in *(city and state)*.
- Remind the children that we are called to do our part by sharing our gifts that God has given us. Tell them that our gifts are not meant just for us—God wants us to share our gifts with others in our community. Explain that we can use our gifts to help one another follow God and keep the New Covenant.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why did God choose David to be king, when David didn't seem very important? *(God knew that David would listen and would help the Israelites keep the Old Covenant.)*
 - Who helps us keep the New Covenant today? *(The Church and its leaders help us keep the New Covenant today. We also help one another, using our gifts.)*
 - What does anointing signify? *(Anointing is a sign that a person has been called to do special work for God.)*
 - Who are some of the leaders in the Church today? *(Affirm correct answers.)*

- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Louis IX of France, and encourage the children to say, ‘Saint Louis IX, pray for us,’ during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Why Did God Make You?” + activity, pages 9–10

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Samuel anointed David as leader of the Israelites in the Old Covenant.
 - The Church and its leaders are the community that helps us keep the New Covenant.
 - God gives us certain gifts to help one another keep the New Covenant.
- Invite the children to place sticker 11 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 11

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” and allow a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to pray the Our Father.
- Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- a board or poster to write on

Materials Needed

- none

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Qualities of a Good Leader (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to imagine that they have been chosen to be the leader of a nation. Ask them to brainstorm answers to the following questions: What rules or policies would you have? What qualities would you need to rule well?
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials.
- Write the following sentence on the board, and ask the children to write it at the top of their paper: "If I was chosen to rule I would . . ."
- Invite the children to complete the sentence with their own answers. Have them draw pictures to illustrate their completed sentence. Allow 5 minutes for the children to work.
- Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class.

Following Good Leaders (15 minutes)

- Clear enough open space for the children to stand in a circle.
- Choose one volunteer to be the leader. Tell the leader that he or she can do any appropriate action (such as dance moves or silly faces). Instruct the rest of the children to imitate the leader. Have the leader do five actions.
- Play the game a few times with different volunteers leading the group, to give the class a chance to follow different leaders.
- Invite the children to give their feedback on the game. Ask them the following questions:
 - What makes a leader easy to follow?
 - What makes a leader hard to follow?
 - What would happen if we had no leaders?
- Remind the group that the Church and its leaders help us to know what is right. Explain that when we follow our Church leaders, we help each other by our example.

Developing Gifts (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Develop Your Gifts and Talents to Glorify God" (YouTube, 1:59) to the group.
- Tell the children that we are given different gifts and talents to help each other keep the New Covenant.
- Invite the children to write down their gifts that help them keep the New Covenant, even gifts that might seem small.
- Invite volunteers to share their gifts with the class. Affirm all answers, and help the children see how their different gifts help the Church and glorify God.

Chapter

12

The Church Helps Us Keep the Covenant




**Chapter
12**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

1 Corinthians 12:14–18, 27

Lesson Goals

- to review that the Sacrament of Baptism brings us into the Body of Christ, the Church
- to state that Baptism is a covenant between God and us
- to identify each one of us as an important and necessary part of the Body of Christ

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

783–786, 901–913, 1141–1142, 1241, 1253

Key Words

parish, Communion of Saints

Music Suggestions

- “We Are One Body,” by Tony Melendez and Jim Cowan (Integrity Music)
- “I’ve Got a Family,” by Brother Francis (Herald Entertainment)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 12 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- two small beach balls
- masking tape
- bandannas, one for each pair of children
- a bowl of holy water
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Baptism is more than just a ceremony or a special occasion for wearing our formal clothes. Our baptismal promises bring us into the Body of Christ and commit us to participate in the New Covenant. The Sacrament of Baptism gives us a share in Jesus’ priestly, prophetic, and kingly ministries. In Baptism, God promises us eternal life—an eternal life that begins when we rise up with Christ from the baptismal font.

We must take our baptismal covenant with God seriously. We create a community of love and service on Earth, and work toward Heaven, as the entire Church, not just as individuals. At the same time, just as the human body has different parts, each of us plays a unique and necessary part in the Body. And like the different parts of the human body, we must work together in harmony rather than be envious of the gifts of others.

The Body of Christ, the Church, includes all the baptized members of Christ—in Heaven, in Purgatory, and on Earth. All of us are called to help one another as part of Christ’s one Body, the Church.

**Get Ready! (10 minutes)****Opening Prayer**

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 12 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to recall what they learned about leadership and gifts in the previous lesson. Remind them that good leaders cannot do everything on their own; they need our help too. Recall that the Church and its leaders are the community that helps us keep the New Covenant. Tell them that God gives us certain gifts to help one another keep the New Covenant.
- Invite the children to discuss the following questions:
 - What would happen if everyone were the same? What would happen if we all acted the same, followed the same schedule, or did things the same way?
 - What would happen if everyone refused to work together?
- Ask the children whether either of these scenarios would help or hurt a community.
- Tell the children that today they will learn more about the Body of Christ, the Church, and why it is important for everyone to do their part.

**Dive In! (15 minutes)****Scripture Focus**

- Invite the children to find 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1807). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1808. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1808–1809. Ask volunteers to describe what they see.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Does Saint Paul say in this Scripture that every part of the body is the same? (*No, he says the body is made of up many parts.*)
 - What are some parts of the body that do different things? (*Feet, hands, ears, and eyes are examples of different body parts that do different things.*)
 - Who put every different part in the body? (*God*)
 - Who is part of Christ's Body? (*each of us*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. God, 2. eye, 3. Christ, 4. body, 5. ear, 6. parts*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1809, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Each part of your body plays an important part, just as each one of you plays an important part in Christ's Body, the Church.
 - Each member of Christ's Body is important.
 - Because we are all given different gifts, each of us has something special to offer the Church.
 - When every person does his or her special work well, it is good for the whole Church.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1809, or have a volunteer read it.
- Help the children to understand the puzzle by having them say the missing letters out loud.
- Ask the group to brainstorm different gifts and talents and how they can help the Church. Write their answers on the board. (*For example, people with musical talent can play an instrument during Mass. And everyone can join in the singing.*)

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1809.
- Ask the group to retell the story using the images. (*Image 1 shows how the body is made of different parts. Image 2 shows the foot wishing it were a hand. Image 3 shows the eye stating it can't hear. Image 4 shows that Christ's Body includes all of us.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Three-Legged Race

- Clear an open space, or play this game in a hallway or outside. Mark a starting line (and a finish line, if you are outside) with masking tape.
- Tell the children that they will be participating in a three-legged relay race.
- Arrange the children into two teams, making sure that each team can split into an even number of pairs (join one of the teams if your group has an odd number of children).
- Have the children choose partners that are close to them in height. Ask the partners to stand next to one another. Give a bandanna to each pair. Instruct the partners to stand shoulder to shoulder and gently tie their inside legs together using the bandanna.
- Instruct the pairs to line up in their teams behind the blue tape for the relay race.
- Hand a beach ball to the starting pair on each team. Have the partners place the ball between their inside hips. Tell them that they must balance the ball all the way down the race course and back without using their hands.
- Explain that when you tell them to go, the starting pair from each team must walk to the far side of the room and back, carefully turning to stay standing and to keep the ball balanced between them.
- Tell them that if they fall or use their hands, they must start over. Point out that the next pair on the team will take its turn when the previous pair makes it back to the starting line.
- Start the race. Continue until both teams finish.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children for their thoughts on the activity.
 - Which parts of your bodies struggled the most with this activity? Why?
 - In your pair, how did you help one another make it down and back? How did you work together?
 - When someone dropped the ball or used their hands, how did it affect that pair? How did it affect the whole team?
- Remind the children that our ultimate goal as God's children is to live with him forever in Heaven. Tell them that just as they all had to work together to finish the race, we must also work together as the Body of Christ, the Church, to have eternal life with God.

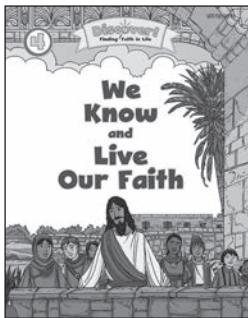
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 142–143 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that the Church is the Body of Christ. Explain that just as our bodies include many unique parts—we are not all hands or all feet—so too is our Church community made up of unique individuals. State that each one of us has a part to play, and that God gave us each special talents and gifts to serve others.
- Tell the children that we should not be envious of what we don't have. Point out that we should be happy with the unique gifts God has given everyone and that we all benefit when those gifts are shared.
- Explain that we became part of the Church, the Body of Christ, in Baptism. Make the following points:
 - We are baptized with water and anointed with holy oil when we become part of the Church in Baptism.
 - We are anointed for the new roles of priest, prophet, and king. These new roles call us to work to grow in holiness, tell others about Jesus, and serve others with our talents and gifts.
 - Baptism forms a covenant, a solemn promise, between us and God. The New Covenant requires each of us to do our part as members of Christ's Body.
 - We participate in that covenant by living out our faith. For example, we participate by going to Mass, receiving Holy Communion, and by using our gifts and talents for the good of the Church.
 - Each one of us is an important and necessary part of the Body of Christ.
- Explain that we are again anointed with holy oil in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Tell the children that at Confirmation we are sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Share that the Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens us to live out the New Covenant and do what is right. Point out that we receive gifts from God to help the Church community, not just ourselves.
- Remind the children that the local church is called the **parish**. Explain that our parish is our local community where we come together to worship and help one another by using our gifts and talents.
- Explain that the Church, the Body of Christ, includes all those who have been baptized—those on Earth, in Heaven, or in Purgatory (on their way to Heaven). Tell the children that we call this the **Communion of Saints**.

- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How is the Body of Christ like our physical bodies? (*Our bodies include many unique parts, and the Body of Christ is made up of many unique individuals.*)
 - What Sacrament makes us part of the Church, the Body of Christ? (*the Sacrament of Baptism*)
 - What three roles are we anointed for during Baptism? (*the roles of priest, prophet, and king*)
 - Who is included in the Body of Christ? (*The Body of Christ includes all the baptized on Earth, in Heaven, and in Purgatory.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. sacrament, 2. water, 3. anointing, 4. oil, 5. priest, 6. prophet, 7. king, 8. covenant, 9. Heaven. The six-letter word is CHURCH. The last sentence reads, "Baptism brings us into the Body of Christ, the Church."*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint Francis Xavier, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Francis Xavier, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Sacraments and Sacramentals" (paragraph 1), page 38
- "Life in Christ," page 47

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Sacrament of Baptism brings us into the Body of Christ, the Church.
 - Baptism is a covenant between God and us.
 - Each one of us is an important and necessary part of the Body of Christ.
- Invite the children to place sticker 12 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 12

Closing Prayer

- Place a bowl of holy water on your classroom prayer table.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Tell the children that you will read brief questions that echo the baptismal promises. Invite the children to say "I do" after each question.
 - Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth?
 - Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord?
 - Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

(Based on the Rite of Baptism for Children)
- Conclude by leading the children in the Our Father, followed by "Amen."
- Invite the children to come up one by one to dip their fingers in the holy water and make a closing Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- strips of paper, one for each child
- a large bowl

Can You Guess the Talent? (15 minutes)

- Give a strip of paper to each child. Ask the children to write down a specific talent or gift they have that no one knows about. Be sure to prepare a strip for yourself!
- Have the children fold their strips and place them in a bowl. Add your folded strip, and toss the strips to mix them up.
- Choose one strip and read it out loud. Invite the group to guess which person wrote down this talent or gift.
- After all the strips have been read, make connections to show how we help one another with our gifts and also how each of us is unique.

Materials Needed

- decks of cards, one for each team

Each One of Us Matters (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by making a simple three-tier house of cards, somewhere protected from drafts.
- Arrange the children into teams of three or four. Hand each team a deck of cards.
- Invite each team to build a three-tier house of cards. Tell the children to pay close attention to which cards they personally used to build the team's house. Allow 5 minutes for the teams to build their houses.
- Ask for one volunteer from each team. Instruct each volunteer to pull out the cards that he or she placed in the house.
- Ask the children to summarize what happened when the cards from one member were removed from the team's house.
- Discuss the following points:
 - Just as one person's actions can hurt or help in building a house, so too can one person's actions help or hurt the Body of Christ.
 - We all work together in the Church.
 - What we do is important because each of us is important to God and to one another.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- some type of building blocks (*optional*)

We Need Others (15 minutes)

- Show the video “The Lego Principle #2—5 Rules for Kid Connection” (YouTube, 2:31) to the group.
- Lead a discussion on how our differences help us grow as a community. Point out that only by working together can we build something. Explain that if we were all the same, we couldn’t get anything done—we would all have the same faults and the same strengths.
- Tell the group that identifying our strengths and weaknesses helps us understand that we need others—we can’t do it all ourselves.
- Remind the children that Jesus gave us the Church as the way to stay connected to him.
- Invite the children to share some of the “rules” from Scripture and from the Church that help us become a stronger community.
- Consider having the children build structures from building blocks if you have time. Invite them to make comparisons to teamwork and to individual parts coming together to build the structure.

Chapter

13

A Covenant of Love




**Chapter
13**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Deuteronomy 6:4–9

Lesson Goals

- to state that loving God is part of the Old Covenant
- to identify that Jesus made loving God part of the New Covenant also
- to recall that the first three commandments are about loving God

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

201–202, 2083–2195

Key Word

consistency

Music Suggestions

- “Teach Them (Deuteronomy 6:4–7),” by Seeds Family Worship (Seeds Family Worship)
- “Simplicity,” by Rend Collective (Integrity Music)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 13 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- paper hearts cut from red construction paper, one for each child
- twenty balloons (or additional paper hearts, if anyone has a latex allergy)
- a permanent marker
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

God is perfect and complete in himself. He didn’t need to create us—he chose to create us out of love. This message is the heart of the Gospel, the New Covenant: God loves us and wants us to be with him. God loved us first and created us out of his unending, powerful love.

God calls us to put his love into action here on Earth, with everything we do and say. Throughout the Old and New Covenants, God’s love for us remains strong. To remain faithful to his covenant, we respond to his love. We do our part by loving God with our whole selves—acting on what we believe with all our heart, soul, and strength.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 13 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to think about giving a gift to someone. Lead a discussion using the following questions:
 - How do you expect the person who receives your gift to act?
 - How do you feel if they say thank you?
 - How do you feel if they don’t say anything to you and throw away your gift?
- Explain that God created us out of love and that our life is our gift from God.
- Tell the children that today they will discuss what it means to love God with everything we are and everything we do.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Deuteronomy 6:4–9 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 253). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 254. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 254–255.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How does the Scripture say we should love God? (*We should love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength.*)
 - To whom does Moses say the Israelites should teach these commands? (to their children)
 - When does Moses say the Israelites should repeat these commands? (*when they are at home and also when they are away*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Pictures and symbols will vary but should depict the words God, heart, soul, and strength.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 255, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - God is all-powerful and all-wise. He has no beginning and no end—he is everywhere.
 - God created the whole world out of love.
 - We must love God more than we love anything or anyone else. It is easy to love God, because he loved us first.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 255, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the red paper hearts. Instruct the children to write “I love God because . . .” at the top of the hearts. Have them list three reasons on the hearts, as suggested in the Live It!
- Tell the children to sign their names on the hearts and take them home to use as a bookmark in the family Bible.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 255.
- Invite volunteers to retell the story by describing each image. (*Image 1 shows Moses telling the Israelites to love God. Image 2 shows a parent teaching his children the commandment to love God. Image 3 shows a man reading the commandments of God. Image 4 shows the commandments of God in a box attached to a doorpost. [You might inform the children that this box is called a mezuzah and is still posted on the doorways of Jewish homes today.]*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Loving God Balloon Scavenger Hunt

- Blow up twenty balloons: four sets of five balloons each. Use a permanent marker to label three balloons for each set: “Heart,” “Soul,” and “Strength.” Label the remaining two balloons in each set with any word you like (these are fillers). *Note: If anyone in your class is allergic to latex, please modify this activity by making and labeling additional red construction paper hearts instead of balloons.*
- Scatter or hide the balloons throughout the classroom.

- Arrange the children into four teams. Explain that each team must work together to find three balloons, one with each of these labels: “Heart,” “Soul,” and “Strength.”
- Give the children time to collect all three balloons for their teams. Have the children sit in their teams when they are finished.

Process the Activity

- Write “Heart,” “Soul,” and “Strength” as three column headings on the board.
- Invite the teams to take turns brainstorming ways to live out each kind of love for God. Write their answers under the appropriate headings. *(For example: Love God with all your soul by praying every day. Love God with all your heart by showing kindness to others. Love God with all your strength by helping your parents bring in the groceries.)*
- Remind the children that loving God is our priority. Explain that if we don’t love God, we can’t love anyone else.

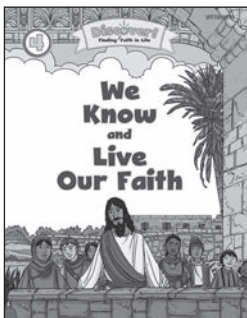
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 151 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that in today’s Scripture story, Moses calls the Israelites to love God. Explain that loving God was a part of the Old Covenant that God made with Moses and the Israelites.
- Tell the group that Moses tells the Israelites that they must never stop thinking about God. Share that Moses says that everything that is done should be done for God’s glory and love.
- Point out that Jesus tells us that we must love God as part of the New Covenant. Reread this part of the Understand It! and recall what the children remember about the Great Commandment covered in chapter 8.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1988 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* to see the list of the Ten Commandments. Have a volunteer read the first three commandments. Write these on the board as they are read.
- Show the children that the first three of the Ten Commandments are specifically about loving God. Invite the children to share the meaning of the first three commandments, affirming correct responses and filling in details when necessary.

- Explain to the children that they have been learning about **consistency** in thought and action in previous lessons. Tell them that *consistency* means acting and believing the same way.
- Remind the group that they have been learning that we can't say we love God but then do something that goes against God's love. Point out that our actions must match, or be consistent with, our words and beliefs.
- Tell the children that God created us out of love so that we can love him and share his love with others.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Where do we hear the commandment to love God? (*We hear it in the commands Moses gave to the Israelites, we hear it in the Great Commandment from Jesus, and we see it repeated in the first three of the Ten Commandments.*)
 - Why did God create us? (*God created us out of love so that we can love him and share his love with others.*)
 - What does it mean to be consistent in actions and words when we talk about loving God? (*Being consistent means that our actions must match our words.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Thérèse, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "The First Commandment," page 52
- "The Second Commandment," page 53
- "The Third Commandment," pages 54–55

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Loving God is part of the Old Covenant.
 - Jesus made loving God part of the New Covenant also.
 - The first three Commandments are about loving God.
- Invite the children to place sticker 13 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 13

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1994 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* and pray the "Act of Love" aloud.
- Invite the children to respond with "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- cardstock cut into bookmarks, one for each child
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- stickers or glitter glue

Love God at All Times Bookmark (15 minutes)

- Distribute the bookmarks, drawing materials, and decorating supplies.
- Invite the children to create a bookmark that will remind them to love God at all times. Encourage them to be creative. Allow 5–10 minutes for the children to work.
- Invite volunteers to share their bookmarks with the class.
- Encourage the children to take home their bookmarks and use them whenever they read for school or for fun.

Materials Needed

- blank paper

Consistency Is Key! (15 minutes)

- Explain to the children that what we believe determines how we act. Explain that our minds are very powerful, so it is important to develop correct beliefs in what we know to be true.
- Arrange the children into pairs. Give each pair two pieces of blank paper. On one piece of paper, have them write three things they know to be true about God. On the other piece of paper, have them write three things they know to be false about God.
- Invite each pair to read one thing from their true list. Affirm all reasonable responses. Then invite each pair to read one thing from their false list. Ask the group how they know these things are false.
- Tell the pairs to crumple up their false pieces of paper and throw them in the trash. Explain that we need to do the same thing as we grow in faith—“throw away” false beliefs that might lead us down the wrong path.
- Remind the children that above all, we know it is true that God loves us.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

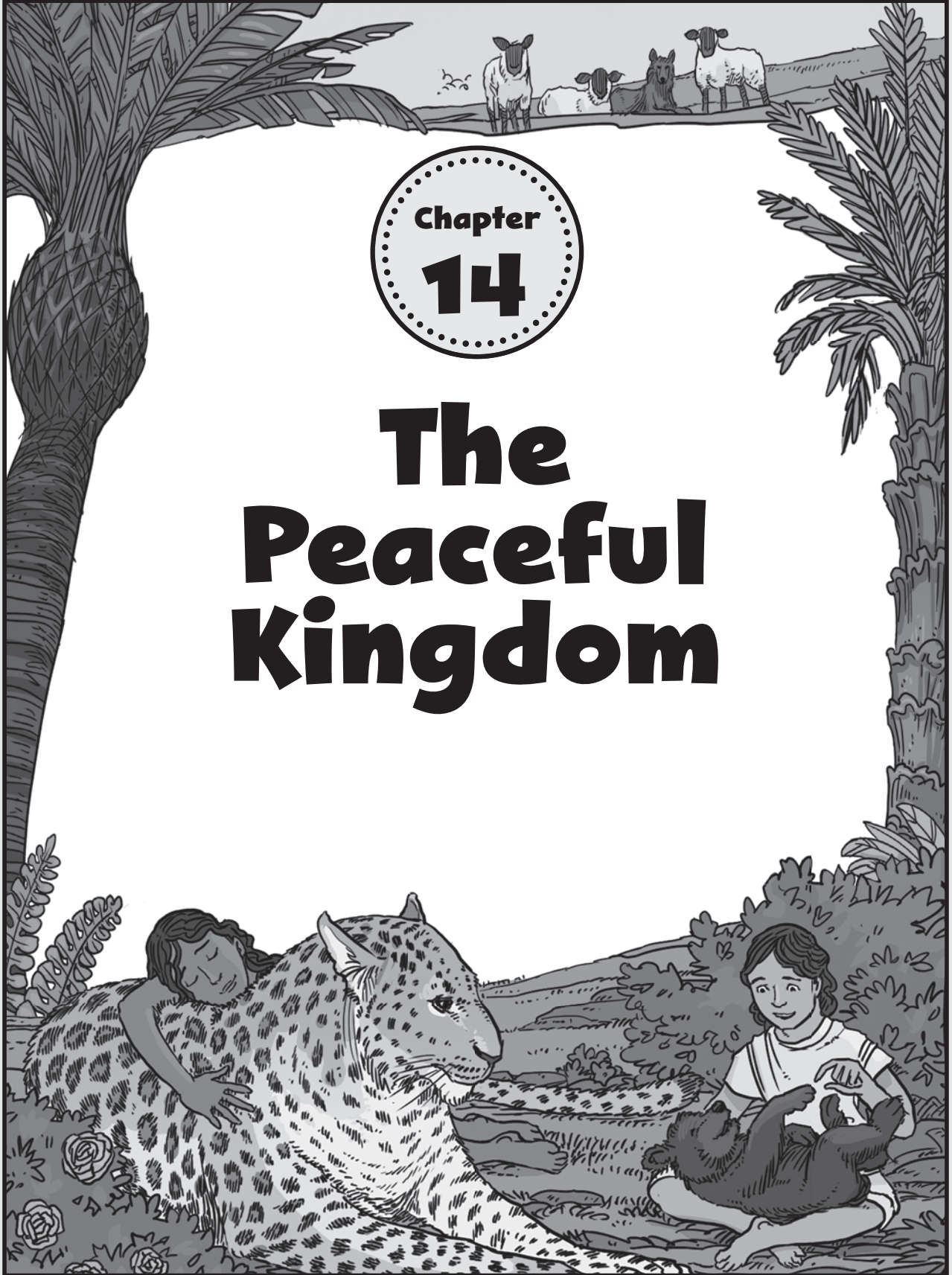
Sing and Dance Along: All That I Am (15 minutes)

- Show the video “All That I Am | Treasured VBS | Group Publishing” (YouTube, 2:53) to the group several times so the children can learn the dance moves. Encourage the children to sing and dance along as they feel comfortable.
- Discuss how the children can use their talents to praise God. Ask these questions:
 - Who has a talent for music? sports? arts or crafts? welcoming people? helping people?
 - How can you use these talents to praise God in your parish? in your family? in your school?
- Tell the children that when we praise God, we are showing God we love him.
- Encourage the children to brainstorm other ways to praise and love God every day.

Chapter

14

The Peaceful Kingdom




 Chapter
14

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Isaiah 11:6–9

Lesson Goals

- to explain that the prophet Isaiah has shown us a picture of the peace of the Kingdom of God
- to identify Jesus as the King who will bring about this peaceful kingdom
- to describe peaceful ways we can contribute to the coming of the Kingdom of God

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catechism References

672, 736, 2302–2306, 2437–2442

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

Key Words

leopard, poisonous, sacred, harmony

Music Suggestions

- “Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace,” by Lori True (GIA Publications, Inc.)
- “You Are Holy (Prince of Peace),” by Cedarmont Kids (Cedarmont Music, LLC)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 14 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

We yearn for peace. Our everyday lives are busy and often chaotic. People fight over little things and big things. Tensions are high, with so much stress.

In Isaiah 11:1–9, the prophet paints a different picture. He foretells the peace and understanding that will come from a descendant of David, who will be called the Prince of Peace.

We know this Prince of Peace is Jesus, our King. Jesus taught us the way of peace as part of the New Covenant. We are humans who still carry the consequences of sin, and peace often eludes us. But that doesn’t mean that we can’t find peace in Jesus. We can work toward peace on Earth by following his example. With small, peaceful, constructive actions, we can work toward peace in our families and communities. More and more, we can work toward peace and finally experience God’s ultimate peace in the Kingdom of Heaven.

**Get Ready! (10 minutes)****Opening Prayer**

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 14 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to think about a time when they apologized to someone. Ask how they felt before they apologized and then after.
- Invite the children to think about a time when someone apologized to them. Ask how they felt before the other person apologized and then after.
- Explain that sometimes we don’t get along with others. Point out that we hurt others, and we are hurt by others. Note that we have disagreements and even fights. Share that we need to make peace with others to move forward.
- Tell the children that today they will learn about Jesus as the Prince of Peace who helps us spread peace in our world.

**Dive In! (15 minutes)****Scripture Focus**

- Invite the children to find Isaiah 11:1–9 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (pages 1105 and 1108). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1106. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1106–1107. Invite them to describe what they see and guess what the artwork says about today’s lesson.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What were some creatures that the prophet Isaiah said would live in peace? (*wolves, sheep, leopards, goats, calves and cows, lions, bears, snakes, and children*)
 - What did he say would not be harmed if it played near a dangerous snake? (*a baby*)
 - What will not exist on God’s sacred hill, Zion? (*harmful and evil things*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1107, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Sometimes people fight. But Isaiah tells us that a time is coming when people will stop fighting.
 - Isaiah says a new king will bring about peace. In this kingdom there will be no more enemies and no more danger.
 - Jesus is that king. His perfect Kingdom is Heaven.
 - In Heaven, there is no fighting or sadness, only joy and peace.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1107, or have a volunteer read it.
- Point out that when Saint Francis lists an action that does not contribute to peace, he shows us that God has provided an action we can take to be peacemakers.
- Invite the children to suggest some examples of ways Jesus gives us to make peace.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1107.
- Invite the children to retell the story to a partner using the images. (*Image 1 shows a sheep and a wolf sitting together. Image 2 shows a cow and a bear sitting together. Image 3 shows a lion eating straw instead of meat. Image 4 shows a baby playing near a poisonous snake without being harmed.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Frozen or Free

- Clear a large space, or play this activity outside or in a larger room.
- Tell the children that they will be playing a game like Red Light, Green Light.
- Instruct the children to stand, walk, hop, and skip around the open area. Point out that they are free to move around because there are no obstacles.
- Explain that you will call out some actions. Tell the children to freeze when they hear a hurtful action. Tell them to move around when you call out a peaceful or helpful action.
- Use this list of actions, and add your own: gossiping, telling the truth, loving, forgiving, holding a grudge, blaming others, lying, being obedient.
- Invite two or three volunteers to be the leader who calls out actions to the group, time permitting.

Process the Activity

- Invite the children to share their thoughts on the game. Ask them to recall which actions were helpful and which actions were hurtful.
- Remind the children that when we work toward peace and harmony, we are all free to do what we need to do. Tell them that when we choose conflict, we get stuck (frozen) and can't move forward or help others.

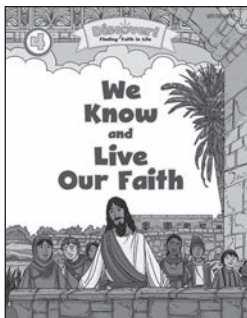
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 159 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that in today's reading, the prophet Isaiah is describing the Kingdom of God: Heaven. Explain that in Heaven, there is no conflict, no fighting, and no sadness but rather, perfect peace.
- Explore with the children how they would feel if they didn't have to worry anymore or if no one was mean and everyone was getting along.
- Remind the children that Jesus is the king Isaiah foretold. Explain that one of Jesus' titles is Prince of Peace. Point out that Jesus shows us how to live in peace with one another, helping to build the Kingdom of God here on Earth, while we wait to join his Kingdom in Heaven.
- Tell the children that we don't have to wait for Heaven to live out our call to peace. Explain that we can practice living peacefully here on Earth by following Jesus and his teachings. Remind them that Jesus showed us how to live in peace with one another right now, and that this can be the beginning of Heaven on Earth! Tell the children that we can help build up the Kingdom of God right now.
- Share with the group that Jesus taught us how to love. Remind the group that if we remember that love should be at the center of everything we do, we can work toward peace. Explain that we are called to live in **harmony**, and that living in harmony means working together to do what is best for everyone, not just what is best for ourselves.
- Invite the children to think of a music performance. Point out that when all the instruments and voices work together, the music is beautiful. Help the children understand that if every musician did his or her own thing the performance would have no order and no harmony—it would not sound good at all.
- Create two columns on the board, with the headings "Peace" and "Conflict." Ask the following questions, and record the children's answers in the appropriate columns:
 - What are some things you can do in your family, school, or community to promote peace and harmony?
 - What are some things that stand in the way of peace or that cause conflict?

- Remind the children that following Jesus means always working to do what is right, even when we don't feel like it. Explain that we might have to "be the bigger person" by apologizing or working to fix a relationship, even if it would be easier for us to stay angry and upset.
- Highlight the fact that following Jesus all the time helps promote peace because he shows us the way to hope and healing.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What kind of kingdom was the prophet Isaiah describing? (*Isaiah was describing the Kingdom of Peace, or Heaven.*)
 - Who is our King, the Prince of Peace? (*Jesus*)
 - What are some ways that we can work toward peace and help build the Kingdom of God here on Earth? (*We can follow Jesus, who showed us how to live in peace and how to love. We can apologize or work to fix a relationship.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. Give them some examples of hurtful experiences if necessary (someone being a bully, stealing, or lying) and also ways to heal that experience (the bully can apologize, the person can give back what he or she stole, the person can apologize and tell the truth). *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Blessed James Miller, and encourage the children to say, "Blessed James Miller, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Jesus, the New Covenant" (paragraph 7), page 25
- "A Society of Justice," page 73

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The prophet Isaiah has shown us a picture of the peace of the Kingdom of God.
 - Jesus is the king who will bring about this peaceful kingdom.
 - We can contribute to the coming of the Kingdom of God in peaceful ways.
- Invite the children to place sticker 14 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 14

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to return to the excerpt from the prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi, found in the Live It! on page 1107 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Have the group read the first line in unison. Then invite the children on the left side of the room to read the nonpeaceful half of each line, and have the children on the right side of the room read the peaceful response.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- construction paper
- markers or crayons
- stickers and glitter glue
- a board or poster to write on

Acrostic “Peacemaker” Prayer (15 minutes)

- Have the children review the excerpt from the prayer of Saint Francis in the Live it! on page 1107 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible*.
- Invite them to spend a quiet moment thinking of ways that God is calling them to be peacemakers.
- Distribute the construction paper, drawing materials, and decorating materials.
- Write the word *peacemaker* vertically down the left side of the board in capital letters. Instruct the children to do the same on their papers.
- Invite the children to compose an acrostic poem-prayer by writing a peace-making word or phrase that begins with each letter in the word *peacemaker*. Encourage them to be creative in thinking of ways they can live as a peacemaker. Allow 5–10 minutes for the children to write and decorate their papers.
- Invite volunteers to share their prayers with the class.
- Encourage the children to take their prayers home and hang them where they will see their prayers every day.

Materials Needed

- masking tape

Peacemaker or Troublemaker? (15 minutes)

- Prepare by using masking tape to make a line down the center of the room.
- Explain that we have a choice to make every day. Tell the children that we can choose to listen and make peace, or we can choose to ignore or disobey. Remind them that when we listen to Jesus, we follow his example of peacemaking; when we choose not to listen, we can become troublemakers.
- Ask the children to line up single file in the middle of the room with their feet on the tape line. Stand at one end of the line and have all the children face you. Explain that the right side of the line (as they face you) is for the peacemakers, and the left is for the troublemakers.
- Explain that you will call out actions that describe either peacemaking or troublemaking. Tell them that if the action describes peacemaking, they should jump to the right side of the line. Tell them that if the action describes troublemaking, they should jump to the left side of the line.
- Tell them that you will begin slowly and then start calling out actions faster.
- Lead the activity using this list of actions, or make up your own: gossiping, telling the truth, loving, forgiving, holding a grudge, blaming others, lying, using mean words, being obedient, and so on.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Peacemaking Skills (15 minutes)

- Show the video “KIDS—Peacemaker” (YouTube, 2:25) to the group.
- Invite the group to brainstorm ways that Jesus is our example of peace.
- Have the children form pairs or small teams. Ask the teams to come up with a 1-minute skit showing one way we can follow Jesus’ call to peace in everyday life. Allow the teams to work for a few minutes.
- Have the teams perform their skits for the group.
- Invite the children to comment on something new they learned from watching one another’s skits.

Chapter

15

We Renew Our Baptismal Promises




 Chapter
15

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

John 3:4–6

Lesson Goals

- to recall that Baptism is a new birth that makes us children of God and members of the Church
- to review that Baptism makes us part of the New Covenant of Jesus
- to discuss the meaning of the promises made at Baptism for us by our godparents

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

1213–1284

Key Words

womb, physically, spiritually, godparents

Music Suggestions

- “We Are the Body of Christ,” by Andrew Chinn (World Library Publications)
- “Children of God,” by Phil Wickham (Phil Wickham)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 15 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- handout of the baptismal promises from your parish or online, one copy for each child
- a small bowl of holy water
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

We become children of God by being born again in Baptism. Through Baptism, we enter into the New Covenant established by Jesus. This covenant asks us to respond to God through faith—a response that we must live out every day of our lives.

Those who were baptized as infants or young children might not remember their Baptism, but that does not mean they are not graced with abundant new life or are not bound by the promises made on their behalf. At Baptism, parents and godparents make serious promises to God to nurture the spiritual life of the child to grow in faith.

Every Easter, Catholics personally renew their baptismal promises before God. This renewal reminds us that God expects our participation in this New Covenant. As God’s children, we must live out our faith in our lives through our choices, thoughts, and actions. In this lesson, the children will have the opportunity to renew their baptismal promises and say yes to God once again. We are so blessed to have a loving Father who calls us to participate in his plan for us!



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 15 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Lead the children in a brief discussion about water. Encourage the discussion by using questions like these, and write the children’s answers on the board.
 - Why is water important? What does it do? (*Water gives life, cleans us, quenches our thirst, and so on.*)
 - What would happen without water? (*People or other living things would die.*)
 - Why do we call water the source of life? (*It is necessary for every living thing.*)
- Invite the children to think of ways water is used in the life of the Church. Guide the children to think of something that many babies experience at Church that involves water. Write “Baptism” on the board.
- Tell the children that today they will review the significance of Baptism and how it makes us an important part of the Church.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find John 3:1–21 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (pages 1651 and 1656). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1658. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1658–1659. Invite the children to share what they see.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did Nicodemus ask Jesus? (*Nicodemus asked how a grown man can be born again, because we cannot reenter our mother's womb to be born a second time.*)
 - What did Jesus say is necessary to enter the Kingdom of God? (*Jesus says we must be born of water and the Spirit.*)
 - Jesus said that a person is born physically of human parents, but how is a person born spiritually? (*A person is born spiritually of the Holy Spirit.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answer: We are born again through Baptism.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1659, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Jesus says that Baptism is another birth, in which we receive a new spiritual life.
 - Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Baptism makes us children of God and members of his family, the Church.
 - Baptism saves us from sin and marks us as God's holy people.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1659, or have a volunteer read it.
- Direct the children's attention back to the list of qualities and importance of water.
- Encourage them to say a quiet prayer of gratitude to God throughout the day every time they use water in any way. Tell them that they can also offer a prayer of gratitude for being born again spiritually through Baptism.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1659.
- Invite several volunteers to share what each image shows and how each image relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows Nicodemus asking Jesus how to be born again. Image 2 shows Jesus explaining that one must be spiritually reborn. Image 3 shows a Baptism of an adult in a river.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Baptism Tag

- Prepare for this activity by clearing the room of all obstacles, or take the children to the gym, multipurpose room, or an outdoor space.
- Explain to the children that today they will play a variation of tag—but in reverse. Ask the children to spread out and freeze. Choose one child to be “It.”
- Explain that the job of “It” is to tag other children. When they get tagged, they have to say, “Born again!”
- State that the “born again” child will become another “It” and join in tagging even more children.
- Everyone who is tagged becomes “It,” and it is everyone’s job to make sure no one remains frozen.
- Start the game of tag. Consider playing the game several times until the children get the idea. You might want to time them to see how long it takes the group to all become “born again.”

Process the Activity

- Ask the children why it was important to work together. (*If everyone did not participate, then it would have taken longer for everyone to be tagged, etc.*)
- Invite the children to reflect on how the game is similar to Baptism. (*Being tagged is being freed and unfrozen, just like Baptism frees us from sin. Normally, only an ordained minister—a parish priest or deacon—can baptize. However, in an emergency, anyone with the right intention can baptize.*)
- Remind the children that through our Baptism, we all belong to our family, the Church. Explain that we profess a unity of faith, of beliefs, as Catholics and that we actively participate in our faith as children of God and members of the Church.
- Assure any children who are not yet baptized that they are welcome in the Church and that the Church looks forward to the day that they too might be baptized.

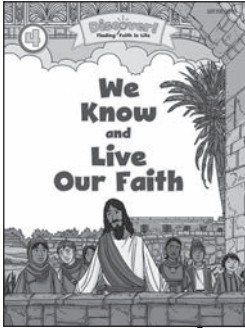
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 168 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Prepare in advance by making copies of the baptismal promises from the Easter Vigil, one copy for each child. Place a bowl of holy water on the prayer table or other central location.
- Remind the children that they learned about Baptism in chapter 12. Recall that they learned that the Sacrament of Baptism brings us into the Body of Christ, the Church; it is a covenant between God and us; and each of us is an important and necessary part of the Body of Christ.
- Review that in today's Featured Story they learned that Baptism is a new birth, a spiritual rebirth and that just as water strengthens and preserves our physical life, the waters of Baptism signify the new spiritual life of our soul. Remind the children that Baptism is a new birth that makes us children of God and members of the Church.
- Ask the children if any of them have attended a Baptism, perhaps of a friend or relative. Invite those children who have to share what they remember about the celebration. Summarize their sharing in points on the board.
- Ask whether any children remember their own Baptism. Acknowledge those who remember their Baptism because they were older at the time, and acknowledge what some children know from hearing their family's stories. Affirm all answers and make the following points:
 - Many of us were baptized as infants and don't remember our Baptism. But just because we don't remember something doesn't mean that we didn't play an important part in it or that it never happened.
 - Explain that every baptized person's name is registered in the parish list, and every baptized person is given a certificate of Baptism.
 - Our Baptism was the first step of faith. We are called to live out our faith every day.
 - At your Baptism, your parents and your **godparents**—adults your parents chose to support your faith—made solemn promises before God. Remember that in covenants, all parties must make and keep promises to one another.
 - The promises of Baptism bring us into the New Covenant of Jesus. God's part in this covenant is to adopt us into his family. We become children of God and sisters and brothers of Jesus. Our part is to live out our faith every day.
 - Every day we must make choices that bring us closer to God. The Church, as our spiritual family, helps us with this.
- Tell the children that at every Easter, we have the opportunity to renew our baptismal promises. Distribute the copies of the baptismal promises.
- Invite volunteers to read the first three baptismal questions to the group. Explain the meaning:
 - In the first set of promises we reject Satan, his works, and all his empty promises.
 - Making these promises first is important because by rejecting Satan we are rejecting sin.

- Invite volunteers to read the rest of the baptismal promises to the group. Make the following points:
 - These questions form an affirmation, or profession, of faith.
 - These are not just words—they are solemn promises to God. Our words are meant to reflect our beliefs.
 - You—or your godparents at your Baptism—are telling God that you will live out your faith every day of your life. You will work to always follow him.
- Invite the children to renew their baptismal promises together by reading the questions. Encourage the children to respond “I do” clearly and firmly after each question.
- Ask the children to come forward and bless themselves in the holy water you have provided. Explain that every time we bless ourselves with holy water (such as entering and exiting a church), we remember the great gift of our Baptism and the promises we made before God.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How is Baptism like birth? (*Baptism is a spiritual rebirth.*)
 - What role do parents and godparents play in the Baptism of an infant or young child? (*They promise God that they will teach the child how to live the faith.*)
 - What is our part in the New Covenant? (*Our part is to live out our faith every day.*)
 - When do we renew our baptismal promises every year? (*We renew our baptismal promises every Easter.*)
 - How does remembering our Baptism help us? (*It reminds us of who we are—children of God—and that we have chosen to follow Jesus.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Paul the Apostle, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Paul, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Sacraments and Sacramentals” (paragraph 1), page 38
- “Life in Christ,” page 47

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Baptism is a new birth that makes us children of God and members of the Church.
 - Baptism makes us part of the New Covenant of Jesus.
 - Our godparents made promises to God for us at our Baptism.
- Invite the children to place sticker 15 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 15

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the group to read the prayer together on page 4 of the activity booklet.
- Invite the children to pray the Lord’s Prayer, followed by a final “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*
- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Materials Needed

- a timer
- index cards with words related to Baptism
- a board or posters to write on

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- stationery, one piece for each child

Water as a Sign of Life (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to turn to the Live It! on page 1659 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Distribute the paper and drawing materials and instruct the children to follow the directions on page 1659. Encourage them to be creative, and allow several minutes for them to work.
- Ask the children to write a short prayer thanking God for the wonderful gift of water.
- Invite volunteers to share their drawings and prayers with the group.
- Encourage the children to take their art home and place it somewhere to remind them to thank God for his many gifts, especially the gift of Baptism.

Draw It! Baptism (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by creating index cards with terms related to Baptism: *water, oil, baby, godparents, parents, priest, deacon, baptismal font, Holy Spirit, members of the Church, candle, white garment*.
- Arrange the children into two teams, and give each team a piece of chalk or a dry-erase marker (depending on your board). Explain that the two teams will take turns trying to guess a word that is related to Baptism.
- Ask each team to nominate a team member to draw the word. Explain that the goal is to draw a picture that helps the team to guess the correct word in 45 seconds. Toss a coin to determine which team goes first.
- Show the card to the person drawing for the first team. Tell the person to begin, and set the timer for 45 seconds.
- Continue with the second team once time is up or the first team guesses the correct word. Play several rounds, rotating the drawing duties among team members if you wish.
- Conclude the game by reminding the children that all of these words are related to Baptism.

Choose Him Again (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Sacraments 101: Baptism (why we baptize)" (YouTube, 6:29).
- Invite the children to share what they learned from the video and which points they already knew.
- Ask them if they have ever been to a Baptism other than their own. Have them share what they remember.
- Explain that each Easter the whole Church renews our baptismal promises, recommitting to following Jesus and proclaiming our faith.
- Distribute stationery for letter-writing. Ask the children to write a short letter to Jesus, beginning, "Dear Jesus, I choose you because . . ."
- Call on volunteers, if time permits, to share their letters. Ask the children to take their letters home and put them in a safe place until Easter, as a reminder of why they are renewing their baptismal promises.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Unit 4

We Live the Covenant

Chapter 16

The Way to Happiness 170

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Chapter

16

The Way to Happiness




 Chapter
16

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 5:6–9

Lesson Goals

- to identify that Jesus shows us the way to God’s Kingdom
- to define three ways to be happy as taught by Jesus
- to describe how we can follow the ways to happiness today

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

1716–1729

Key Words

merciful, pure in heart, Beatitudes

Music Suggestions

- “The Beatitudes Song,” by The Church at Brook Hills (Brook Hills Music)
- “Build Your Kingdom Here,” by Rend Collective (Rend Collective Experiment)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 16 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Sometimes we confuse happiness with everyday feelings, but that is not what Jesus taught us. In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us a path to happiness that seems to contradict our modern understanding of happiness. We might read his teachings and think, How can I be persecuted or insulted and still be happy?

The happiness Jesus describes is a deeper happiness often referred to as joy. We are joyful because we know that we are sons and daughters of God. We are joyful because we belong to God’s family, the Church. We are joyful when we actively participate in God’s plan for us, even if we don’t understand his plan. We are joyful because God promised us true happiness.

During our earthly life, we are working toward eternal happiness with God by living our faith. Jesus gave us the Beatitudes to teach us the way to true happiness by showing us how to imitate him. We no longer worry about what the world thinks of us—we focus only on how God sees us and our world. We are free to make God’s priorities our own. In the Beatitudes, we find the perfect way to find happiness in living the New Covenant.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 16 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Write the word *happiness* on the board. Create a mind map by inviting the children to brainstorm things that make them happy and then to write them on lines connecting to the word *happiness* on the board.
- Invite volunteers to describe a time when they were happy doing something that seemed difficult, such as giving something they really wanted to someone in need, or doing something for others that they didn't really feel like doing. Affirm all reasonable examples and write them on the board.
- Tell the children that today's lesson will focus on the **Beatitudes**, Jesus' teachings on true happiness, and how we find happiness by following him and living the New Covenant.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 5:1–12 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1454–1455). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1456. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1456–1457. Invite volunteers to describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Whom did Jesus say God will "satisfy fully"? (*Jesus said that God will satisfy those who want to do what God requires.*)
 - To whom will God be merciful? (*God will be merciful to those who are merciful to others.*)

- Who will see God? (*Jesus says the pure of heart will see God.*)
- Whom will God call his children? (*God will call his children those who work for peace.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. heart, 2. peace, 3. requires, 4. merciful. The unscrambled word is Heaven.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1457, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - God made us to be happy, so we care for others by wanting them to be happy also.
 - Jesus gave us the secrets to happiness. Three of the ways he taught were to have mercy, be pure of heart, and work for peace.
 - Jesus did not just teach us these secrets—he lived them.
 - Living the way that Jesus taught is the only way we will find true happiness.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1457, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to brainstorm ways they can follow Jesus' teaching to have mercy, be pure of heart, and work for peace. Affirm all reasonable answers, and write them on the board.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1457.
- Invite volunteers to share what each image shows and how each image relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows a child showing mercy by offering bread to a hungry man. Image 2 shows a child praying, being pure in heart. Image 3 shows a child being a peacemaker.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Happiness Skits

- Divide the children into four groups, and assign each group one of the Beatitudes from the Featured Story (Matthew 5:6–9).
- Tell the groups that they must work together to develop a 1-minute skit illustrating the beatitude they have been assigned.
- Explain that their skits should focus on small problems we encounter every day, or small tasks we can do every day, such as forgiving someone who wronged us, saying a prayer every morning, finding a peaceful solution to a fight with a sibling, and so on.

- Emphasize that the skits should be about 1 minute long. Allow the groups 5 minutes to develop their skits.
- Invite each group to perform its skit for the other children.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children what they learned from watching one another's skits.
- Invite the children to share observations of how the skits portrayed following Jesus.
- Conclude by thanking them for sharing examples of the Beatitudes being lived out.

Additional Activity Options

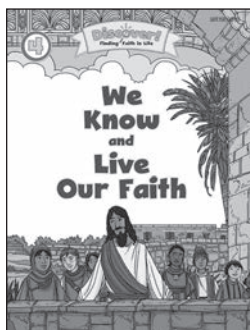
If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 177 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain that in today's Scripture reading, Jesus is showing us the way to God's Kingdom and teaching us again how to love as God loves. Remind the children that Jesus tells us to love everyone and to do the right thing, even when it is difficult.
- Share that today's reading tells three ways that we can be happy: we should be merciful, be pure in heart, and work for peace.
- Write "Beatitudes = Happiness" on the board. Make the following points:
 - The word *beatitude* means "happiness" or "blessedness."
 - The Beatitudes show us the way of happiness by teaching us to act toward others as Jesus does.
 - Remember how Jesus wasn't always treated nicely? It did not matter how others treated him. He always responded with love. He did God's will here on Earth, and he asks us to do the same.
 - We know that God wants us to be happy and safe. We keep our part of the New Covenant by doing what he asks.
- Ask the children to recall the discussion about happiness at the beginning of the lesson. Invite them to compare their discussion of happiness with Jesus' teachings about happiness. Lead them to the following points:
 - Happiness is not just a feeling in a moment. True happiness is a lasting sense of peace and joy that comes from doing the right thing, even when it is hard.
 - God wants us to be happy. Our final goal is Heaven, God's Kingdom. In Heaven, we will be truly happy. Here on Earth, true happiness is knowing Jesus and following his way by living by the Beatitudes.
 - Jesus shows us the way to God's Kingdom through the Beatitudes. When

we follow the Beatitudes, we follow Jesus' example of how to act.

- Have the children turn to the list of the Beatitudes on page 1988 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.
- Write the word *attitude* on the board. Explain that living the New Covenant doesn't mean just believing something in our minds. Emphasize that it requires us to act on our belief every day. Tell the group that just like our attitude reflects how we are feeling, our attitude should also reflect our beliefs through our actions toward others.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - According to today's Featured Story, what are three ways to follow Jesus? (*We can follow Jesus by being merciful, being pure of heart, and working for peace.*)
 - What are these ways to happiness called? (*the Beatitudes*)
 - What can we do today to be happy and to live the New Covenant? (*We must act on our beliefs through our actions toward others every day. We can live the covenant by following the Beatitudes.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. happiness, 2. Jesus, 3. joy, 4. merciful, pure in heart, peace.* Encourage the children to sign the Beatitudes Pledge. You may want to have them stand and take the pledge together, and then sign together.
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint Josephine Bakhita, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Josephine, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "The Beatitudes" + activity, pages 67–68

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Jesus shows us the way to God's Kingdom.
 - In today's Featured Story, Jesus gives us three ways to be happy.
 - We can follow these ways to happiness today.
- Invite the children to place sticker 16 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 16

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Ask the children to respond to each petition with "Lord, hear our prayer." Read each of the following petitions.
 - That we will always do what God requires, even when it is difficult, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - That we will always show mercy, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - That we will always work for peace, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - That we will always be pure in heart, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - That we will always work for what is right and good, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - That we will always work for happiness by following Jesus' example, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - We ask all of this in Jesus' name.
- Invite the children to respond with "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- none

When We Are Happy, We Show It! (15 minutes)

- Invite all the children to stand in one large circle, with enough space between each child for movement.
- Ask the children to recall the song “If You’re Happy and You Know It.” Explain that you will sing “If you’re happy and you know it” followed by an action you want the group to perform (such as clapping hands, twirling around, and so on). Tell the children to pick up the rest of the verse and sing with you while performing the actions.
- Sing the first verse and invite the group’s participation. Then invite volunteers to take turns leading the class with actions that show happiness.
- Conclude by reminding the children that when we are happy, we show it. Our actions show that we are happy. Remind the children that God wants us to always be happy and to spread happiness to others.

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Illustrating Happiness (15 minutes)

- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials to the children. Have the children reread the Live It! on page 1457 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Invite them to draw a picture of themselves living out one of the ways of happiness listed. Allow a few moments for the children to work.
- Invite each child to share and explain his or her drawing with the group.
- Ask the children how applying Jesus’ teaching to our lives can help us find happiness. Affirm all reasonable answers.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Following Happiness (15 minutes)

- Show the video “BEGINNER MOTIONS (The Beatitudes)” (YouTube, 2:35) to the group. Encourage the children to follow along with the motions. Consider playing the video two or three times to help the children learn it.
- Ask the children to name some of the actions and promises listed in the video.
- Invite the children to brainstorm ways they can live out being peaceful, merciful, or pure in heart. Affirm all reasonable answers, and write them on the board.
- Remind the children that only by following what Jesus taught can we be truly happy.

Chapter

17

We Celebrate Our Covenant with God




 Chapter
17

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

2 Samuel 6:12–15

Lesson Goals

- to state that the Ark of the Covenant was a sign of the presence of God and his covenant among the community
- to identify that God's presence among us brings us joy
- to name the Mass as the way we celebrate our covenant with God today

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

1322–1332, 1373–1375, 2130, 2594

Key Words

ark of the Lord, fatling, girt, Ark of the Covenant, tabernacle, sanctuary lamp

Music Suggestions

- "10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)," by Matt Redman (sixstepsrecords/Sparrow Records)
- "You Are Good," by Bethel Music Kids (Bethel Music)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 17 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose
- upbeat music suitable for dancing joyfully

Background Reflection

Can you imagine being so excited that you just burst into dance? That is exactly what we read in today's Featured Story about David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant. David was so overcome with joy and thanksgiving for the presence of God that he sang and danced to welcome the Ark into his city. David did not care how he looked—he cared only for praising God.

Can we say the same when we worship God through the Mass? Mass is the ultimate way we celebrate our covenant with God today. We may not dance like David did, but our heart and mind should completely fill with awe and joy at God's presence among us. We should participate fully, lifting and joining our hearts and minds and voices to praise and celebrate God's presence with us.

At Mass, Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist, under the appearances of bread and wine. We are truly in the presence of God, and the presence of God is within us. This great gift of his presence with us and in us should fill our hearts with joy and wonder. Praise God!

**Get Ready! (10 minutes)****Opening Prayer**

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 17 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Write "Celebrate!" on the board. Invite the children to describe what comes to mind when they hear the word *celebrate*. Ask them to brainstorm things that happen at a celebration. Affirm all reasonable answers and write them on the board.
- Tell the children that they will learn about how King David celebrated God's presence and how we celebrate God's presence today.

**Dive In! (15 minutes)****Scripture Focus**

- Invite the children to find 2 Samuel 6:12–19 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 422–423). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 424. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened and slightly different version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 424–425. Invite volunteers to share what they notice.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did David bring from the house of Obed-edom into the City of David? (*David brought the Ark of the Lord into his city.*)
 - What did David sacrifice in thanksgiving? (*David sacrificed "an ox and a fatling" [verse 13], or a fatted calf.*)
 - What else did David do in thanksgiving to show his joy? (*He danced "with abandon" [verse 14], meaning he danced wildly.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.* Invite the children to share their answers and discuss their thoughts. Tell them that they will learn more about this Scripture passage in this lesson.

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 425, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - God is so wonderful and great that we call him awesome, meaning we are filled with awe.
 - For the Israelites, God was present in the Ark of the Lord. That is why David celebrated when the Ark was brought into his city.
 - David celebrated first by offering a sacrifice to honor God.
 - Then David took off his kingly clothing to lead everyone in celebrating and honoring God by dancing and making music.
 - God is with us always too, especially when we gather in church to pray.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 425, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to spend a few minutes reflecting quietly on how they experience the presence of God at Mass.
- Invite volunteers to share their thoughts. Affirm all reasonable answers.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 425.
- Invite volunteers to describe what each image shows and how each image relates to the Scripture passage. *(Image 1 shows King David receiving the news that the Ark of the Lord will be sent to the City of David. Image 2 shows King David sacrificing an ox and fattling. Image 3 shows David dancing before the Ark of the Lord. Image 4 shows all the house of Israel.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Follow the Leader: Dance Edition

- Prepare by obtaining upbeat music suitable for dancing joyfully—either one of the music suggestions or another song. Be ready to play the music for the group. Prepare a few simple dance moves to show the children.
- Explain to the children that they will follow as a leader shows them dance movements. Explain that they should follow the leader's joyful dancing.
- Play the music, and lead the children in some dance moves during the song.
- Ask for three volunteers to become new leaders. Tell the new leaders that they should choose one dance move to show the group during the song.
- Play the song again, and have the first volunteer lead with his or her dance move. Switch to the second and third volunteers at appropriate intervals during the song.

Process the Activity

- Discuss with the children how dancing can be a way to express joy. Tie this to the joy that David felt because he wanted to celebrate God’s presence.
- Invite the children to share other ways we might celebrate that God is with us always, especially when we gather in church to pray.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 184–185 in its place.

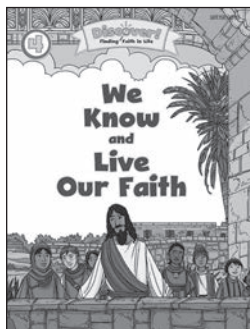
Core Teaching

- Explain that the Ark of the Lord is also called the **Ark of the Covenant**. Make the following points:
 - The Ark of the Covenant was very special to the Israelites because it was God’s throne. For the Israelites, God was present here.
 - Because it held the Ten Commandments, the Ark was also a sign of God’s presence and a symbol of the covenant between God and the Israelites.
 - There was only one Ark of the Covenant, and it was always handled with the greatest respect and awe.
 - David brought the Ark of the Covenant to the City of David, which was Jerusalem and the capital city at the time, so that the Israelites could worship God in his very presence.
- Remind the children that today we celebrate the New Covenant at Mass. Tell the group that we can compare David’s celebration of God’s presence in the Ark with our celebration of God’s presence at Mass today.
- Write the following terms on the board: *music, praise, sacrifice, God’s presence*. Ask the children to brainstorm examples of each idea from today’s Scripture reading that is part of the Mass. (For example, the Scripture passage describes the playing of horns, and we begin Mass with an entrance song.)
- Introduce an important similarity between the Scripture story and the Mass: namely, the way in which the **tabernacle** in every church building is like the Ark of the Covenant. Make the following points:
 - The tabernacle is the box, usually made out of gold, with a door, that we see in or near the sanctuary in each Catholic church.
 - The priest puts the remaining consecrated hosts—the Body of Christ—in a large chalice inside the tabernacle after each celebration of the Eucharist.
 - The tabernacle therefore holds the Real Presence of Jesus Christ.
 - To remind us that Jesus is present, a red candle or lantern, called a **sanctuary lamp**, sits or hangs near the tabernacle. This candle always remains lit, just like the light of Christ is always present in our lives.
- Remind the children that we celebrate God’s presence at Mass. Explain that this is one reason we should actively join in worshipping God. Tell them that we may not be dancing at Mass, but we can sing and participate, just like King David did. Remind them that God’s presence with us brings us joy!

- Explain that Mass is also an opportunity for us to come together as a community. The Israelites joined David in celebration. We should do the same at Mass: join together as a community to worship God as one. At Mass, we celebrate our covenant with God today.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is another name for the Ark of the Lord, and why was it special? *(It is also called the Ark of the Covenant. It was special because it was the throne of God, and also a symbol of the covenant between God and the Israelites because it contained the tablets with the Ten Commandments.)*
 - How do we celebrate God’s presence and our New Covenant with him today? *(We celebrate God’s presence and the New Covenant in the Mass.)*
 - Where do we find the Real Presence of Jesus in every Catholic church or chapel? *(Jesus is really present in the consecrated hosts inside the tabernacle.)*
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint David the King, and encourage the children to say, “Saint David the King, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Ark of the Covenant,” page 17

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Ark of the Covenant was a sign of the presence of God and his covenant among the community.
 - God's presence among us brings us joy.
 - The Mass is the way we celebrate our covenant with God today.
- Invite the children to place sticker 17 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 17

Closing Prayer

- Tell the children that King David is thought to be the author of many of the Psalms in the Old Testament. Explain that today's closing prayer is a song of praise from Psalm 117.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Read Psalm 117 on page 934 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Consider having the children repeat each line after you as a call-and-response.
- Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- slips of paper with Bible passages

The Bible Gives Examples of Joy (15 minutes)

- Prepare slips of paper in advance with the following Bible citations on them, one per slip:

◦ 1 Chronicles 16:8–18	◦ Psalm 150
◦ 1 Chronicles 16:28–34	◦ Philippians 4:4–7
◦ Psalm 117	◦ 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18
- Point out to the children that today's Featured Story comes from the Second Book of Samuel in the Old Testament. Explain that the Old Testament includes many teachings about joy.

- Ask the children to form six groups, and give each group one of the slips you prepared. Ask each group to find the Bible passage on its slip and be prepared to read it in front of the class. (*Optional: Review with the children how to locate a verse in the Bible, using John 3:16 as a sample.*)
- Allow time for the groups to locate their passages. Invite each group to come forward and read its passage.
- Ask the children the following questions:
 - What did you learn about joy and praise for God from these verses? (*Examples might include how people used music in praise, or the many ways people praised God for watching over his people.*)
 - What are some similarities between these passages and today's Featured Story about King David and the Ark of the Lord? (*Examples might include praising God for his goodness, or making music and dancing as forms of praise.*)

Materials Needed

- small cardboard boxes, one for each child
- decorating materials, such as stickers, regular glue and glitter glue, ribbon, etc.
- small pieces of paper

Prayer Box: God Is Always There for Us (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by gathering small cardboard boxes (one per child) and a variety of decorating supplies.
- Distribute the boxes to the children. Invite the children to form four to six groups, and supply each group with decorating materials.
- Tell the children that today they will create prayer boxes that they can use at home. Invite the children to decorate the boxes however they want to remind them to turn to God in prayer. Allow a few minutes for decorating.
- Give each child several small pieces of paper, and ask them to write short prayers on the pieces and place them inside their boxes. Explain that their prayers can be prayers of thanksgiving, praise, petition, or intercession. Encourage the children to write general prayers they can say on a regular basis. Allow a few more minutes for the children to work.
- Conclude by explaining how prayer is another way in which we experience God's presence. Remind the children that in prayer we express our joys or sorrows to a God who is always there for us.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Sing and Dance Along: Bible Theater (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Bible Theater: 2 Samuel—David Dances" (YouTube, 2:13) to the group.
- Discuss David's attitude in the video. Lead the children to realize that David did not care whether other people liked his celebration. Explain that he wasn't doing it for others—he was doing it for God!
- Ask the children how they would feel dancing and singing to God.
- Show the video "Power Shuffle | Everest VBS Music Video | Group Publishing" (YouTube, 3:14) to the group. Encourage the children to sing and dance along.
- Remind the children that we can celebrate our covenant with God through our own singing and dancing, just as David did.

Chapter

18

Living the Covenant




 Chapter
18

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

1 John 3:11, 16–18

Lesson Goals

- to identify that love was Jesus' message in the New Covenant
- to name love in action as something that can help those who are in need
- to state that the Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Commandments are against unloving thoughts and actions

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

1822–1829, 2331–2400, 2443–2449, 2514–2557

Key Words

claim, envy

Music Suggestions

- “Love Take Me Over,” by Steven Curtis Chapman (Provident Label Group, LLC)
- “Your Love Awakens Me,” by Phil Wickham (Phil Wickham)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 18 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Jesus based the message of the Gospel on love, so love is at the center of what we do as Christians. Love motivates our actions and calls us to work for the good of others. Love truly requires us to desire the good of one another—to love one another as God loves us.

The Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Commandments warn us against envious thoughts and actions based on wanting someone or something that we have no right to want. Envy can harm the attitude of love that God calls us to embrace, because envy steals our joy and makes us believe that what others have is better than what we have. Envy might even make us think we have a right to take what others have. When envy enters our hearts, we become bitter, selfish, and angry. We focus on ourselves and on negative things, and we lose our focus on love.

Instead of focusing on what we don't have, we need to remember the love we do have. Let us always model this love through our actions and desires.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 18 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to recall what the Great Commandment is. (*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” [Mark 12:30–31]*) Affirm correct responses and write the Great Commandment on the board.
- Ask the children what one word can summarize the entire Great Commandment. (*love*)
- Invite the children to share what they remember from the past lessons about why love is important to Christians. Affirm all reasonable answers and write them on the board.
- Tell the children that today they will learn more about placing love at the center of everything they do.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find 1 John 3:11–18 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1934). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1936. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on page 1934.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1936–1937. Invite the children to describe what they see, and encourage them to connect the artwork with the title of the Featured Story.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What message does the writer of this letter, the Apostle John, say we have heard from the very beginning? (*that we should love one another*)
 - How do we know what love is? (*We know what love is because Christ gave his life for us.*)
 - Can we claim to love God if we turn away from those in need? (*No, we cannot.*)
 - How do we show our love for one another? (*We show our love through our actions, not just our words.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. F, 2. T, 3. F, 4. T, 5. T*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1937, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - We show our love and live out Jesus' teachings about love through our actions.
 - If we love God, we need to show our love by doing things to help other children of God—our brothers and sisters.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1937, or have a volunteer read it.
- Remind the children that charity is a particular kind of love—loving one another the way God loves us.
- Invite the children to share examples of how we can live out the call to charity in our families. Affirm all reasonable examples.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1937.
- Invite volunteers to share what each image shows and how each image relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows the message from this Scripture, "Love One Another." Image 2 shows Jesus showing us love by sacrificing himself on the cross. Image 3 shows a grown person giving money to the poor. Image 4 shows a child putting his offering into a box for the poor.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Captain, May My Neighbor?

- Prepare for the activity by clearing adequate space, or consider playing this game in the gym, multipurpose room, or outdoor space.
- Tell the children that they will play the game Captain, May My Neighbor? Explain that it is like Mother, May I, but with a twist. Explain that the children must ask the permission of the group's Captain for their neighbor—another child in the group—instead of for themselves.
- Choose one child to be the Captain, and ask that child to stand at one side of the room. Ask the other children to line up on the opposite side of the room.
- Tell the children that to play, they have to ask the Captain if their neighbor can move forward. Tell the children that they must give their neighbor's name and specify the number and type of movements forward. Give the following examples:
 - You can say, "Captain, can Maria take three steps forward?"
 - The Captain can then respond with yes or no. The Captain can also modify the activity. For example, the Captain can respond, "Maria can move forward two jumps."
 - Neither you nor the Captain can have someone move backward. All movement must go forward.
- Tell the children that the first person to reach the Captain and tap him or her on the shoulder wins. Point out that this means the children will be helping one another win, not themselves.
- Begin the game and referee as needed. Make sure all the children are helping one another to advance.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children how they felt asking permission for others instead of for themselves. Question whether that was easy or difficult.
- Explain to the children that Jesus asks us to do something similar when he asks us to look out for the happiness of others. Remind them that he asks us to love one another, even if that means we sometimes have to give up something for ourselves.

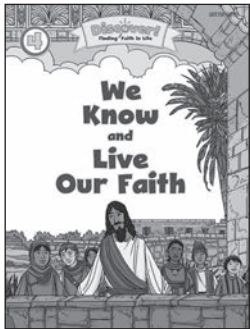
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 194–195 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Write the word *charity* on the board. Remind the children that charity describes loving others as God loves us.
- Remind the children that Jesus gave us the ultimate example of charity, or love, by sacrificing himself on the cross for our sake. Ask the children to describe simple ways we can follow Jesus' example of love for others in our everyday lives, and affirm reasonable answers.
- Make the following points about Jesus' message of love:
 - Love was Jesus' message in the New Covenant.
 - As Christians, we are called to always model Christ's love, even if that means sacrificing our own needs or wants.
 - We should always desire good for other people, especially those who are in need. Love in action always helps those who are in need.
 - Loving others like God loves us takes hard work. It means focusing on what we have instead of focusing on what we don't have.
 - The world today can tempt us to think that we need every new thing to be happy. But we can be happy knowing we are loved by God and following his call to love others.
- Invite the children to turn to the list of the Ten Commandments on page 1988 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Invite three volunteers to read the Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Commandments.
- Explain that these three commandments tell us to avoid unloving thoughts and actions, and they warn us about the dangers of selfishness and **envy**. Tell the children that envy is wanting what others have, thinking that we should have what they have and not being happy for another's good fortune or accomplishments.
- Share that envy steals our joy. When we are envious, we lose focus on love and become distracted by thinking of ourselves only. Point out that when we think of ourselves only, we stop remembering how to celebrate others. We stop remembering how to love. Explain that when we focus on acting out of love, we will always remember to do what is best for others.

- Remind the children that loving God and loving others are the same thing. Recall that in chapter 8 they learned that we cannot say we love God but then hate our neighbors. Share that if we say we love God, then we follow God's commandments because all of his commandments center on love.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is charity? What is the ultimate example of charity? (*Charity is loving others as God loves us. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate example of charity, his love for us.*)
 - What are we called to do as Christians? Whom should we especially help? (*We are called to love in a way that models Christ's love. We should especially help those in need.*)
 - How can we be happy? (*We can be happy knowing we are loved by God and following his call to love others.*)
 - What do the Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Commandments have in common? (*They all call us to avoid unloving thoughts and actions and warn us of the dangers of selfishness and envy.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint John Baptist de La Salle, and encourage the children to say, "Saint John Baptist de La Salle, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "The Sixth Commandment," page 57
- "The Ninth Commandment," pages 61–62
- "The Tenth Commandment," pages 62–63

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Love was Jesus' message in the New Covenant.
 - Love in action is something that can help those who are in need.
 - The Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Commandments are against unloving thoughts and actions.
- Invite the children to place sticker 18 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 18

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite the children to respond "Lord, hear our prayer" after each intention below. Allow the children to add their own intentions at the end.
 - For our Pope, our bishop, and all priests, deacons, and religious in our diocese, that they may always be examples of Christ's love, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - For the sick and suffering of our community, that they may receive support from all of us, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - For all families in our parish, that they may always be examples of Christ's love, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - For our own growth in God's love, that we may always model our love through our actions, we pray to the Lord . . .
 - For all the intentions we hold in our hearts (*pause to allow the children to add their own intentions*), we pray to the Lord . . .
- End by saying, "This we ask through Christ our Lord."
- Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- paper lunch bags
- decorating materials, such as glitter glue, markers, cheerful stickers, etc.
- small slips of paper

An Action of Love (15 minutes)

- Tell the children that prayer is a great way to show our love for others.
- Distribute the lunch bags and decorating materials. Ask the children to decorate their prayer bags with images and words that remind them to pray. Allow a few minutes for the children to decorate their bags.
- Distribute several slips of paper to each child, and ask the children to write intentions on their slips—something that they would like others to pray for. Tell them they can write their names on their intentions or leave them anonymous, whichever they wish. Allow a few more minutes for the children to write their intentions.
- Invite the children to exchange their intentions with another child. Have all the children put the intentions they received inside their prayer bags.
- Ask the children to take the prayer bags home. Tell them to read the slips at home and pray for the intentions they received for at least the next week.
- Encourage the children to add their intentions or those of their family to their prayer bags throughout the week.
- Remind the children how important it is to always show our love through action. Emphasize that prayer is a powerful action of love. Explain that when we remember others' intentions in prayer, we lift them up and look out for what is best for them.

Materials Needed

- a board or poster to write on

Love in Action Theater (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to brainstorm ways that they can show love in their everyday activities—at home, at school, anywhere and in every situation. Affirm all reasonable answers and write them on the board. Keep notes for yourself about which suggestions would make good skits.
- Ask the children to form groups of four. Assign each group a scenario from the suggestions on the board to act out in front of the class. Tell the children that the skits should last 1–3 minutes and should be relatable by focusing on small tasks that anyone can do every day. Allow the groups 5–7 minutes to come up with their skits.
- Invite each group to perform its skit.
- Ask the children what they learned from each skit, and thank them for sharing examples of God's love!

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Sing and Dance Along: Sharing Love (15 minutes)

- Show the video “Give It Away | Weird Animals VBS | Group Publishing” (YouTube, 2:52) to the group. Encourage the children to sing and dance along. Consider playing this video two or three times so the children can learn the songs and dance movements.
- Invite the children to brainstorm ways that they can “give away” God’s love. Affirm all reasonable answers and write them on the board.
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials, and invite the children to draw a picture showing one thing that they will do this week to share God’s love with others.
- Invite volunteers to share their pictures with the class.
- Tell the children to take their drawings home and display them in a place where they will see them every day.

Chapter

19

We Care for Those Who Are Poor




**Chapter
19**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Amos 8:4–7

Lesson Goals

- to summarize that the prophet Amos called people to treat others fairly and justly
- to identify that we are called to share what we have with others who may not have enough
- to state that following the covenant means treating others fairly and justly

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catechism References

1397, 2401–2463

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

Key Words

trample, measures, debt, sworn, justice

Music Suggestions

- “Speak Life,” by TobyMac (ForeFront Records)
- “Go Make a Difference,” by Steve Angrisano (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 19 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- music for “Musical Chairs” activity
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

This chapter takes another look at how we live out the New Covenant—not only by what we don’t do but also by what we choose to do. The Seventh Commandment requires us not to steal, but it encompasses so much more than merely not stealing. The Seventh Commandment requires that we make sure everyone has what they need to live. Living the covenant calls us to seek justice and to give others what they deserve.

The Church has always had concern and love for the poor. We have a special obligation to look out for those who cannot help or defend themselves. We are called to respond to the needs of those around us, not to be selfish. We give of what we have joyfully, knowing that our gift will help them. It is in this joyful giving that we truly imitate Christ’s love for us.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 19 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to brainstorm what they think of when they hear the word *sharing*. Affirm all reasonable responses.
- Ask them to recall the many ways that others share things with them (*parents share love and money, friends share time, teachers share knowledge, doctors share care, etc.*). Invite them to reflect on how they feel when they realize how much others share with them.
- Have them now recall a time when someone wouldn’t share with them and how that made them feel.
- Tell the children that in today’s lesson they will learn about the importance of sharing what they have with others, especially those who are poor or in need.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Amos 8:4–7 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1389). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1390. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1390–1391.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who does the prophet Amos say he is talking to in this Scripture passage? *(Amos says he is talking to those who take advantage of those in need and who try to destroy the poor.)*
 - What are some of the evil deeds that the prophet Amos says are wrong? *(Amos mentions overcharging, changing the measuring scales so as to cheat people, and buying someone who is poor to make them a slave.)*
 - According to Amos, what will the Lord do about these evils? *(The Lord will never forget when someone does evil.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. Amos, 2. slaves, 3. false, 4. grain, 5. worthless, 6. evil*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1391, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - We share what we have with others because God wants us all to have what we need to live.
 - Sometimes people are greedy. They take more than they need and may cheat others.
 - Amos reminds us that God remembers everything we do, good or bad, and he will punish those who treat others badly, even if they do not get caught by other people.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1391, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to find a partner, and have them work in pairs to discuss the scenarios listed in the Live It!
- Invite volunteers to share their responses for each scenario.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1391.
- Invite volunteers to describe what each image shows and how each image relates to the Scripture passage. *(Image 1 shows a person waiting to sell grain. Image 2 shows the same person tipping the scale with their finger to charge the other person [the buyer] unfairly. Image 3 shows stalks of wheat that are worthless because they do not have many grains on them. Image 4 shows someone selling a poor person as a slave.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Musical Chairs

- Prepare the classroom by setting the chairs in a circle, one chair for each child except one. Select a song or songs to play during the game.
- Explain to the children that they will play Musical Chairs, but with a twist. Tell them that you will play music, and when the music stops, each child must find a chair to sit on.
- Tell the children that after each round of music, you will take away another chair.
- Explain that in a regular game of Musical Chairs, the person or people left standing would be “out.” Tell them that in this game, those still sitting must find a way to share their chairs with those left standing.
- Point out that those who have a chair may invite those who are left standing to put their hands on the back of a chair, hold a leg of the chair, or sit on half of the chair. Explain that the only rule is that everyone must keep their hands to themselves—no sitting on or touching one another—but after each round, everyone should be touching a chair in some way.
- Emphasize that those who are standing must be invited by someone sitting to touch their chair in some way.
- Begin the game, and continue until only one chair remains and everyone has found a way to touch it.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children how they felt playing the game. Ask what made it difficult or easy to find a way for everyone to stay in the game.
- Remind the children that we can always make room for others and their needs—sometimes we just have to get creative!

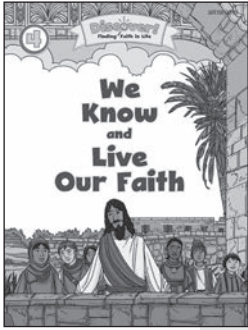
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 203 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Write the word *covenant* on the board. Ask the children what they have learned about covenants so far, and write some of their answers on the board as a mind map with *covenant* at the center.
- Tell the children that in the Old Testament, God’s people, the Israelites, often needed reminders to keep the covenant. Explain that the Old Testament tells us how the prophets reminded God’s people of what the covenant called them to do.

- Point out that in today’s Scripture passage, for example, they learned that the prophet Amos reminded people to treat others fairly and justly. Explain that Amos had noticed people becoming greedy and breaking the covenant by not treating people fairly and justly. Their behavior was selfish.
- Tell the children that Amos reminded the people that God always remembers what has been done—right or wrong.
- Write the word **justice** on the board, along with this definition: “Giving to others what they need and what is rightly due to them.”
- Invite the children to turn to the Ten Commandments on page 1988 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Invite a volunteer to read the Seventh Commandment.
- Explain to the children that when God said, “Thou shalt not steal,” he was commanding that we literally avoid stealing. Point out that God also meant that we must also treat others with justice—that is, treat everyone fairly and give everyone what they are owed.
- Tell the children that is it not always enough to *not do* something (like not stealing or not cheating). Remind the children that the commandments also require us to *do* good things.
- Explain that we are called to share what we have with others who may not have enough. Remind the children that when we do good things and treat others fairly and justly, we are actively living out and following the covenant.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Whom did God send to remind the people of how to keep the covenant in the Old Testament? (*God sent the prophets.*)
 - What is justice? (*Justice is giving to someone what they need and deserve.*)
 - What does the Seventh Commandment call us to do and not do? (*The Seventh Commandment tells us not to steal, but it also calls us to share with others who do not have enough.*)
 - When we follow the commandments, is it enough to just avoid doing bad things? (*No, we must also do good things.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Katharine Drexel, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Katharine, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Legitimate Authority” (last paragraph), page 72
- “A Society of Justice,” page 73

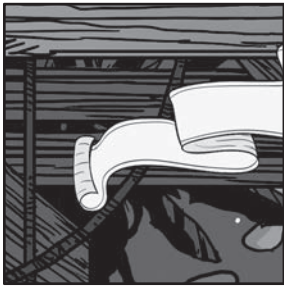
Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The prophet Amos called people to treat others fairly and justly.
 - We are called to share what we have with others who may not have enough.
 - Following the covenant means treating others fairly and justly.
- Invite the children to place sticker 19 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 19

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Turn to Proverbs 31:8–9 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 992), and invite two volunteers to read the verses.
- Conclude by saying:
 - Lord God, please place in our hearts the desire to serve all those on Earth, especially those who are in most need. Amen.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- twelve (or more) newspapers or other print news sources
- markers
- several pairs of scissors

Opportunities Are All Around Us (15 minutes)

- Prepare by gathering twelve or more print news sources: local newspapers, parish bulletins, community newsletters, diocesan newspapers, and so on. Screen the newsletters to remove any inappropriate news for this age-group. Gather markers and scissors, enough to share.
- Ask the children to form groups of three or four. Invite each group to choose a couple of news sources from the stack you have brought in. Provide each group with markers and scissors.
- Ask the groups to look through the newspapers and find as many examples as they can of people helping one another. Tell them to cut out or circle the examples they find. Allow a few minutes for the groups to work.
- Invite spokespeople from each group to share what their groups found and why they noticed those stories.
- Tell the children that we have opportunities all around our community to make a difference.

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*

What Would You Do? (15 minutes)

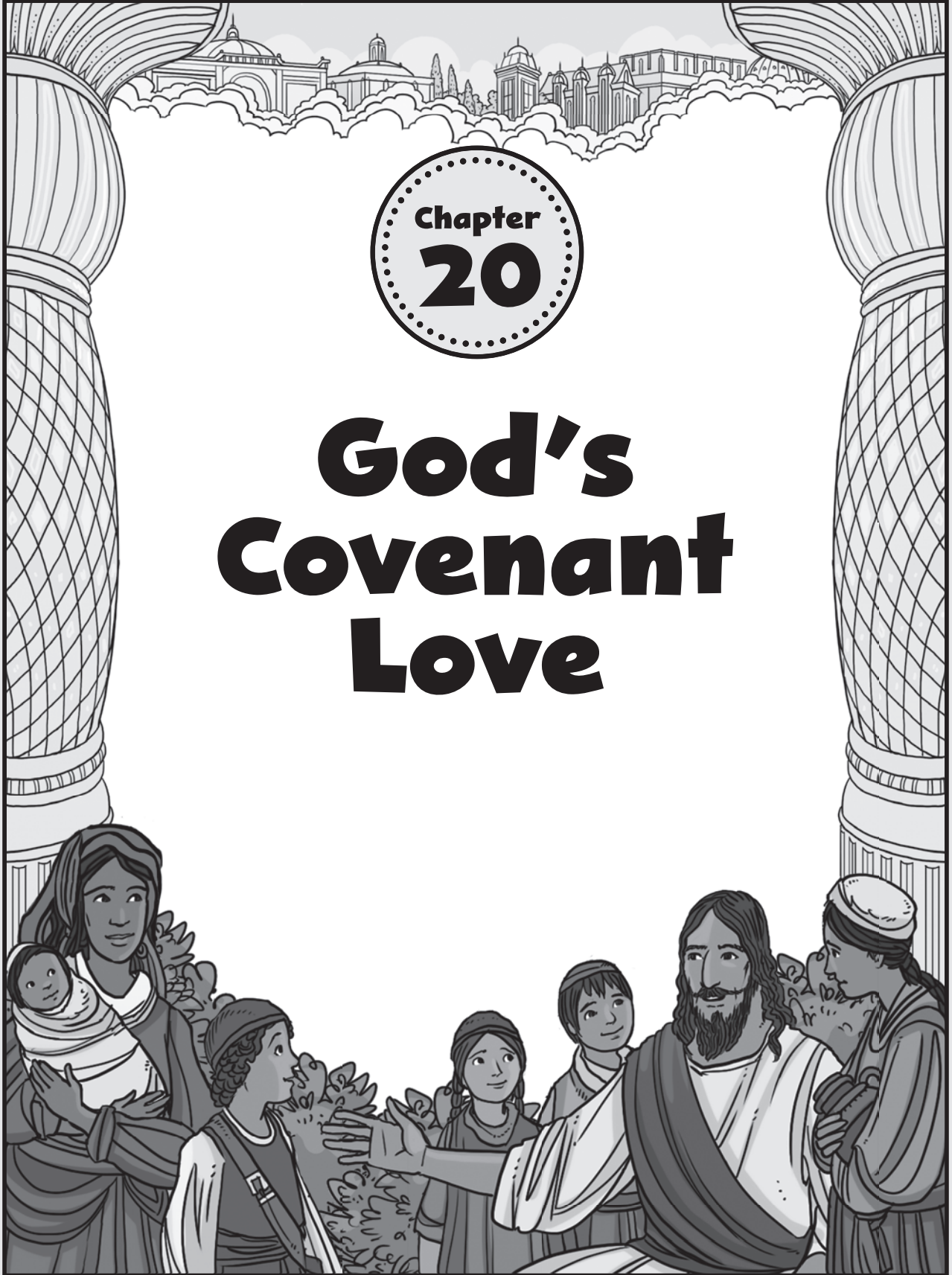
- Ask the children to turn to the Live It! on page 1391 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Explain that the children will develop skits to process the situations in the text.
- Arrange the children into six groups. Assign the first Live It! scenario to two groups. Explain that one group must develop a skit to depict the situation as written, and the other group must develop a skit to show what Greg should do differently.
- Assign the second and third scenarios to two groups each as above.
- Allow the groups a few minutes to develop their skits.
- Invite the two Greg groups to present their skits: the negative skit and then the positive change. Do the same for the Ramon groups and the Olivia groups.
- Ask the children to comment on the negative situations and how the positive groups made them right.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Simple Acts of Kindness (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Simple Acts of Kindness (HD)—Give it a Try" (YouTube, 4:26) to the group.
- Invite the children to describe acts of kindness that stood out in this video.
- Remind the children how treating others fairly can be something we do every day. Point out that acts of kindness do not have to be big and grand—simple acts of kindness can make a big impact on someone's day.
- Invite the children to write down one simple act of kindness they can practice this week.



Chapter

20

God's Covenant Love


 Chapter
20

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Romans 8:35, 37–39

Lesson Goals

- to identify that Jesus showed us that nothing can separate us from God's love
- to recall the love of God and how it has been shown to us in our lives
- to state that prayer is our connection with God who loves us

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

603, 2558–2745

Key Words

persecution, victory

Music Suggestions

- "Good Good Father," by Chris Tomlin (sixstepsrecords/Sparrow Records)
- "Never Let Go of Me (Shipwreck VBS Theme Song)," by GroupMusic (Group Publishing)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 20 activity booklet
- the sticker sheet and the *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- a beach ball
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

This lesson reminds us that nothing can separate us from God's love. God's love for us is unconditional. We don't earn it, and we don't lose it. Saint Paul reminds us of God's total and unending love in today's Scripture passage from his Letter to the Romans. Even when things seem to not go our way, God is always there for us.

Prayer is how we connect with God. Just like we communicate with those we love to keep in touch, we communicate with God through prayer. In prayer, we open ourselves by talking and listening to God.

Participating in the Eucharist is the ultimate prayer because the Eucharist is our participation in God's own life. God gave us his only Son out of love for us. Let us always remember how great God's love for us is and keep close to him in prayer throughout our lives.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of their chapter 20 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to recall what they learned about the Old and New Covenants this year. Write some of their responses on the board. Ask them what word describes or summarizes both the Old and New Covenants. Lead them to recall that the word *love* summarizes both covenants.
- Write “God’s Love” in the center of the board and circle it. Remind the children that God has always shown his love to his people and he continues to show his love for us today through the New Covenant.
- Ask the children what comes to mind when they think of God’s love. Create a mind map by writing their examples on the board and connecting them to “God’s Love” at the center. (*Examples might include: God gave us his Son, Jesus; God always loves us; we are God’s children; we are made in God’s image.*)
- Remind the children that they are all God’s children and that God loves them. Recall that God loves all of us so much that he sent Jesus.
- Tell the children that today they will learn that God’s love for us never ends and that nothing can separate us from that love.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Romans 8:31–39 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1779). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1780. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1780–1781.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Can trouble, hardship, persecution, hunger, poverty, danger, or death separate us from the love of Christ? *(No, they cannot.)*
 - What does Saint Paul say grants us victory over all these misfortunes? *(We have victory over these things through Jesus Christ.)*
 - What can separate us from God's love? *(Nothing in all of creation can separate us from God's love.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. poverty, 2. hardship, 3. persecution, 4. trouble, 5. hunger, 6. death. The unscrambled word in the last sentence is victory.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud Understand It! on page 1781, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Like those who care for us, Jesus has total and unending love for us.
 - Jesus showed us how much he loved us by dying and rising for us.
 - No matter what kind of sufferings we face, we can remember God's love for us.
 - Nothing can stop God from loving us.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1781, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to brainstorm examples of things in their life that remind them of God's love for them.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1781.
- Invite volunteers to describe what each image shows and how each image relates to the Scripture passage. *(Image 1 shows Jesus welcoming people—nothing separates him from his people. Image 2 shows that even poverty or illness can't separate us from Jesus' love. Image 3 shows Christ the King as the one who shows us God's never-ending love in Heaven.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

God’s Love Is All Around Us

- Prepare by bringing in a beach ball. Clear a space in the classroom, or move the group to the gym, a multipurpose room, or an outdoor space.
- Ask the children to stand in a circle. Join them in the circle, holding the beach ball.
- Explain that you will toss the ball to a child, and that child must name one thing that reminds him or her of God’s love. That child must then pass the ball to another child in the group, who must do the same.
- Begin the activity, and continue until everyone has had at least one turn.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children what new ideas they heard during the activity. Invite them to point out similarities and differences among the answers.
- Point out that everyone thought of ways they experience God’s love in their lives.
- Emphasize how God’s love is never-ending, just like the circle the children stood in.

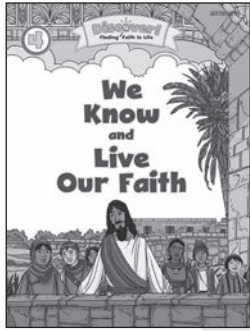
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 211–212 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Invite the children to recall an experience of God’s love during a difficult time. Give an example from your personal experience, and then prompt with questions:
 - Think quietly a moment. How has God’s love been shown to you in your life?
 - Have you ever been afraid of something, but then God showed you how to conquer your fear?
 - Have you worried about how something would go, but then you realized it worked out even better than you imagined?

- Acknowledge that it is not always easy for us to remember that God loves us. Tell the children that when difficult things happen, sometimes we don't understand why. We may even be tempted to think that God doesn't love us.
- Remind them that Jesus tells us that no matter what happens, God loves us—nothing can separate us from God's love!
- Remind the children that prayer is a way for us to connect with God and remember how much he loves us. Make the following points:
 - When you love someone, do you ignore them? No, of course not! When you love someone, you talk to that person and keep in touch.
 - Prayer is our communication with God. Through frequent prayer, we grow in relationship with God.
 - We have many different ways to pray. Some people like to pray memorized, structured prayers, like the Our Father or Hail Mary.
 - Another way to pray is by reading and reflecting on Scripture and thinking about how God is speaking to you through his words.
 - Another kind of prayer is just talking to God, telling him what is going on in your life or asking him for help.
 - All of these are great ways to keep in touch with God.
- Explain to the children that going to Mass and receiving Jesus in Holy Communion are the ultimate connection with God. Remind the children that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist, under the appearances of bread and wine.
- Emphasize that participating in Mass is how we celebrate the New Covenant. Explain that when we participate in Mass and receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we connect with God.
- Recall that we do our part in the New Covenant by responding to and participating in God's love for us.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - When bad things happen, does this mean that God has forgotten about us? (*No, he always loves us.*)
 - What do we call our way of communicating with God? (*Prayer is our communication with God.*)
 - What are some different ways of praying? (*Answers include memorized or structured prayers, reflecting on the Bible, or just talking with God.*)
 - What is the ultimate prayer? (*Participating in the Mass and receiving Holy Communion are the ultimate prayer.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint Peter Claver, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Peter Claver, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Prayer Is God’s Idea,” page 76
- “Praying to God Our Father,” page 76
- “Three Kinds of Prayer” + activity, pages 77–79

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Jesus showed us that nothing can separate us from God’s love.
 - The love of God has been shown to us in our lives.
 - Prayer is our connection with God who loves us.
- Invite the children to place sticker 20 in the appropriate space on their folder.



Sticker 20

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite volunteers to read their prayers from page 3 of the activity booklet. Follow each prayer with “Amen.”
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blindfolds, one for each child
- masking tape

Victory in Christ (15 minutes)

- Gather blindfolds in advance, one for each child. Prepare by using masking tape to mark a starting line on one side of the room and a finish line on the other side. Make sure that the children will have adequate space to walk between both lines with no obstacles.
- Line up all the children on the starting line. Hand out the blindfolds and instruct the children to tie them on. Explain to the children that they must listen carefully to your instructions.
- Instruct the children to walk toward the finish line by giving these directions:
 - Take two steps forward.
 - Hop forward twice.
 - Take one step backward.
 - Take five baby steps forward.
- Continue giving directions until all children have crossed the finish line. Invite the children to take off their blindfolds. Point out that they have finished the race.
- Explain that this activity required the children to listen and trust. Ask the children how this game would have worked if they had not listened to your instructions. (*They would not have finished.*)
- Remind the children that God loves us no matter what and always looks out for us. Tell them that he just wants us to place our trust in him and listen. Explain that even when we take steps backward, or things don't go our way, God will find a way for us to move forward because of his love for us.

Materials Needed

- photos of the children (request in advance)
- red or pink construction paper
- several pairs of scissors
- several glue sticks
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

God Loves Us (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by asking the children to bring a small school picture or candid photo of themselves. Gather the red or pink construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, and drawing materials.
- Distribute the art supplies to the children.
- Reread the Live It! on page 1781 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Ask the children to follow the instructions as you read them. Allow time between instructions for the children to share scissors and glue sticks.
- Encourage the children to decorate their hearts with everything they can think of that shows God's love for them.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Nothing Can Stop God's Love (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Reckless Love (Official Lyric Video)—Cory Asbury" (YouTube, 5:33) to the group. Ask the children to listen carefully to what the song says about God's love.
- Point out that we often use the term *reckless* to indicate behavior that could be dangerous. Emphasize in this song that it is used to show how God loves us so much that he pours his love out on us whether we return it or not. Share that in this way, God is unconcerned with the consequences of his amazing love for us—he loves us no matter what.
- Invite the children to share their thoughts on the video by asking the following discussion questions:
 - What are some ways the song describes God's love? (*The song says God's love is overwhelming, never-ending, reckless, undeserved, and so on.*)
 - What does the singer say God did when he was God's foe, or enemy? (*The singer says that God continued to love him.*)
 - What obstacles can prevent God from loving us? (*No obstacles can prevent God from loving us always, no matter what.*)
- Invite the children to spend a few minutes silently reflecting on God's love for them.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Liturgical Season Lessons

Our Lady of the Rosary

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All Saints' Day

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Meeting the Risen Jesus 264

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Ordinary Time

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**Our Lady of
the Rosary**



Holy Mary, Mother of God





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Luke 2:46–52

Lesson Goals

- to recall that Mary is the mother of Jesus
- to state that Jesus gave Mary to us to be our mother too
- to identify Jesus as being obedient to his parents

Catechism References

531–534, 963–975, 2197–2233

Key Words

Temple, treasured, favor

Music Suggestions

- “Hail, Mary,” by Danielle Rose (World Library Publications)
- “Sing of Mary,” by Donna Cori Gibson (Donna Cori Gibson)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Our Lady of the Rosary activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- images portraying Mary
- pipe cleaners, one for each child
- pony beads, eleven for each child
- a sample rosary craft
- flowers (real or artificial) for the prayer service
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The Gospels tell us little about Jesus’ childhood, but Luke describes an event that demonstrates Jesus’ obedience to Mary and Joseph. Jesus went with his parents to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. When they prepared to return to Nazareth, Mary and Joseph could not find Jesus. They finally located him in the Temple, listening to the Jewish teachers. Even though he explained that he needed to be in his Father’s house, the twelve-year-old Jesus obeyed his parents by leaving the Temple and returning with them to Nazareth.

This Scripture story is the fifth joyful mystery of the Rosary. It is a story that shows the great care Mary had for Jesus. We know that Mary cares for us too. We can call on Mary, as Mother of God, Mother of the Church, and mother to us all, to pray for us to her Son that we may grow in faith and holiness. Through the gift of the Rosary, the Church has given us a special prayer devoted to Mary in which we focus on the key events in the lives of Jesus or Mary. May we use this prayer to call on Mary, our Mother, to pray for us.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Our Lady of the Rosary activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Show the children images that portray Mary in various aspects of her biblical life. An internet search will bring up classic and contemporary renditions.
- Ask the children to look at the images and brainstorm what they know about Mary, the mother of Jesus. Write their responses on the board.
- Tell the children that in today's lesson they will learn more about Mary and will learn about a special prayer to Mary called the Rosary.

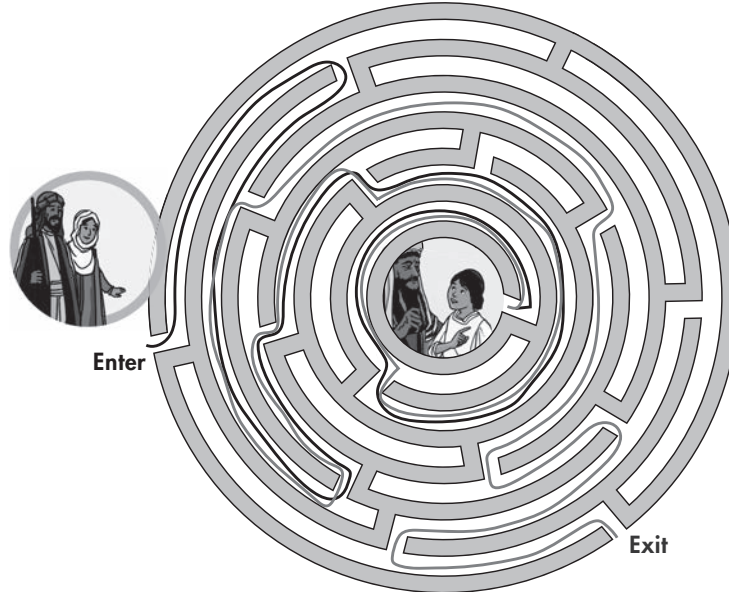


Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Luke 2:41–52 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1577 and 1580). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1582. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1582–1583. Point out that Jesus is about twelve years old in this Scripture story.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Where did Mary and Joseph find the young Jesus? (*They found him in the Temple.*)
 - With whom was Jesus talking? (*Jesus was sitting with the Jewish teachers, listening to them and asking questions.*)
 - Why were Mary and Joseph worried? (*They did not know where Jesus was.*)
 - How did Jesus answer them? (*He asked, "Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?" [verse 49].*)
 - What happens at the end of this account? (*Jesus obeys Mary and Joseph and returns with them to Nazareth.*)

- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1583, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - When Jesus was twelve, he traveled with Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem. When Mary and Joseph left to return home, Jesus stayed behind without their knowledge.
 - Mary and Joseph found Jesus talking with the teachers in the Temple.
 - Jesus amazed the teachers because he knew so much about God.
 - Jesus obeyed Mary and Joseph and returned to Nazareth with them. He obeyed them until he was a grown man.
 - Obeying our parents shows our obedience to God the Father.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1583, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the group to think about the questions for several minutes. Then invite them to say a silent prayer, asking Jesus to help them obey the people who care for them.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1583.
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story in their own words. Affirm the children for the points they remember. Help them with key points they may have left out. (*Image 1 shows the boy Jesus talking with a Jewish teacher. Image 2 shows Mary and Joseph asking Jesus why he stayed behind without their knowledge. Image 3 shows Jesus back in Nazareth, learning from Joseph.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Making Rosaries (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by gathering pipe cleaners (one for each child) and pony beads (eleven for each child). Create a sample of this rosary craft to show the children.
- Remind the children that a rosary is composed of five decades, which follow five mysteries. Ask the children if they know what prayers make up each decade. Tell them that each decade includes one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and one Glory Be. Explain that they will learn more about the Rosary shortly.
- Give each child one long pipe cleaner and eleven pony beads.
- Have the children string their beads on the pipe cleaner, leaving a space after the first one and clustering the other ten together.
- Direct the children to twist the ends of the beaded pipe cleaner together to form a circle.

Process the Activity

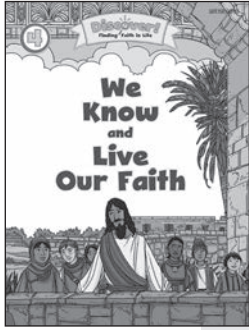
- Point out that the children have created a one-decade rosary that they can use whenever they don't have a full-size rosary with them. Tell the children that they can use this rosary or give it away to someone special.
- Invite the children to pray one decade of the Rosary. Consider praying the final joyful mystery, the finding of Jesus in the Temple, to reinforce today's Scripture reading.
- Remind the children that the Rosary is not just a mindless repetition of prayers, but rather a way to walk prayerfully through the Gospel. Explain that the Rosary honors Mary and asks her to pray to God for us.
- Ask the children if they think they could pray one decade of the Rosary each day. Discuss ways that they can include the Rosary in their prayer life.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 222–223 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Have the children turn to page 1988 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*, and invite a volunteer to read the Fourth Commandment. Recall that Jesus came not to abolish the Old Covenant but to make it come true. Point out that in today's reading, they learned that Jesus, the Son of God, obeyed his earthly parents, Mary and Joseph.
- Explain that we are called to obey our parents or anyone who takes care of us. Remind the children that by obeying those who care for us, we are obeying and honoring God.
- Explain that today's Scripture story is the fifth joyful mystery of the Rosary. Tell the children that it is a story that shows the great care Mary had for Jesus. Point out that Jesus gave Mary to us to be our mother, too, so Mary also cares for us. Tell the group that we can call on Mary—Mother of God, Mother of the Church, and mother to us all—to pray for us to her son that we may grow in faith and holiness.
- Have the children turn to page 1996 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*, and invite volunteers to read the description of the Rosary and the Mysteries of the Rosary. Explain that through the gift of the Rosary, the Church has given us a special kind of prayer devoted to Mary in which we focus on the key events from the life of Jesus or Mary.
- Tell the children that the Rosary is a beautiful way that we ask Mary to pray for us. Remind the children that we call Mary "Mother of God" because she was the mother of Jesus, who is God. Ask the children what they recall about the Holy Trinity and the three Persons of the Holy Trinity.
- Tell the group that along with Mother of God, we have many titles for Mary that honor her.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What attitudes and behaviors do we owe our parents, following Jesus' example? (*We should obey our parents, just as Jesus obeyed Mary and Joseph.*)
 - What is the name of the special kind of prayer devoted to Mary, the Mother of God? (*the Rosary*)
 - What are the Mysteries of the Rosary? (*They are the key events in the lives of Jesus or Mary.*)
 - Why do we call Mary the Mother of God? (*Because she was the mother of Jesus, and Jesus is God.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Our Lady of the Rosary, and encourage the children to say, "Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,” page 15
- “Sacraments and Sacramentals” (last paragraph), page 38
- “Vocal Prayer and Meditation,” pages 77–78

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Mary is the mother of Jesus.
 - Jesus gave Mary to us to be our Mother too.
 - Jesus was obedient to his parents.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - Mary, you said yes to God’s plan for you to give birth to his Son and to raise him. You watched as he grew, and you treasured the events of his childhood in your heart. Help us follow his example of loving obedience to those who care for us. And pray for us always, that we may continue to grow in faith. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Mary, Our Mother

Display the pictures of Mary around the prayer area. Select five volunteers to bring some flowers up to the prayer table to honor Mary. Explain that one volunteer will process each time after the group responds, "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee." Volunteers will bring their flowers and lay them on the prayer table and then return to their place. Invite all the children to stand.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: Mary, you said yes to God's plan for you to give birth to his Son and to raise him.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. *(Invite one of the volunteers to bring his or her flower to the prayer table.)*

Leader: Jesus, you obeyed Mary and Joseph, even when they did not understand you.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Leader: Jesus, you grew in both body and wisdom.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Leader: Mary, you treasured all the events of Jesus' childhood in your heart.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Leader: Mary, you are our mother too, and we ask for your prayers that we may grow in faith and holiness and become closer to your son, Jesus.

All: Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

End by singing a Marian hymn and closing with the Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- several extra rosaries

Praying the Rosary (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by asking the children to bring in a rosary for this lesson. Gather a few extras to give to children who forget theirs or do not have one.
- Ask if any of the children have prayed the Rosary before. Have the children turn to pages 1996–1997 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Point out that these pages give a thorough guide to praying the Rosary.
- Explain that we see Mary as a model disciple of Jesus. Tell them that the Rosary is a traditional way to ask Mary to pray for us. Tell them that in the Rosary, we can pray for others and at the same time ask Mary to pray for us.
- Make sure each child has a rosary. Tell the children that today they will pray just one decade of the Rosary. Review the basic structure of a Rosary decade with the children, and then introduce the fifth joyful mystery, the finding of Jesus in the Temple, as the focus.
- Ask the children to keep the mystery in their mind, and lead them in praying the decade.
- Remind the children that the Rosary is not just a mindless repetition of prayers, but a way to walk prayerfully through the Gospel and honor Mary.
- Ask the children if they think they could pray one decade of the Rosary each day. Discuss ways that they can include the Rosary in their prayer life.

Materials Needed

- a measuring tape
- a 2-inch-wide roll of paper
- a pair of scissors
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- masking tape

Growing in Wisdom (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by gathering a measuring tape, a narrow roll of paper (about 2 inches wide), a pair of scissors, drawing materials, and masking tape.
- Remind the children that today's Featured Story says that Jesus grew in both body and wisdom.
- Invite the children to discuss how a fourth grader can grow in wisdom. Make the following points:
 - A regular prayer life, with Mary as a model of prayer, can lead to wisdom.
 - Our bodies grow best with healthy habits, and our wisdom grows through healthy spiritual habits.
 - Just as Jesus grew up under the care of Mary and Joseph, children today grow under the care of their parents.
 - Jesus obeyed his parents, and his obedience is a model for ours.
- Measure the height of each child with measuring tape, and then cut a strip from the roll of paper to match each child's height. Distribute the drawing materials and have the children decorate their strips with their names and the words "Lord, help me grow in wisdom."
- Tape the strips vertically on the wall so the bottoms of the strips touch the floor and the height of the tops varies. Invite the children to stand back and look at the display. Point out that they are all growing in wisdom, just as they are growing in height.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- *The Catholic Children's Bible*

Rosary Prayer Challenge (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Why Pray the Rosary" (YouTube, 2:42) to the group.
- Invite the children to summarize some of the points the priest is sharing in the video.
- Challenge the children to commit to praying one decade of the Rosary within the next week. Remind them to focus on a particular mystery, and encourage them to reflect on what that mystery might mean for their own life.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1996 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* and review how to pray the Rosary. Pray a decade together.

All Saints' Day



Holy Men and Women, Pray for Us





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

John 11:25, 38–41, 43–44

Lesson Goals

- to identify All Saints' Day as the day on which we celebrate all the saints who are in Heaven, even those whose names we do not know
- to recall that everyone who believes in Jesus will live forever
- to state that we are all called to become saints

Catechism References

946–962

Key Words

resurrection, canonization, intercessor

Music Suggestions

- "Litany of Saints," by Rory Cooney (GIA Publications, Inc.)
- "When the Saints," by Sara Groves (Sponge Records)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the All Saints' Day activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- blank paper
- markers or crayons
- pictures of saints, enough for the children to make collages
- construction paper or cardstock, one sheet for each child
- glue sticks, one for each child
- scissors, one pair for each child
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

On All Saints' Day, we celebrate all the saints in Heaven—even those whose names we do not know. All those in Heaven are saints, even if they are not officially canonized by the Church. We celebrate their heavenly reward and ask for their intercession as we continue on our journey of faith.

We look to the saints as examples of how to live a Christian life, because they made their way to great holiness often despite great struggle. Their lives are examples of amazing faith that assure and encourage us as we too face everyday struggles on our own path to holiness. Although we may not face some of the extreme circumstances that many of the saints did, their lives and actions shine as lights of courage, hope, and perseverance for us all.

Make sure to point out to the children the "People of Faith" section in every chapter of this program. This section helps the children become more and more familiar with the holy men and women of the Church. May we all look to the saints as heroes of faith, and may we pray for their intercession as we become saints ourselves.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the All Saints' Day activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children how many of them have played charades before. Invite the children to briefly summarize the point of charades (*pantomiming something while others guess what the person is acting out*).
- Ask for three volunteers. Assign each volunteer one of the following scenarios to act out, or pantomime:
 - a basketball player shooting a basket, making it, and celebrating
 - a baseball player hitting a home run, running the bases, and celebrating
 - a soccer player shooting a goal and celebrating
- Invite each volunteer to act out his or her assigned scenario while the group guesses what he or she is doing.
- Ask the children how the fans watching such games usually act. Have the entire group pretend to be spectators and act out the role by showing excitement, cheering, standing up, and smiling.
- Tell the children that the saints in Heaven are some of our biggest fans, cheering us on and guiding us to victory in Heaven through their prayers and examples.
- Explain that today's lesson will be about the saints and All Saints' Day.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find John 11:17–44 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1679 and 1682). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1680. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.

- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1680–1681.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did Jesus say about himself when he first talked with Martha? *(Jesus said he is the resurrection and the life.)*
 - What did Jesus tell the people to do at the tomb? *(He told them to take the stone away.)*
 - Did the people want to follow Jesus' directions? Why or why not? *(No, they thought the tomb would smell bad because Lazarus had been dead for four days.)*
 - After they rolled the stone away, what did Jesus say? *(He thanked the Father and then said, "Lazarus, come out!" [verse 43].)*
 - Did Lazarus come out of the tomb alive again? *(Yes.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. resurrection, 2. stone, 3. tomb, 4. Father, 5. four, 6. Martha, 7. die, 8. glory*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1681, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Lazarus had been dead for four days when Jesus called him from the tomb.
 - Only God has power over life and death, so this miracle shows that Jesus is God.
 - Jesus promises that all who believe in him will live forever.
 - Jesus freed all of us from death through his death and Resurrection.
 - Like Jesus, we will rise from the dead to live with God forever.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1681, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the blank paper and the drawing materials, and have the children follow the instructions in the Live It! to draw pictures of what they think happened after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.
- Invite volunteers to share their pictures with the class and describe what they drew and why.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1681.
- Invite volunteers to share what each image shows and how each image relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows Jesus telling Martha that he is the resurrection. Image 2 shows people following Jesus' direction to take away the stone from Lazarus's tomb. Image 3 shows Jesus commanding Lazarus to come out of the tomb. Image 4 shows Lazarus coming out of the tomb.*)

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity (Craft)****Saints Collage (15 minutes)**

- Prepare in advance by gathering hard copies of pictures of saints from prayer cards, parish calendars, bulletins, and the internet. Be sure to have several copies of each saint's image. Gather glue sticks, scissors, and construction paper or cardstock, enough for each child.
- Show the pictures of the saints to the group, and ask the children to identify them based on the imagery, if possible. Discuss briefly the qualities of the saints whose pictures you have gathered. Ask the children to brainstorm the names of other saints with whom they are familiar. Write all these names on the board.
- Ask the children which of them have pictures of athletes, actors, and other famous people in their bedrooms because they admire them or want to emulate them.
- Explain that today the children will make a collage of saints that they can hang in their bedrooms to help them remember to be saint-like in their daily lives.
- Spread the pictures on a central table for the children to peruse. Provide each child with a piece of paper or cardstock, a glue stick, and a pair of scissors. Invite the children to choose pictures of saints that appeal to them, cut those pictures out, and arrange and glue the pictures onto their papers.

Process the Activity

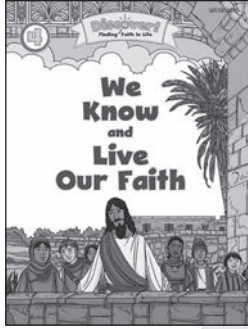
- Invite volunteers to show their collages and share anything they know about the saints they chose for their collages.
- Encourage them to research the saints on their collages at home with their families.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 233 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Point out to the children that because Jesus died and was resurrected, we are all freed from death. Remind them that Jesus promised that all who believe in him will live forever. Explain that this is how we know the saints are in Heaven with God.
- Share that the Church names some people as saints and formally recognizes them in the process called **canonization**.
- Explain that an unknown number of believers live with God in Heaven, and we do not know all their names. Tell them that All Saints' Day is the day we celebrate all the saints—those we know and those we don't—and ask them to pray for us as we journey to Heaven.
- Tell the group that *Halloween* comes from words meaning "All Hallows Eve." All Hallows Eve is another way of saying the eve, or day before, All Saints' Day. Explain that Halloween is best celebrated as the victory of light over darkness. Encourage the children to focus their celebration of Halloween as a preparation for All Saints' Day by focusing on forces of goodness and holiness (light).
- Explain that the saints are **intercessors**—those who pray for others. Write the word *intercessor* on the board. Tell the children that we can ask the saints to pray to Jesus on our behalf because they are in Heaven and close to Jesus.
- Emphasize to the children that we are all called to be saints. Ask the children to brainstorm ways fourth graders can live their call to holiness every day.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension:
 - Whom do we celebrate on All Saints' Day? (*We celebrate all the saints in Heaven: those we know and those we don't.*)
 - Why are saints good intercessors for us? (*Saints are good intercessors because they are close to Jesus in Heaven.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saints Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and encourage the children to say, "Saints Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Sacraments and Sacramentals" (last paragraph), page 38
- "The First Commandment" (last paragraph), page 52

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - All Saints' Day is the day on which we celebrate all the saints who are in Heaven, even those whose names we do not know.
 - Everyone who believes in Jesus will live forever.
 - We are all called to become saints.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - Jesus, we know that all who believe in you will live forever. Open our hearts to grow in our belief and love of you. Help us to be saints who live your Greatest Commandment: to love God and one another. We ask this in your holy name.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Help Us to Be Saints

Invite the children to bring their saints collages up to the prayer table. Display them as focal points for the prayer service. Choose three readers and give them a minute to read over their parts. Explain that you will be praying a litany as part of this prayer service. Tell the children that you will ask them, one by one, to name a particular saint, and then the whole group will respond, "Pray for us."

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: Let us remember the saints, whose lives glorify God. They are models for all of us.

Reader 1: Mary, Mother of God, you are the Queen of All Saints. May we look to you for guidance and follow your example of holiness.

All: Lord, help us to be saints.

Reader 2: Jesus, we know that all who believe in you will live forever. Open our hearts to grow in our belief and love of you.

All: Lord, help us to be saints.

Reader 3: All the saints, you lived your lives according to the Great Commandment, loving God and neighbor through prayer, sacrifice, and good deeds.

All: Lord, help us to be saints.

Leader: Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and all the saints, please pray for us as we journey toward Heaven.

All: Lord, help us to be saints.

Leader: Let us ask for the prayers of specific saints, by calling out their names and responding, "Pray for us."

Invite the children to name particular saints. After each name, encourage the group to respond, "Pray for us."

Leader: Thank you, Lord, for the call for us to become holy men and women. Help us to grow in our faith so that we might become saints. And help us to remember to call on the saints in Heaven to help us on our path.

All: Amen.

Close with the Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- supplies necessary for chosen service project

Saintly Service (15 minutes)

- Arrange beforehand a simple service project the children can accomplish in the time frame. Ideas include decorating food pantry grocery bags, cleaning the church pews, making cards for those who are homebound, and so on.
- Remind the children that the saints helped others because of their love of God. Explain that even saints who did not actively preach to others still served others through prayer and good example.
- Tell the children that today they will be of saintly service to the parish. Conduct the service activity you have planned.
- Ask the children to reflect on how doing a service project for love of Jesus is different from doing chores for payment or awards.

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*

Saint Skits (15 minutes)

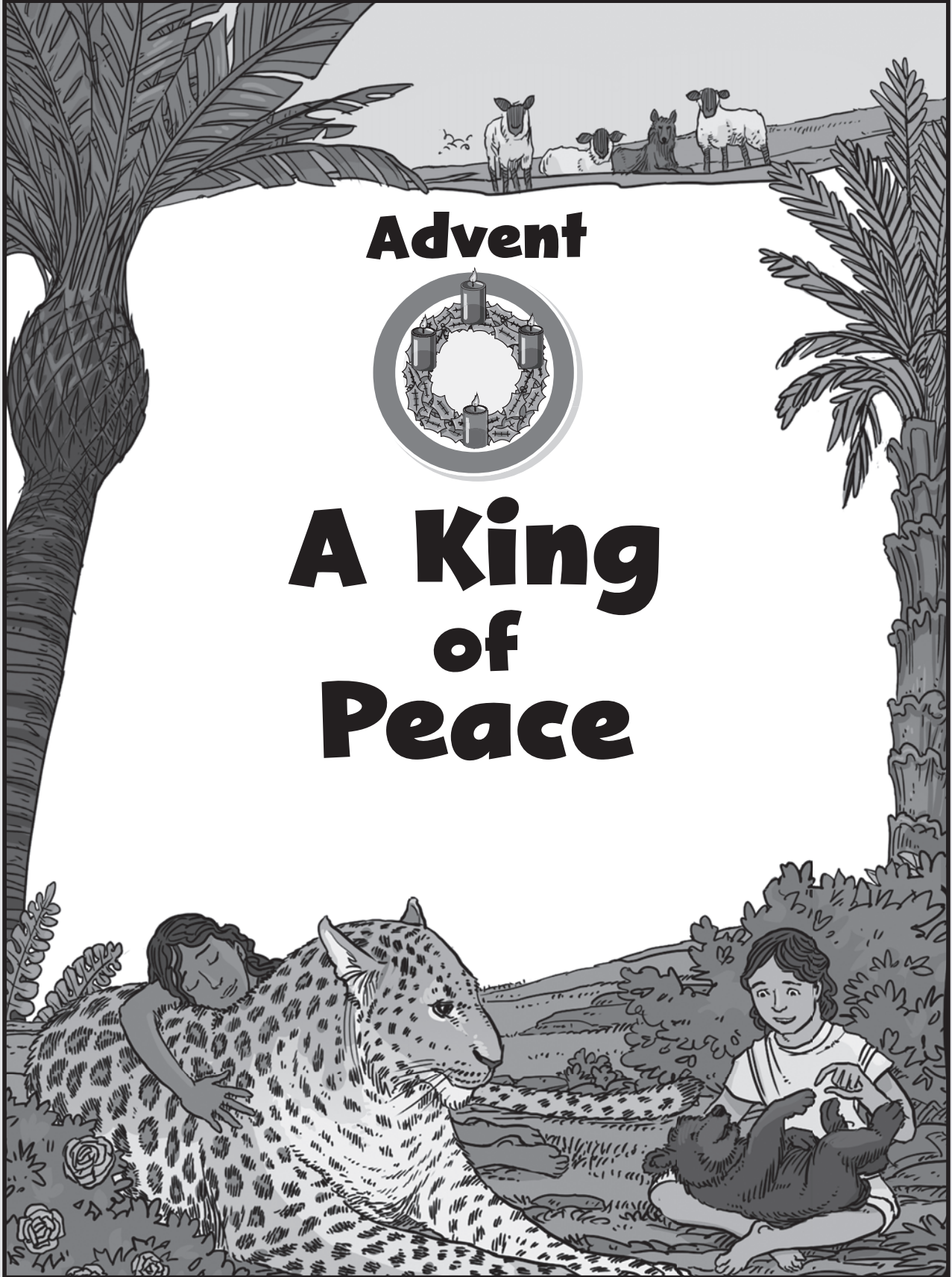
- Ask the children to share how we feel when a family member or a good friend becomes sick or even dies. Explain that Lazarus's sisters, Martha and Mary, as well as Jesus, his friend, wept when Lazarus died.
- Tell the children that they will act out today's Featured Story about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Assign the children parts from today's Featured Story: Jesus, Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and the crowd. Give the children time to prepare how they will retell the story as a skit. Invite the children to reenact the story.
- Emphasize that in this story, Jesus showed himself to be what he said he was: the resurrection and the life.

Materials Needed

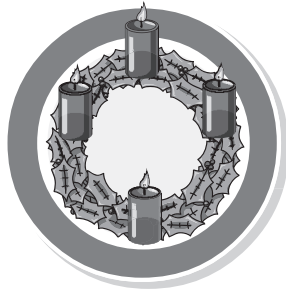
- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

All Saints' Day Music Video (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to brainstorm the names of saints that they know about. Write all the names on the board. Discuss the common trait of these saints—that is, love of God and neighbor.
- Show the video "All Saints' Day (featuring 'Your Heart' by Chris Tomlin)" (YouTube, 4:39) to the group, and point out any saints that the children listed in the brainstorming session.
- Discuss the quote from Saint Augustine featured at the very beginning of the video. (If possible, restart the video and pause it on the quote.)
- Ask the group what the quote means to them and how they could become saints whose lives are like "music played out loud."



Advent



**A King
of
Peace**



Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Isaiah 11:6–9

Lesson Goals

- to recall Advent as the season in which we await the coming of the Savior, the Prince of Peace
- to define the three comings of Jesus: his coming as a child in Bethlehem, his coming at the end of time, and his coming into our hearts at Christmas
- to identify Jesus as the king foretold by Isaiah

Catechism References

522–524, 1095, 2612

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white at the end of this book and in full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Key Words

leopard, poisonous, sacred, Advent

Music Suggestions

- “Breath of Heaven (Mary’s Song),” by Amy Grant (Amy Grant Productions)
- “O Come Divine Messiah (feat. Jennie Lee Riddle),” by Robbie Seay Band (Catapult)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Advent activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- copies of the handout “Be-a-Servant Stars,” one copy for each child
- a completed “Be-a-Servant Stars” sample
- markers or crayons
- purple construction paper
- several pairs of scissors
- several staplers
- Advent wreath with battery-powered candles OR a picture of an Advent wreath (perhaps with construction paper flames you can attach to the candles)
- Advent music for the prayer service
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The liturgical season of Advent is often a hurried precursor to the celebration of Christmas. We find it easy to focus on the birth of Jesus, but it’s important to remember that the Church takes four weeks before Christmas to slow down and prepare.

The word *advent* comes from the Latin word for *coming*. In Advent, we prepare for Christ’s coming in the historical event of Christmas, we prepare for his coming at the end of time, and we prepare for his coming into our hearts at Christmas, especially by receiving Holy Communion on that great feast.

This lesson focuses on pausing in prayer as we prepare for Christmas. We invite the children to participate in traditional Advent customs like lighting an Advent wreath and serving others as Jesus came to serve us. We can also remind the children of Isaiah’s promise of Jesus and his peaceful kingdom in the Old Testament. In these ways, our children learn that Advent is a special season all its own.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Advent activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to talk about a time they have seen a teacher, parent, or friend be a peacemaker at home or school. (*Answers might include intervening on the playground or in a sports game.*)
- Ask the children how it feels when friends are involved in an argument or misunderstanding, using the following questions:
 - How does it feel when a peacemaker helps calm the fight?
 - How does a peacemaker serve others?
 - Have you ever been a peacemaker?
- Tell the children that today they will learn how Jesus is the peaceful king promised long ago by Isaiah, the Old Testament prophet.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Isaiah 11:1–9 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1105 and 1108). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1106. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1106–1107. Ask them if the pictures are unusual in any way. (*These images show animals that do not usually rest peacefully together.*)

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Isaiah is describing a peaceful kingdom. Whom do you think might be the king Isaiah promises? (*Jesus*)
 - How does Isaiah describe this new kingdom? (*He says animals will live together in peace. There will be nothing harmful or evil. The land will be full of knowledge of the Lord.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: wolves/sheep, leopards/young goats, calves/lion cubs, cows/bears, calves/bear cubs*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1107, or invite a volunteer to read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - The Old Testament prophet Isaiah tells of a time of peace, when people will not fight with one another.
 - There will be no enemies and no danger in this kingdom.
 - Jesus is the new king foretold by Isaiah, and this perfect Kingdom is Heaven.
 - We will live with Jesus in Heaven forever if we follow his Law of Love.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1107, or have a volunteer read it.
- Encourage the children to suggest concrete ways they can be instruments of God's peace, following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1107.
- Pair up the children to describe what each image shows. Allow them to talk for a couple of minutes.
- Choose some volunteers to share with the class. (*Image 1 shows a wolf and a lamb, natural enemies, together. Image 2 shows a cow lying in peace with a wolf—two more natural enemies. Image 3 shows a lion eating straw as cattle do. Image 4 shows a baby playing safely near a snake.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Note: The handout can be found at the end of this chapter or accessed online at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.



Advent

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Be-a-Servant Stars

- Prepare in advance an example of a completed “Be-a-Servant Stars” handout so that you can model ways to serve.
- Explain to the children that Jesus came to us a king who served others. Tell the group that because Jesus was born to a poor family, we make special efforts during Advent to help and serve those who are poor and in need.
- Distribute the “Be-a-Servant Stars” handout, and show them the example you completed. Distribute the drawing materials, purple construction paper, scissors, and staplers.
- Invite the children to write or draw four good deeds they can do during Advent for people in need—one good deed for each star on the handout. Encourage the children to decorate their stars with colors and images.
- Invite the children to cut out their stars and staple them to a piece of construction paper to take home to display.

Process the Activity

- Ask volunteers to share their service ideas with the group.
- Conclude by reminding the children that when we serve as Jesus served, we help bring about the peaceful kingdom Isaiah promised.

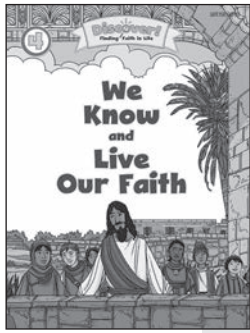
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 242 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain the season of **Advent** to the children, using some of the following points:
 - Advent is a time the Church gives us to prepare for Christmas. It lasts almost four weeks and marks the beginning of the Church year.
 - During Advent, we remember three different comings of Jesus:
 - his birth in Bethlehem
 - his coming into our hearts at Christmas, especially in receiving him in Holy Communion on that special day
 - his second coming at the end of time, when we will all enter into his Kingdom of Peace

- Remind the children that one important Advent symbol is the Advent wreath. Show the group an Advent wreath (or picture) you brought. Explain the wreath's symbolism as follows:
 - The wreath is a circle. This circle reminds us that God's love is unending, just like a circle has no end.
 - The wreath has four candles, usually three purple and one pink.
 - We light one new candle each Sunday of Advent to count the weeks to Christmas. We light the purple candles on the First, Second, and Fourth Sundays of Advent. Purple is a color of waiting, preparation, and repentance.
 - We light the pink candle on the Third Sunday of Advent. Pink (or rose) symbolizes joy. It reminds us that Christmas is very close.
- Recall that Isaiah promised the coming of a peaceful kingdom. Remind the children that in this peaceful kingdom there will be nothing harmful or evil, and the land will be full of knowledge of the Lord.
- Emphasize to the children that Jesus is the king of this peaceful kingdom, the king foretold by Isaiah. Explain that we will sometimes hear Jesus referred to as the Prince of Peace. Tell the children that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is the promised king that comes to us at Christmas.
- Remind the children that their "Be-a-Servant Stars" suggest ways they can be like Jesus, the Prince of Peace, in their everyday lives.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who is the Prince of Peace we hear about in Isaiah? (*Jesus is the Prince of Peace.*)
 - What will Jesus' Kingdom be like? (*It will be peaceful, with nothing harmful or evil. Everyone will know the Lord.*)
 - Why do we help the poor and needy especially this time of year? (*Jesus himself was born to a poor family, and he came to serve others.*)
 - Why is the Advent wreath a circle? (*It reminds us of God's unending love.*)
 - What do the four candles symbolize? (*The purple candles symbolize waiting and preparation, and the pink candle symbolizes joy.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint John the Baptist, and encourage the children to say, "Saint John the Baptist, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "God Didn't Give Up on Us," pages 14–15
- "The Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary," page 15

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The season of Advent is when we await the coming of the Savior, the Prince of Peace.
 - The three comings of Jesus are his coming as a child in Bethlehem, his coming at the end of time, and his coming into our hearts at Christmas.
 - Jesus is the king foretold by Isaiah.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Pray together the following, and ask the children to respond, "Come, Lord Jesus" to each prayer:
 - Be with us, Lord Jesus, in Advent, as our Prince of Peace. . . .
 - Be with us, Lord Jesus, as we prepare to celebrate your birth as a baby in Bethlehem. . . .
 - Be with us, Lord Jesus, as we prepare to receive you into our hearts at Christmas, especially in Holy Communion. . . .
 - Be with us, Lord Jesus, as we prepare to meet you at the end of time, when you will make all things new in your Kingdom. . . .
- Invite the children to respond with "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Advent Light

Arrange an Advent wreath in a place where the group can gather around it in a circle. Invite the group to gather first in one corner of the room. Explain that when the music begins, you will lead them single file to the Advent wreath and around it in a circle. Explain that the circle of the Advent wreath and the circle they will form around it are signs of God's love, because a circle has no beginning and no end. A circle goes on forever.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Invite a volunteer to light the appropriate Advent wreath candle.

Leader: Jesus, during this season of Advent, we remember your birth in Bethlehem. Let us think of your willingness to be born as a helpless baby. May we trust in you when we feel unsure and weak.

All: Come into our hearts, Lord.

Leader: Jesus, during this season of Advent, we invite you to enter our hearts and lives with your peace and joy. May we trust in you when we feel alone and distracted.

All: Come into our hearts, Lord.

Leader: Jesus, during this season of Advent, we know you will come again at the end of time. May we trust in you when we feel anxious and afraid.

All: Come into our hearts, Lord.

Leader: Lord Jesus, during this season of Advent, help us be part of your Kingdom of Peace by bringing peace and joy to others.

All: Come into our hearts, Lord.

Leader: Lord Jesus, during this season of Advent, help us to prepare to receive you into our hearts at Christmas, especially when we receive you in Holy Communion.

All: Come into our hearts, Lord.

Leader: We ask all of this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Make a final Sign of the Cross and then sing an Advent song that is popular in your parish or that the children know.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*

Act It Out: Images from Isaiah (15 minutes)

- Arrange the children into groups of two to four. Assign each group an image of the peaceful kingdom from Isaiah 11:6–9 to act out for the class.
- Allow 5 minutes to prepare, and then invite each group to present its image.
- Invite the other children to discuss the image depicted by each group.
- End by praying the prayer by Saint Francis of Assisi in the Live It! on page 1107 of *The Catholic Children's Bible*.

Materials Needed

- strips of purple or pink construction paper, ten for each child
- markers or crayons
- several staplers

Advent Prayer Chain (15 minutes)

- Explain that praying for others is one way we follow the Prince of Peace, Jesus. Tell the children that Advent is a perfect time to make prayer a priority.
- Tell the group that today they will make an Advent prayer chain. Explain that the prayer chain will help them count down each day until Christmas but also remind them of people they'd like to pray for.
- Give each child ten long strips of construction paper and some markers or crayons. Instruct the children to complete each strip by writing the name of a person for whom they want to pray in a special way during Advent. Tell the children that they can write a description if they don't know the person's name (such as someone they see at Church).
- Have the children staple one strip together so that it forms a circle. Show them how to make a chain by looping a second strip through the first and stapling it into a circle, and so on. Continue until their chains have ten links. Tell them that they can continue adding to their Advent prayer chains at home until they have one chain for each day of Advent.
- Lead a discussion as the children work on their prayer chains, asking them where they could keep their chains to remember to pray and count down to Christmas.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

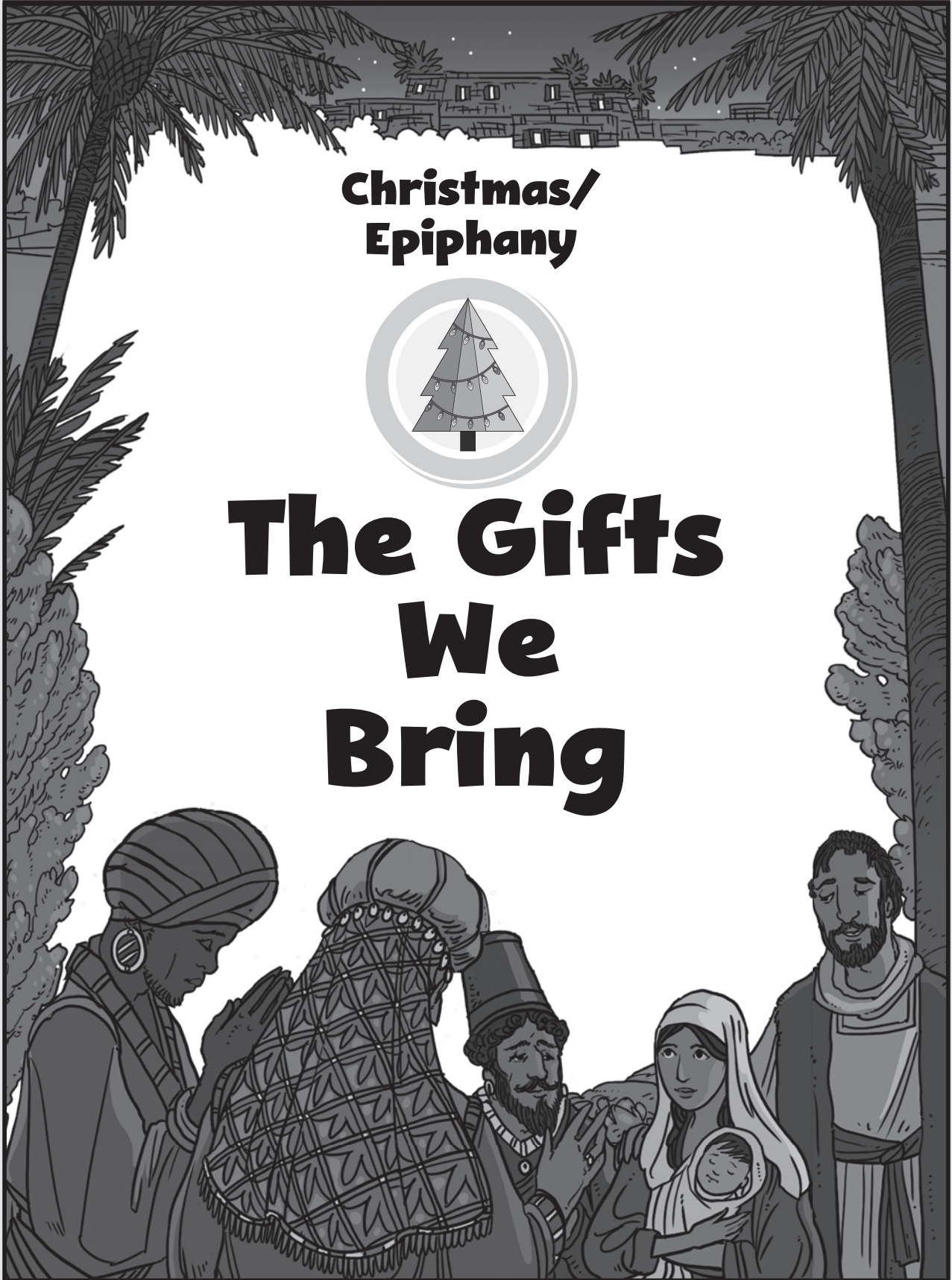
Advent Summary (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Advent in 2 Minutes (NEW!)" (YouTube, 2:09) to the group. Ask the children to share what they noticed.
- Reshow the video, pausing as needed for the children to read all the text.
- Invite the children to share three things they think are important to remember about Advent. You might invite them to imagine that they need to teach the second graders about Advent, and that they have to come up with three key points. (*Accept all reasonable responses.*)
- Tell the children that the video mentioned that this is a time to be expectant, hopeful, and joyful in our lives. Encourage them to share how they think they might display these qualities during Advent.
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials. Ask the children to think about welcoming Jesus into the home of their hearts. Invite them to draw what they want that scene to look like.

Be-a-Servant Stars

Jesus came to be a servant to us. Think about ways you can be a servant to others this Advent season. On each star, write or draw a way you can help others, especially those who are poor or in need. Then cut out the stars and glue them to construction paper to display at home.





Christmas/ Epiphany



The Gifts We Bring



Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 2:9–11

Lesson Goals

- to identify Jesus as not only the King of the Jews but also the King of the entire world
- to explain that the “men from the East” in the Gospel passage are also called “Magi” or “the Three Kings”
- to state that the tradition of Christmas gift-giving comes from the gifts of the Magi

Catechism References

525–530

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white at the end of this book and in full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Key Words

frankincense, myrrh, tangible, intangible

Music Suggestions

- “Joy to the World,” by Casting Crowns (Provident Label Group, LLC)
- “We Three Kings,” by Cedarmont Kids (Cedarmont Music, LLC)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Christmas/Epiphany activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- a wrapped tissue box
- empty tissue paper boxes
- several rolls of Christmas wrapping paper
- several rolls of clear tape
- several pairs of scissors
- small slips of paper, five for each child
- a nativity scene, including the Three Kings
- lyrics to “We Three Kings” (*optional*)
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The festivities of the Christmas season also include the Feast of Epiphany. Sometimes overlooked, Epiphany celebrates the coming of Christ to the entire world. This is the last great feast of the Christmas season. Usually, about one week later, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (the last day of the Christmas season) ushers in Ordinary Time again.

At Epiphany, the Church celebrates the visit of the Magi, or Wise Men, to the Christ child. The message of these travelers is important. Traveling from the East, and traditionally representing every race and nation, they came to offer their worship and royal gifts. They recognized that the child Jesus is the newborn King of all.

In this lesson, the children examine the Three Kings’ journey to Bethlehem, what it means for us to seek Jesus today, and what gifts we can offer for the love of Christ. The Feast of Epiphany shows us why we give gifts at Christmas in the first place: to honor and imitate both the Three Kings and the love of Jesus, the greatest gift of all.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Christmas/Epiphany activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Write the heading "Gifts" on the board, and ask the children to recall some of the gifts they have received at Christmas in the past. Record several on the board.
- Ask the children what they know about the Wise Men in the Christmas story and the gifts they brought to Jesus.
- Explain to the children that today they will learn more about these Wise Men, the gifts they brought, and how we can use our own gifts to show our love of Jesus.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 1:18—2:15 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1447 and 1450). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1448. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1448–1449. Ask volunteers to describe what they think the people in the picture on page 1448 might be feeling.
- Ask a volunteer to read the title of the Featured Story.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Where did the visitors come from? *(They came from the East.)*
 - How did the visitors know where to go? *(They followed the star, which went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child Jesus was.)*
 - What adjectives in the story describe the visitors? *(happy, joyful)*
 - What gifts did the visitors bring? *(They brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh.)*
- Review the key words on the page with the children.
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. frankincense, 2. myrrh, 3. Jesus, 4. gold, 5. star*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1449, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - When Jesus was born, a new star appeared in the sky. This was a sign that a king had been born.
 - Men from the East traveled to see the new king, who turned out to be the Savior.
 - The travelers were happy to find Jesus, and they gave him gifts.
 - Jesus is the King of all people, not just the Jews.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1449, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials. Invite the children to take a few minutes to draw their gift boxes for Jesus, following the instructions in the Live It!
- Assure the children that their answers will be kept private—they will not be asked to share the gift they choose to give to Jesus.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1449.
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story in their own words. Affirm the children for the points they remember. Help them with key points they may have left out. *(Image 1 shows the Three Kings following the star. Image 2 shows the star above Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Image 3 shows Mary holding baby Jesus. Image 4 shows the Wise Men bowing to worship Jesus. Their gifts have been presented.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Gift for Jesus

- Prepare in advance by wrapping an empty tissue box. Wrap the box in a way that keeps the opening free.
- Create craft stations around the room in advance—enough for four or five children to take turns at each. Place empty boxes, Christmas wrapping paper, clear tape, pairs of scissors, and crayons at each craft station.
- Inform the group that we exchange gifts at Christmas because the Wise Men brought gifts for Jesus. Explain that gifts can be physical items (like gold, frankincense, and myrrh) or nonmaterial things (like prayer, time, or good deeds).
- Show the group the sample you created in advance, and direct the group's attention to the way the empty tissue box is wrapped to preserve the opening.
- Arrange the children into groups, according to the number of craft stations you have prepared. Have each child wrap an empty tissue paper box with Christmas paper and then return to his or her seat.
- Give each child five slips of paper and a crayon. Invite the children to brainstorm gifts for Jesus and write them on slips of paper. (*Ideas might include cleaning up after class, sending cards to someone in the military, memorizing a Bible passage, or helping a friend study.*)
- Ask the children to put their slips inside their wrapped boxes. Explain to the children that they can pull out a slip of paper each day this week to remind them of a gift they can give Jesus.

Process the Activity

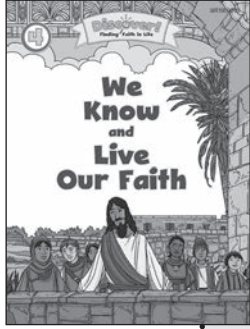
- Invite volunteers to share with the class some of the gifts they wrote on the slips. Draw the group's attention to which ones are **tangible** (physical or touchable) gifts and which are **intangible** (untouchable things, such as experiences).
- Remind the children that the gifts we can give to Jesus are often things such as praying, learning about our faith, reading the Bible, or doing good deeds for others.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 253 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that the men from the East are also called the Magi, the Wise Men, or the Three Kings. Ask them if they have heard of any of these titles.
- Tell the group that in the Church, the celebration of the Magi (Wise Men / Three Kings) coming to Jesus to bear gifts is called the Feast of the Epiphany.
- Explain that the Three Kings came to see Jesus from far away, from different countries. Tell them that the Three Kings remind us that Jesus is not only the King of the Jews, but the King of the entire world.
- Explain that the Feast of the Epiphany is just as important as Christmas in some cultures around the world. Tell the group that in some countries, people give gifts not on Christmas Day but on Epiphany (the Sunday between January 2 and January 8). Point out that some cultures celebrate the Three Kings on January 6 with parades.
- Tell the children that we now give gifts at Christmas because it reminds us of the gifts that were given to Jesus by the Three Kings.
- Explain that the gifts of the Three Kings are symbolic and have deeper meaning to us:
 - Gold was a gift that was essential for a king. This shows that Jesus is the King of all people.
 - Frankincense was used in religious worship. This gift shows that Jesus is a spiritual leader.
 - Myrrh was commonly used to prepare a dead body for burial. This gift foretells Jesus coming to die for the sins of all people.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What are some other names for the “men from the East”? *(They are also called the Three Kings, the Wise Men, and the Magi.)*
 - What did the gold, frankincense, and myrrh symbolize? *(They symbolized Christ as King, Christ as a spiritual leader [priest], and Christ who came to die for us.)*
 - Why do we exchange gifts at Christmas? *(We follow the Magi’s example.)*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint John Chrysostom, and encourage the children to say, “Saint John Chrysostom, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “God Didn’t Give Up on Us,” pages 14–15
- “The Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary” + activity, pages 15–16
- “The Church at Home,” page 37

Read aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, the selections as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



GO! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Jesus is not only the King of the Jews but the King of the entire world.
 - The “men from the East” in the Gospel passage are also called the Magi, the Wise Men, or the Three Kings.
 - The tradition of Christmas gift-giving comes from the gifts of the Magi.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - God our Father, you placed a bright star in the sky to guide the Three Kings to your Son, the Light of the World. Guide us to your Son just as you guided the Three Kings. Fill us with joy, and help us recognize your Son as King of all the world. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

We Give Our Gifts

Create some space in the room where you can process from one side of the room to the Nativity scene you have in the room. Invite the children to line up behind you with three people in each row (to represent the Three Kings). Give three of the gift-wrapped tissue paper boxes to the last three people in line. Tell them that when they reach the Nativity scene, they should lay their gifts by the scene. Teach or practice the refrain to the "We Three Kings" song. You may want to print out the lyrics and give the children a copy to carry.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

(Sing refrain of "We Three Kings.")

Leader: Jesus, the Magi followed the bright star to you. . . .

All: Guide us closer to you, Jesus.

(Sing refrain of "We Three Kings.")

Leader: Jesus, the Magi were full of joy when they found you. . . .

All: Keep our hearts joyful, Jesus.

(Sing refrain of "We Three Kings.")

Leader: Jesus, the Magi brought you gifts and worshipped you. . . .

All: Help us bear your gifts to others, Jesus.

(Sing refrain of "We Three Kings.")

Leader: Jesus, the Magi knew you were the king of all the world. . . .

All: Show us how to enter into your Kingdom, Jesus.

(Sing refrain of "We Three Kings.")

All: Amen.

Invite the last three children to place their gifts near the Nativity scene. Close with the Sign of the Cross. You might also want to end by singing the entire "We Three Kings" carol.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- stapled bundles of five to ten slips of paper, one bundle for each child
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Materials Needed

- masking tape

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Service Coupons (15 minutes)

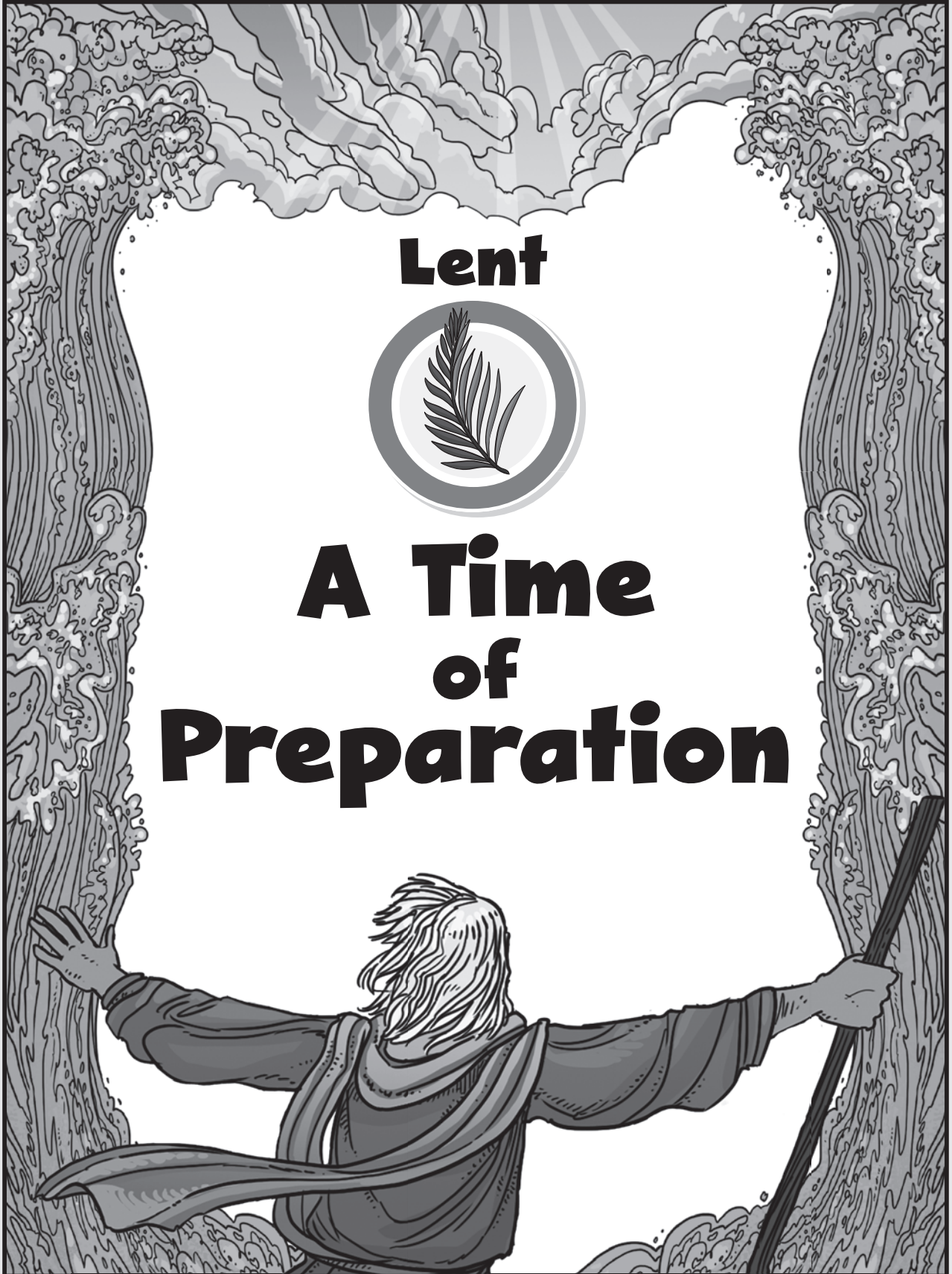
- Tell the children that just as the men from the East brought gifts to Jesus, we can give gifts to others. Explain that sometimes the best gift is a favor or a service, not a material thing.
- Invite the children to brainstorm ways they can serve others this Christmastime.
- Hand each child a stapled bundle of five to ten slips of paper and the drawing materials. Ask the children to write a service they can provide on each slip and then decorate the slips to make a coupon book to share with their families.
- Invite volunteers to share some of the ideas they wrote on their coupons. Ask the group to comment on how each service can be a gift to the person who receives it.

Traveling Magi (15 minutes)

- Explain that sometimes the Magi are shown traveling on camels to Bethlehem to worship Jesus. Announce that the children will play a traveling game.
- Mark two lines with masking tape, one line on each side of the room. Ask the children to clear the desks to the sides of the classroom so there is clear space between the two lines you have marked.
- Arrange the children into groups of four. Designate one child in each group to be the camel and the others to be the Three Kings.
- Ask each group's camel to get down on his or her hands and knees behind the line on the starting side of the room. Tell them that when you say "go," the camels will have to crawl—with their Wise Men walking on either side—to the line on the other side of the room.
- Explain that as soon as they have crossed the line on the other side of the room, the group will have to choose a new camel, and that camel will crawl with the Wise Men to the other side of the room. Tell the children that they will continue switching roles until everyone in the group has had a chance to be the camel.
- Share that the first group to complete the relay wins.

Epiphany Blessing (15 minutes)

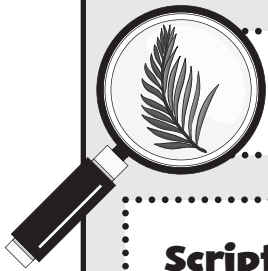
- Show the video "Epiphany Blessing HD" (YouTube, 2:46) to the group. Remind the children to listen prayerfully to the blessing and to make the Sign of the Cross along with the deacon at the end of the video.
- Tell the children that the star followed by the Magi symbolizes how Christ is the light for the world, leading us out of darkness.
- Invite the children to discuss the deacon's reminder that God led us out of darkness and that we are called to be a light shining in the darkness. Ask them to brainstorm some ways we can be lights to others. Affirm all reasonable answers.



Lent



**A Time
of
Preparation**



Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Exodus 14:21–25

Lesson Goals

- to explain that the waters of Baptism lead us to freedom from the slavery of sin
- to identify Lent as a season in which we prepare for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter
- to define the Easter Vigil as the night when new Christians receive the Sacraments of Initiation

Catechism References

1217–1222, 1229–1233

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white at the end of this book and in full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Key Words

pursued, chariot, panic

Music Suggestions

- “You’re All I Need (Live),” by Hillsong Kids (Hillsong Church)
- “Come to the Water,” by Jaime Thietten (Alturas Productions)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Lent activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- blank paper
- crayons
- blank stapled booklets, one for each child
- a copy of the parish calendar
- a bowl of holy water
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Easter approaches—but first the Church encourages us to journey through the season of preparation we call Lent. Lent is the time when we, together as an entire Church, root ourselves more deeply in the salvation we have in Christ. Traditionally a time of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, the forty days of Lent are also a personal time of spiritual growth, rooted in our Baptism.

Just as Moses led God’s people to freedom through water, our Baptism leads us to the freedom of being God’s sons and daughters. This gift of Baptism is renewed in Lent, as we especially remember and pray for those catechumens who are preparing for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil. The renewing of our own baptismal promises is our best response to the new life begun in Christ in the Sacrament of Baptism. Encourage your children to see their Baptism as a wonderful beginning to a new life of grace—a new life of joy, peace, and love.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Lent activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to recall a time in their life or in their family life when their biggest question was, "How will I, or we, get through it?" Give examples and ask for others. (*Examples may include a flood or other natural disaster, an accident, an illness, even a music recital, a race or game, or other personal challenge.*)
- Ask the children to share anything they remember about this challenge. Accept all reasonable responses, and write key information on the board.
- Tell the children that they will read about a challenge Moses and the Israelites faced in Egypt and will see how God's miraculous action through Moses is connected to our Baptism and a season in the Church called Lent.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Exodus 14:5–29 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 120–121). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 122. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 122–123. Invite volunteers to describe what they see happening in the pictures.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who was able to cross the sea on dry ground? (*the Israelites*)
 - Who was following the Israelites? (*the Egyptians*)
 - What happened to the Egyptians? (*The Egyptians got stuck, and they realized that God was with the Israelites.*)
 - Who was fighting for the Israelites and helping them? (*God*)
 - Who fights for us and helps us get through what we need to get through in life? (*God*)

- Explain that our faith in God does not prevent us from facing difficulties. Assure the children that our faith in God does help us get through the difficulties we face, just as the Israelites got through the sea with God's help.
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. Moses, 2. back, 3. sea, 4. water, 5. pursued, 6. panic, 7. chariots*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 123, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Water kept the Israelites safe when the Egyptians were chasing them.
 - God did something wonderful at the Red Sea: Moses raised his stick, and God split the Red Sea in two so the Israelites could safely cross the water on dry ground.
 - In the waters of our Baptism, God gives us grace, his special gift that makes us his children.
- Tell the children that some children are baptized as infants, and others receive Baptism when they are older—but God wants all of us to be close to him through Baptism.
- Remind the children that the grace of Baptism leads us to freedom from the slavery of sin.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 123, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the blank paper and crayons to each child. Ask the children to use crayons to draw the picture suggested in the Live It! Remind them to add a title. Allow a few minutes for the children to work.
- Invite volunteers to share their drawings and titles, time permitting.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 123.
- Invite volunteers to retell the story using the images. (*Image 1 shows Moses raising his hand over the Red Sea, with the Israelites behind him. Image 2 shows the Israelites walking between the walls of divided water. Image 3 shows the Egyptian army about to get stuck in the water. Image 4 shows the Egyptians knowing it's time to leave.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Lenten Reminder Booklets

- Prepare blank booklets, one for each child, before class by stapling five half-sheets of paper together.
- Invite the children to brainstorm things they can do for Lent to draw closer to Jesus. Write their answers on the board, and suggest possibilities if they get stuck. (*Possible answers include: cleaning up after meals without being asked, reading to a younger sibling, reading Scripture, praying for others, helping a friend with homework, or making cards to send to nursing homes.*)
- Explain that giving up treats like candy and ice cream are also good ideas, because these things can help us remember what Jesus gave up for us. Tell the young people that we can make this a prayer for all of those who have less than we do. Remind the young people to ask their families to help them keep this kind of resolution.
- Distribute the blank booklets and crayons to the children. Have the children write one Lenten act of prayer or service on each sheet of paper in the booklet. Then invite them to title the booklet and decorate the covers and pages.
- Tell the children to take the booklet home and to choose one of the activities to do each week as a Lenten practice.

Process the Activity

- Invite volunteers to share some of the ideas they wrote in their booklets.
- Tell the children that they are now going to learn about the season of Lent and why Lent is a good time to spend extra time focused on our relationship with Jesus and doing good works for others.

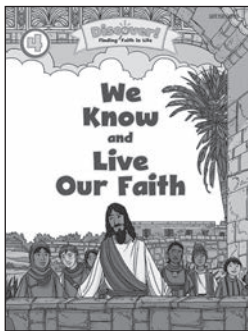
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 263 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that Lent is forty days long. Show them a parish calendar, and count the days of Lent, from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday. (Remember that Sundays are not counted as “days of Lent,” although we usually keep up our chosen Lenten practices on Sundays as well.) Continue with the following additional points about Lent:
 - The forty days of Lent remind us of the forty years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness after passing through the Red Sea.
 - The forty days also remind us of the forty days Jesus spent fasting and praying in the desert. This reference is found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
 - Lent is a time to renew our lives in Christ.
 - Three traditional practices during Lent are praying, fasting, and doing good works (also called almsgiving). These practices help prepare for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter.
 - Fasting means more than just giving up food. We can also make small sacrifices, such as “fasting from,” or giving up, mean words, too much time with electronics, or other things that take us away from time with our family or time in prayer.
 - Spending more time in prayer is a wonderful practice for the season of Lent. We should make an effort to pray more often during this season.
 - Good works can be any action that helps or shows care for someone else.
- Tell the children that on the night before Easter, many adults and older children officially enter the Church at the Easter Vigil. Explain that those who were not already baptized receive Baptism at the Easter Vigil and receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Remind the children that together these three sacraments are the Sacraments of Christian Initiation.
- Point out to the children that today’s Scripture reading is read as part of the Easter Vigil liturgy to remind us of God’s saving action. Explain that just as crossing through the waters of the sea brought the Israelites freedom, we are freed from sin by the waters of Baptism.
- Remind the children that Lent is a preparation for Easter, and at Easter we renew our baptismal promises. Explain that in these promises we say that we believe in God and renounce the ways of sin. Assure the children that faith in God leads to joy and love, and that the ways of sin lead to unhappiness for ourselves and others.

- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is the season of Lent? (*Lent is a season of forty days in which we renew our lives in Christ; we prepare for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter.*)
 - What three practices are helpful during Lent? (*fasting, praying, and doing good works*)
 - What are the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation that new Catholics receive the night before Easter? (*Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist*)
 - What do we promise in our baptismal promises? (*We promise to follow God's way in faith and love, and we renounce the ways of sin.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint Augustine of Hippo, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Augustine, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Life in Christ," page 47
- "Prayer Is God's Idea," page 76

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.

**Go! (10 minutes)****Lesson Wrap-Up**

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The waters of Baptism lead us to freedom from the slavery of sin.
 - Lent is a season in which we prepare for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter.
 - The Easter Vigil is the night when new Christians receive the Sacraments of Initiation.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Create a spontaneous prayer for all of those who are preparing to enter the Church through Baptism and the other Sacraments of Christian Initiation at the Easter Vigil.
- Invite the children to respond with "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Our Baptismal Promises

Prepare a small bowl with some holy water, and place it on your prayer table or in your prayer space. Gather the young people around the prayer table, and explain that at the end of this prayer you will be inviting them to come forward, one at a time, to bless themselves with holy water to remind them of the waters of Baptism.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: Lent is a time to remember our Baptism, when we became free as children of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Lent is a time to prepare to renew our baptismal promises, made for us by our parents and godparents.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Lord, as you led your people through the sea, we thank you for leading us through the waters of Baptism.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Lord, we thank you for making us your children through Baptism.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Let us renew our baptismal promises now by saying "I do" after each question.

- Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children? (I do.)
- Do you reject evil? (I do.)
- Do you reject Satan? (I do.)

- Do you believe in God? (I do.)
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son? (I do.)
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? (I do.)
- Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church? (I do.)

Leader: We thank you, God, for the gift of faith, given to us in Baptism.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Lord, may we live our Baptism as your free sons and daughters. We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Invite the children to come forward, one by one, to bless themselves with holy water and then return to their places. You might consider playing some quiet music as the children come forward and bless themselves, especially if you have a large group. Consider ending with an appropriate song.

(Part of this prayer service is based on the "Renewal of Baptismal Promises" in the English translation of The Roman Missal.)

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- slips with the names of this year's RCIA catechumens and candidates from your parish, one slip for each child
- construction paper in spring colors
- markers or crayons

Cards for RCIA Candidates (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by creating slips of paper with the names of your parish's RCIA catechumens and candidates. Put one name on each slip of paper, creating enough slips for each child to get one. (Some names may be listed multiple times if necessary.)
- Explain to the children that many people will join the Church during the Easter Vigil service. Explain that these people have been studying all during Lent and will now celebrate the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or RCIA.
- Give each child one of the slips with the name of an RCIA catechumen or candidate. Tell the children that they will make a card to welcome their assigned person into the Church.
- Distribute the construction paper and drawing materials. Have the children fold the construction paper in half to make a card. Allow them 5–10 minutes to write and decorate their cards.
- Collect the cards and provide them to the RCIA coordinator or other volunteer or staff person to distribute to the RCIA catechumens and candidates.

Materials Needed

- brown and blue construction paper, one sheet of each for each child
- several pairs of scissors
- several glue sticks

I Am a Follower of Jesus (15 minutes)

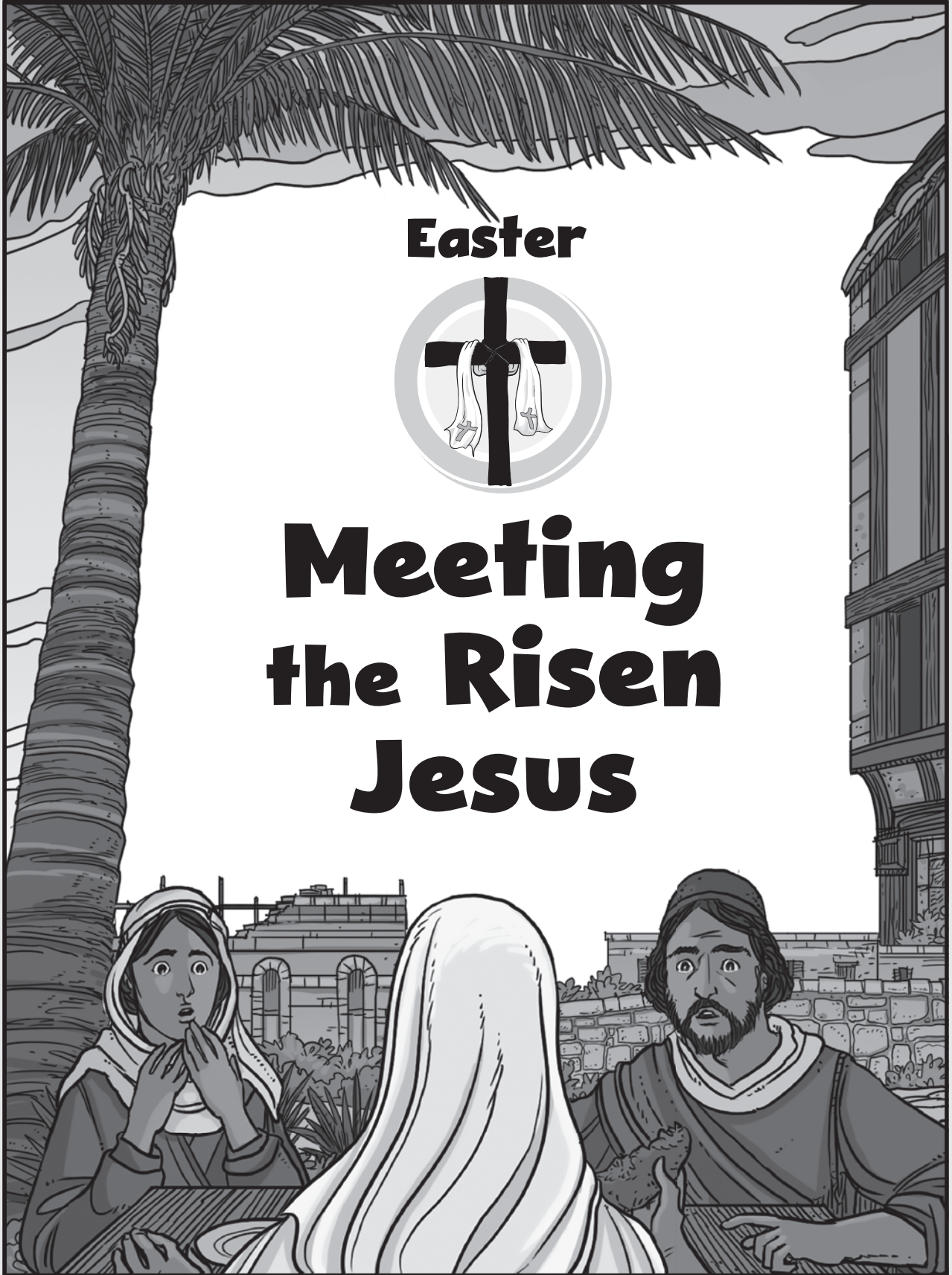
- Tell the children that through our Baptism, we all are children of God, called to follow Jesus. Ask the children to brainstorm ways fourth graders can be followers of Jesus. Affirm all reasonable answers.
- Distribute the brown and blue construction paper, one sheet of each color per child. Have each child trace both feet onto the brown paper.
- Distribute the scissors and glue sticks. Have the children cut out their footprints and then glue the footprints onto the blue paper.
- Have the children write "Because of my Baptism, I follow Jesus" at the top of their papers.
- Tell them that their crafts represent their journey through the waters of Baptism, like the Israelites' journey through the waters of the Red Sea.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Kids Talk about Lent (15 minutes)

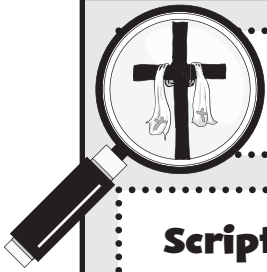
- Show the video "2016 Lent Calendar—Kids Talk about Lent" (YouTube, 2:57) to the group.
- Ask the children to recall what the children in the video shared about their understanding of Lent.
- Invite the children to brainstorm what they also can do to make Lent a holy time during the journey to Easter. Affirm all reasonable answers, and write the ideas on the board.
- Remind the children that we should use this season to grow closer to Jesus.



Easter



**Meeting
the Risen
Jesus**



Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Luke 24:28–32

Lesson Goals

- to recall that Easter is the season in which we celebrate Jesus' rising from the dead
- to explain that the Risen Jesus is present at every Eucharist, just as he was at the meal with the two disciples
- to compare this event to the celebration of the Eucharist, in which we receive the Body and Blood of Christ with faith and love

Catechism References

638–658, 1169, 1384–1390

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white at the end of this book and in full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Key Words

disciple, Resurrection

Music Suggestions

- "Remembrance (Communion Song)," by Matt Maher (Provident Label Group, LLC)
- "Open My Eyes," by Jesse Manibusan (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the Easter activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- white construction paper
- markers or crayons
- several pairs of scissors
- a parish calendar
- loaf of oval bakery bread, cut in half
- clear glass of grape juice (to resemble wine)
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The Emmaus story offers us another encounter between the resurrected Jesus and his disciples. As two discouraged disciples journey to Emmaus on the first Easter day, Jesus appears to them. However, they don't recognize him, even when he explains the Scriptures to them.

The two disciples then invite Jesus to join them for supper. Finally, in the breaking of the bread, their eyes are opened and they recognize the Risen Jesus. He disappears from their sight, and the two disciples get up quickly and go back to Jerusalem to share the Good News.

Like the two followers, we are spiritually fed in the Eucharistic meal, where we encounter the presence of the Risen Jesus. And at the end of Mass, we too should be excited and ready to tell everyone we meet about Jesus. Every Sunday is a celebration of Jesus' Resurrection, and every Mass is a supper at Emmaus, in which we recognize the Lord Jesus we receive in the breaking of the bread, and by whose life within us we are graced and changed.

Assure your children that Jesus risen from the dead at Easter means that when they receive Jesus in Holy Communion, he truly lives within them.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Easter activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Tell the children about a time when you were confused about something—a recipe, a computer issue, driving directions, and so on. Explain the steps you took to figure things out.
- Invite volunteers to share about times they were similarly confused by something and how they solved their problem. Suggest possible situations, if the children cannot think of any, such as confusion about the directions on a worksheet, a piece of music, a teacher’s directions, or a rule in a sport.
- Tell the children that today they will learn about an encounter between the Risen Jesus and two of his followers who were confused and discouraged by his death in Jerusalem; they just did not know what to do with themselves except to head home.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Luke 24:13–35 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (pages 1643 and 1646). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1644. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1644–1645. Invite them to describe what they see in the artwork.
- Invite a volunteer to read the title on the page, and ask the children what the word **disciple** means. Guide them to understand that a disciple is a follower of a teacher—so a disciple of Jesus is a follower of Jesus. Tell the children that this story happened the same evening that Jesus rose from the dead.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Where were the two disciples walking to? (*They were walking to a village, perhaps going back home, discouraged and sad, knowing that Jesus had died on the cross.*)
 - As they talked about Jesus, who joined them? (*They were joined by the Risen Jesus, but they did not recognize him.*)

- When the three of them reached the village, how did the two disciples finally recognize Jesus? *(They recognized Jesus when he took the bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to them.)*
- When Jesus disappeared, what did the disciples say? *(They said that they felt like a fire was burning in them when Jesus talked with them.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution at right:*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1645, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Two disciples were sad after Jesus' death because they thought he was gone forever.
 - On the day of the first Easter, they left Jerusalem and met the Risen Jesus on the road. Jesus explained that Scripture had foretold that the Savior would suffer.
 - When Jesus took the bread, blessed it, and gave it to them, their eyes were opened and they recognized him.
 - Jesus speaks to us in Scripture, and we receive his Body and Blood when we receive the Eucharist.
 - Because we have eyes of faith, we believe that Jesus is risen and is with us.



Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1645, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to find partners. Reread the first sentence of the Live It! to the group, and invite the pairs to discuss the first bullet among themselves. Proceed with the second and then the third bullet after a few minutes.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1645.
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story in their own words using the images to help them. Affirm the children for the points they remember. Help them with key points they may have left out. *(Image 1 shows the two disciples walking and encountering Jesus without knowing him. Image 2 shows the disciples inviting Jesus to stay with them for supper. Image 3 shows Jesus blessing and breaking the bread. Image 4 shows the two disciples recognizing that the stranger is Jesus.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Walking with Jesus (15 minutes)

- Have the children find the map labeled “Israel in New Testament Times” on page 1987 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Help them locate Jerusalem, where the disciples began their journey, and Emmaus, where they recognized Jesus at supper.
- Tell the children that the distance between Jerusalem and Emmaus, the village the disciples were walking to, is about 7 miles according to Scripture (see Luke 24:13). Ask the children how long they think it took for the disciples to walk, and then tell the group it takes 2 to 3 hours to walk 7 miles at an easy pace.
- Invite the group to brainstorm ways that children can be disciples of Jesus. Write answers on the board. Include examples such as participating in Mass, volunteering in the community, studying the Bible, and so on.
- Distribute the white construction paper, drawing materials, and scissors. Help the children trace an outline of one of their feet on the paper to create a footprint. Instruct them to write one way they can be a disciple of Jesus on their footprint, and then to color it and cut it out.

Process the Activity

- Invite volunteers to share their footprints, explaining what they wrote and why. Affirm all reasonable answers.
- Remind the children that the disciples in the story walked a long way with Jesus before recognizing him. Tell the children to take their footprint home and use it as a bookmark that will remind them every day that Jesus walks with them.

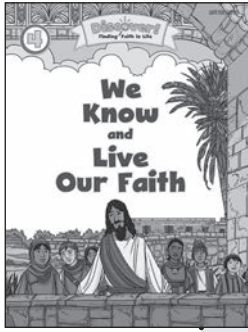
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 272–273 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Show the children a calendar. Help the group count the days between Easter and Pentecost. Explain that Easter is the season when we celebrate Jesus’ **Resurrection**, or rising from the dead. Tell them that it lasts fifty days, from Easter Sunday all the way until Pentecost, the fiftieth day, when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples. (Sundays are counted.)

- Tell the children that Easter is a time of rejoicing, because our Savior rose from the dead. Ask the following questions to prompt discussion:
 - What are some ways your families celebrate Easter?
 - It can seem hard to celebrate for fifty days. What are some ways we can keep Easter full of joy? *(Possible answers include celebrating every Sunday as a day of celebrating the Resurrection, doing something special on Sundays, adding "Alleluia" to meal prayers and other prayers, bringing flowers or baked goods to neighbors in need, sending homemade "Happy Easter" cards to family and friends.)*
- Link the children's answers to the joy that the two Emmaus disciples felt after Jesus disappeared. Remind the children that the disciples hurried back to their friends to tell everyone they had met the Risen Jesus. Explain that we can share in that Easter joy when we tell others about Jesus through our words and actions.
- Read the full story (Luke 24:13–35) to the children. Lead them to realize that Jesus' encounter with the disciples sounds like the Mass: the disciples were given "Scripture readings" and a homily by Jesus, and then they received Holy Communion.
- Point out that Jesus reminded the two disciples of what Scripture says, and then he explained it. At Mass, we hear readings from Scripture, and then the priest explains the readings.
- Share that during supper with the disciples, Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. Explain that we hear similar words in the Eucharistic Prayer, when the bread and wine are consecrated and become the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Emphasize that the Risen Jesus is present at every Eucharist, just as he was at the meal with the two disciples. Tell the children that we receive Jesus himself in the Eucharist with faith and love.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What do we celebrate during the Easter season? How long does this season last? *(We celebrate Jesus' Resurrection for fifty days.)*
 - What did the two Emmaus disciples feel and do after they recognized Jesus? *(They felt joyful and hurried back to their friends to tell everyone that they had met the Risen Jesus.)*
 - How did Jesus show himself to the disciples? When do we encounter Jesus the same way? *(Jesus explained the Scriptures and broke bread with the disciples. We encounter Jesus the same way during Mass, when we listen to Scripture and receive the Eucharist with faith and love.)*
 - What are some ways followers of Jesus can keep the Easter celebration alive? *(Answers will vary.)*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint James the Greater, and encourage the children to say, "Saint James the Greater, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activities in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Jesus, the New Covenant” + activity, pages 24–26
- “The Resurrection of Jesus” + activity, pages 28–29

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin an activity, or have them complete the activities with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Easter is the season in which we celebrate Jesus’ rising from the dead.
 - The Risen Jesus is present at every Eucharist, just as he was at the meal with the two disciples.
 - The Emmaus encounter is similar to the celebration of the Eucharist, in which we receive the Body and Blood of Christ with faith and love.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - Jesus, you helped your two disciples to hear and understand what the Scripture said about you. You broke and blessed bread with the disciples, and you are with us at every Eucharist. Please open our eyes and hearts to see you. We ask this in your holy name.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Open Our Eyes

Place on the prayer table a loaf of round or oval bakery bread cut in half to show the inside, with a clear glass of grape juice (to resemble wine). Help the children practice the response: "Jesus, open our eyes and hearts to see you." Show them how to gently place their hands over their eyes during the leader's part and then to remove them and place their hands over their hearts as they say the response. Explain that they will walk two by two, like the disciples of Emmaus, and take a step forward after each response, as symbol of journeying with Jesus. Begin the prayer by arranging the group in a line about four steps away from the prayer table, and end in a circle around the table.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: *(cover eyes)* Lord, sometimes it is hard to follow you because we don't understand.

All: *(cover hearts)* Jesus, open our eyes and hearts to see you. *(All take one step forward and then cover eyes.)*

Leader: Lord, you helped your two disciples to hear and understand what the Scripture said about you.

All: *(cover hearts)* Jesus, open our eyes and hearts to see you. *(All take one step forward and then cover eyes.)*

Leader: Lord, you broke and blessed bread with the disciples at Emmaus, and you are with us at every Eucharist.

All: *(cover hearts)* Jesus, open our eyes and hearts to see you. *(All take one step forward and then cover eyes.)*

Leader: Lord, we ask with the disciples at Emmaus: "Stay with us. Stay with us always."

All: *(cover hearts)* Jesus, open our eyes and hearts to see you. *(All take one step forward and gather around prayer table. Ask the group to keep their eyes open.)*

Leader: Lord, we have arrived at Emmaus. We are your disciples too, and we come to you with open eyes and open hearts. As we rejoice in your Resurrection, may we remember that every Sunday is a little Easter, and every time we receive Holy Communion, you come to live within us. We ask this in your name, Lord Jesus.

All: Amen.

Sing the suggested song "Open My Eyes" or another appropriate song. Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- four jigsaw puzzles in plastic baggies
- a timer

A Puzzling Mix-Up (15 minutes)

- Prepare by gathering four jigsaw puzzles of twelve to fifteen pieces each. The puzzles can depict any scene. Transfer the pieces for each puzzle from its box to a plastic baggie. Put the boxes aside so the children will not be able to see the pictures.
- Ask the children to think about how confused the two disciples were before Jesus explained the Scripture to them. Explain that Jesus put the mixed-up pieces together for the two disciples—he answered their questions and helped them see the whole picture.
- Tell the children that today they will work together to assemble puzzles without being able to see the pictures they are supposed to make.
- Divide the group into four smaller groups. Give each group a baggie of puzzle pieces, and tell the children they will have 10 minutes to put together their puzzle. Set a timer, and allow the groups to work. Tell the groups to stop working when the timer goes off.
- Invite each group to show its puzzle to the group and explain what its puzzle shows. Ask groups that haven't finished to give their best guesses.
- Ask the children how they decided where to begin and how each piece fit. Guide the children to realize that as they fit more pieces together, they began to see the whole picture clearly.
- Explain that just as the puzzle became easier to complete as the pieces fit together, Jesus is ready to lead us to a clearer understanding as we listen to Scripture and share in the Eucharist.

Materials Needed

- none

Tour of the Church (15 minutes)

- Prepare by arranging for the class to visit the sanctuary (altar area) of the parish church.
- Tell the children that just as the two disciples in today's story recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread, Jesus is present with us in the Eucharist.
- Remind the children to be quiet and respectful as they enter the church building.
- Explain that we bow to the tabernacle before entering or leaving the sanctuary, as a sign of respect for the Real Presence of Jesus. (If the tabernacle is adjacent to the sanctuary, take the children there to bow first, before beginning the tour.) Take the children on a walking tour of the sanctuary, highlighting the tabernacle, the sanctuary candle, the altar, and the Lectionary (or Book of the Gospels), if it is displayed.
- Remind the children that the Lectionary contains the Scripture readings that we hear each Sunday. Explain that the priest helps us understand these readings in the homily.
- Tell the group that the altar is the table where the bread and wine are consecrated and become the Body and Blood of Christ. Emphasize that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.
- Point out the tabernacle and tell the children that consecrated hosts are inside the tabernacle. Point out that the sanctuary candle reminds us that Jesus is present.
- Ask the children to kneel on the altar steps or in front of a pew. Lead the children in quietly praying the Our Father. Allow for private prayer if time permits.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- *The Catholic Children's Bible*

The Road to Emmaus (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Jesus on the road to Emmaus | Bible Story | Life Kids" (YouTube, 2:29) to the group.
- Invite the group to comment on the video, pointing out different things they noticed or new parts of the story they didn't know before.
- Arrange the children into groups of three and have each group member take one of the parts from today's Scripture reading (Luke 24:13–35): Cleopas, the other disciple, and Jesus.
- Direct the groups to read the story in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1643 and 1646), speaking their own parts as indicated. Tell the children that "the other disciple" can read the part of the narrator.
- Give the children time to read the full story together.



Pentecost



Strengthened by the Spirit





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Genesis 1:1–5

Lesson Goals

- to state that the Holy Spirit moved over the disciples at Pentecost, forming a new creation, the new Kingdom of God
- to identify that the Holy Spirit moves over us at Baptism and Confirmation, which makes us a new creation
- to recognize that the Holy Spirit guides and strengthens us with the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Catechism References

683–747, 2670–2672

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white at the end of this book and in full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Key Word

new creation

Music Suggestions

- “Holy Spirit,” by Spring Harvest (Essential Christian)
- “Made for This (2017 Maker Vbs Theme Song),” by GroupMusic (Group Publishing, Inc.)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Pentecost activity booklet
- seven gift-wrapped boxes, each containing a gift of the Holy Spirit written on a paper flame
- a board or poster to write on
- seven large sheets of newsprint or poster board
- markers or crayons
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

In the very first verses of the Bible, we find the Holy Spirit at work. Genesis tells us that the Spirit of God moved over the water when all was still formless. This Spirit of God in the story of Creation is the Holy Spirit—the same Spirit who moved over the disciples at Pentecost, the same Spirit who moves over us at our Baptism and Confirmation and makes us a new creation in Jesus Christ.

At the first Pentecost, before the Holy Spirit touched the Apostles, they were fearful and unsure. Only after they received the gifts of this Helper, the One Jesus promised to send, did the Apostles feel bold enough to leave their hiding place and proclaim the message of Jesus and the coming of the new creation, the new Kingdom of God, that would last forever.

The Holy Spirit still moves over creation, shaping our lives day by day. This lesson recalls the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and their meaning for us. Through the power of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, we shall be recreated, and, in faith and love, we shall renew the face of the Earth!

**Get Ready! (10 minutes)****Opening Prayer**

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Pentecost activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Prepare in advance by printing the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and their descriptions on flame-shaped pieces of paper. Place each flame in a box and gift wrap it.
 - Wisdom—helps us value things rightly.
 - Understanding—helps us to comprehend our faith.
 - Counsel—helps us know the right thing to do, even in difficult situations.
 - Fortitude—gives us strength and courage to do what is right, even when difficult.
 - Knowledge—helps us see the world as it really is, as God sees it.
 - Piety—helps us love God and neighbor as Jesus taught us.
 - Fear of the Lord—helps us not want to offend God; helps us remember how good God is.
- Display the gift-wrapped boxes on a table where all the children can see them. Invite the children to spend a minute guessing what might be inside.
- Explain that on Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples. Remind the children that we receive the Holy Spirit at our Baptism. Tell them that we are strengthened with the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Explain that today they will learn more about how the Holy Spirit has been at work from the very beginning of God's creation right through today in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

**Dive In! (15 minutes)****Scripture Focus**

- Invite the children to find Genesis 1:1–5 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 21).
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How does Genesis describe the Earth before creation? (*Genesis says the Earth was formless and desolate [empty].*)
 - What was moving over the water? (*the Spirit of God*)

- What did God create first? (*God created light first.*)
- How did God feel when he looked at the light he had created? (*He was pleased.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - We hear about creation in the first five verses of Genesis.
 - The Holy Spirit moved over the waters of creation, while the Earth was formless nothingness.
 - The Holy Spirit that moved over creation is the same Holy Spirit that moved over the disciples at Pentecost.
 - The Holy Spirit gave life to the natural world and new life to the disciples.
 - The disciples were sent to spread the message of Jesus and to create a new Kingdom of God on Earth that would last forever.
 - Through Baptism and Confirmation, the Holy Spirit makes us a new creation too.
- Draw attention to the art on page 1 of the activity booklet. Explain that the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Remind the children that we cannot see the wind moving over the waters, but we can see a dove, which is a symbol of the Holy Spirit as a sign of peace and freedom. Recall that the Holy Spirit also appeared in the form of a dove moving over Jesus when he was baptized by John in the waters of the River Jordan.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the group to pray the prayer together, aloud.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to form small groups or pairs. Challenge each group to retell this Scripture story using no more than ten words. Allow a few minutes for the children to discuss.
- Have each group share its summary. Write common phrases from each group's summary on the board.
- Read aloud the words and phrases on the board as an ultimate summary, pointing out that all the groups used those key ideas.

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity (Craft)**

- Ask the children to look again at the wrapped boxes. Have the children form seven small groups. Give each group one of the gift-wrapped boxes, a sheet of newsprint or poster board, and markers or crayons.
- Invite the groups to unwrap their boxes. Tell the groups that they must create a poster that depicts a child using the specific gift of the Holy Spirit that they found in their box. Tell the groups to make sure their poster is labeled with the gift they were assigned. Allow the children several minutes to discuss and create their posters.

Process the Activity

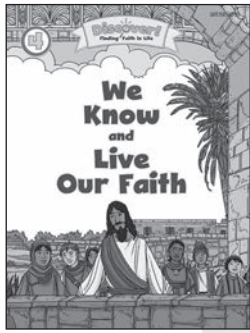
- Invite each group to present its poster to the whole group, in the order of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit given earlier in the lesson. Allow the other children to comment or ask questions as each group presents.
- Tell the children that the Holy Spirit helps us to become holy and to make good decisions as we live out our Christian life.
- Emphasize to the children that we must use the Gifts of the Holy Spirit with gratitude and respect.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on pages 282–283 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain that the Spirit who moved over the waters of creation in the Book of Genesis is the same Spirit who moved over the disciples at Pentecost and moves over us in the waters of Baptism. Explain that the disciples were made a “new creation” at Pentecost, and we are made a “new creation” at Baptism. Tell the children that becoming a “**new creation**” means that we are washed clean of sin, and we become a child of God.
- Tell the children that in Confirmation, all the gifts that we received at Baptism are strengthened, we receive the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and we are called to proclaim the message of Jesus and the new Kingdom of God in our lives.
- Remind the children that we see the Holy Spirit at work again in the account of the first Pentecost. Help the children recall the following points about Pentecost:
 - At his Ascension, Jesus promised to send his followers the Holy Spirit.
 - The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, fifty days after the Resurrection of Jesus, when the Apostles were hiding from Jewish officials in a room in Jerusalem.
 - The Apostles heard a strong wind, and flames of fire came down from Heaven and landed on each of their heads.
 - After this, they were able to go out and preach boldly in many languages so that everyone in the city could understand. They baptized many people that day, which we consider the birthday of the Church.
- Invite a volunteer to read the Featured Story on page 1714 about the Pentecost event, or the full passage at Acts 2:2–13, if you have time.
- Conclude by acknowledging that some people may not understand us when we try to live as Jesus’ disciples. Assure the children that we can rely on the strength of the Holy Spirit—just as the first disciples did.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who is the Spirit of God we learn about in the first five verses of Genesis? (*The Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit.*)
 - When do we personally receive the Holy Spirit? (*We receive the Holy Spirit at Baptism and are strengthened with the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation.*)
 - What happened at Pentecost? (*The Holy Spirit came to Jesus’ followers as they were hiding. The Holy Spirit empowered them to proclaim the message of Jesus, to go preach in many languages, and to baptize people.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Saint Hippolytus, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Hippolytus, pray for us,” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “How God Created the World,” page 6
- “The Church,” pages 30–31

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Holy Spirit who moved over creation is the same Holy Spirit who moved over the disciples at Pentecost, forming a new creation, the new Kingdom of God.
 - The Holy Spirit who moved over creation is the same Holy Spirit who moves over us at Baptism and Confirmation, making us a new creation.
 - The Holy Spirit guides and strengthens us with the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - Holy Spirit, you moved over the waters of creation, and you made us a new creation in the waters of Baptism. You strengthened the frightened Apostles, and you strengthen us at Confirmation. Come upon us today and guide us to be your new creation and renew the face of the Earth with our faith and love.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Renew the Face of the Earth

Explain that wind is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. To symbolize the wind of the Holy Spirit, tell the children that they will move their arms slowly back and forth above their heads as they say the response.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: Holy Spirit, you moved over the waters of creation, and you made us a new creation in the waters of Baptism.

All: We are your new creation, and we shall renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: Holy Spirit, you made the frightened Apostles bold and sure in their faith.

All: We are your new creation, and we shall renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: Holy Spirit, you have guided the Church since that first Pentecost.

All: We are your new creation, and we shall renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: Holy Spirit, you strengthen us with your gifts in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

All: We are your new creation, and we shall renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: Send forth your Spirit, O God, and they shall be created.

All: We are your new creation, and we shall renew the face of the Earth.

All: Amen.

Additional Activities

Pentecost

Materials Needed

- a birthday cake large enough to share with the class (adjust if anyone has food sensitivities or allergies)
 - a cake knife
 - a birthday candle and a safety lighter or a battery-powered candle
 - plates, utensils, and napkins
 - a “Happy Birthday” balloon
 - *The Catholic Children’s Bible*
- Prepare in advance by making or purchasing a birthday cake, large enough to feed the group. Gather a cake knife, birthday candle, safety lighter, plates, utensils, napkins, and a “Happy Birthday” balloon. (Adjust the cake as needed to accommodate food allergies or sensitivities among the children.)
 - Tell the children that at Pentecost we celebrate the birthday of the Church as the beginning of the new creation in the Holy Spirit. Light the candle, and invite the children to sing “Happy Birthday.” Blow out the candle, and serve each child a piece of cake.
 - Ask the children to eat their cake while they listen to the story of the first Pentecost. Read Acts of the Apostles 2:1–6, the Featured Story on page 1714 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*.
 - Point out the meanings of the symbols at the birthday celebration you created for the group:
 - The cake suggests the sweetness of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - The balloon filled with air symbolizes the Holy Spirit moving over creation and the wind the Apostles heard when the Holy Spirit descended.
 - The flame of the candle symbolizes the flames that descended upon the Apostles.

Materials Needed

- slips of paper, each with the name of someone preparing for Confirmation
 - blank note cards and envelopes
 - markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Prepare by creating slips of paper, each one with the name of someone preparing for Confirmation in the parish. Ensure you make enough slips to give one to each child in your group, even if that means duplicates.
 - Remind the children that we too encounter the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Explain that as Catholics, we support those preparing for these Sacraments.
 - Invite the children to brainstorm what they might say to support someone preparing for Confirmation. Affirm all reasonable answers and write them on the board.
 - Distribute the slips of paper. Tell the children that their slips have the name of a parishioner who is preparing for Confirmation. Explain that the children will make a card telling that person that they are praying for him or her. Tell the children they can use some of the ideas written on the board if they wish.
 - Distribute the blank note cards, envelopes, and drawing materials. Allow a few minutes for the children to make their cards. Tell them to be sure to address their envelopes to the recipients.
 - Collect the cards. Make arrangements to distribute the cards to those preparing for Confirmation.

Confirmation Cards (15 minutes)

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Pentecost Makes Us Bold (15 minutes)

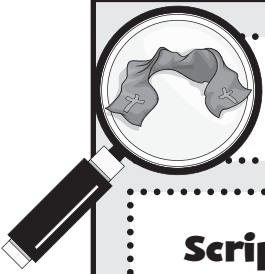
- Show the video “Pentecost HD” (YouTube, 3:40) to the group.
- Invite the children to discuss the difference between the Apostles before the Holy Spirit descended and after the Spirit came. Lead the children to recall that the Apostles were hiding in fear before the Holy Spirit descended, but that the Holy Spirit emboldened them to go out, preach in different languages, and baptize many.
- Ask the children to brainstorm ideas for how children can be bold and proclaim the faith to others. Reassure them that all of us, no matter our age, can share the Good News of Jesus in our words and actions.

**Ordinary
Time**



Jesus' Life and Teachings





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 25:34, 37–40

Lesson Goals

- to recall that Ordinary Time is the season of the year when we learn more about Jesus' life and teachings
- to identify that caring for others was a key part of Jesus' life and teaching
- to name ways we can care for people in need all through the year

Catechism References

678, 1397, 1822–1829, 1929–1933, 2443–2449

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white at the end of this book and in full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.

Key Word

righteous

Music Suggestions

- "Do Something," by Matthew West (Sparrow Records)
- "Whatsoever You Do," by Robert Kochis (Robert Kochis)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the Ordinary Time activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- a list of homebound parishioners
- blank note cards with envelopes
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- cheerful stickers
- a liturgical calendar
- a slice of bread
- a cup of water
- a warm coat
- a box of bandages
- a drawing of a smiley face
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Ordinary Time is anything but ordinary. In this longest season of the Church year, which occurs between Christmas and Lent and again between Pentecost and Advent, we learn more about Jesus' life and teachings. This season reminds us of our baptismal obligation to learn about and spread the Gospel to all people and to care, in a special way, for those among us who are poor and vulnerable.

Jesus taught us, by word and example, how to take care of those who are in need. We learn about the emphasis he placed on loving God and our neighbor as ourselves. The Scripture passage for today's lesson emphasizes this yet again: "Whenever you did this for one of the least important . . . , you did it for me" (Matthew 25:40). It is a message and a call to action that we cannot escape as Christians.

In this lesson on Ordinary Time, we read about Jesus praising those who serve others. May we all be challenged to better show our love for Jesus by sharing what we have with those in need.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Ordinary Time activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to recall a time when they were stuck without something they needed—perhaps their lunch money or a jacket or a ride home. Ask them the following questions:
 - Did someone help you by sharing their lunch? by loaning you a coat? by offering you a ride home?
 - How did it make you feel to be stuck?
 - How did it feel when someone helped you?
- Invite volunteers to share their answers. Affirm all reasonable responses.
- Explain that the people who helped in those situations were taking care of them the way that Jesus would have.
- Tell the children that in this lesson they will learn that when we help someone in need, we are really caring for Jesus himself. Explain that God wants us to help each other just as we would help Jesus.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 25:31–46 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1509). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1510. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1510–1511. Invite the children to tell what they see in the pictures.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who are the “righteous” people sitting on Jesus’ right? (*Righteous people are good people.*)
 - What are some ways these people showed they were good? (*Answers include: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming strangers, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned.*)
 - When the good people did all these things, who were they really helping? (*They were really helping Jesus.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers will vary.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1511, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Jesus has a special love for the poor and needy, and so should we.
 - Other people need help, not just the poor—such as those who are elderly, those who are bullied, or those who have difficulty learning.
 - When we are kind to people in need, we are being kind to Jesus.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1511, or have a volunteer read it.
- Tell the children that if they simply look around at home and school, they will see people with needs that they can help address.
- Have the children find a partner, and then ask the pairs to discuss the Live It! question: “What can you do to show you care?” Allow time for the pairs to discuss.
- Invite the pairs to share their ideas with the group, and write their ideas on the board.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1511.
- Invite volunteers to retell the story in their own words. Affirm the children for the points they remember. Help them with key points they may have left out. *(Image 1 shows Jesus as King inviting the people on his right to the Kingdom. Image 2 shows a girl giving drink to the thirsty. Image 3 shows a woman visiting a sick man. Image 4 shows Jesus telling the people that the good works they did for others were really done for him.)*

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity (Craft)****Letters of Love (15 minutes)**

- Prepare by asking the parish office for a list of homebound parishioners, including those who live in assisted living homes—one name per child in your class. Be sure the people on the list have consented to having their names shared.
- Show the list to the children, and tell the group that many people in the parish need extra love or encouragement. Explain that today the children will make cards for parishioners who are homebound or otherwise in need.
- Distribute the blank note cards, envelopes, drawing materials, and stickers. Give each child a name from the list. Have the children write their assigned person's name on the envelope and then decorate the card with a cheerful, general "thinking of you" or "praying for you" message.
- Collect the finished cards, and explain that you will pass them to the parish ministers who visit the people regularly.

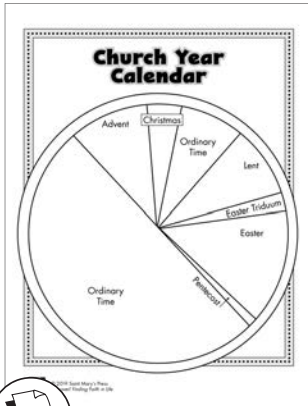
Process the Activity

- Ask the children to imagine how these cards might make the recipients feel. Invite them to discuss how these cards fulfill Jesus' call to us to care for those who are in need.

Additional Activity Options

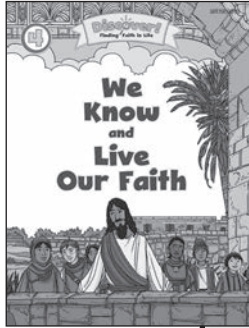
If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 292 in its place.

Note: The handout can be found at the end of this chapter or accessed online at www.smp.org/discover_grade4.



Core Teaching

- Make copies of the black-and-white Church year calendar on page 293 of this guide, or download and print copies of a full-color version at www.smp.org/discover_grade4. Give each child a copy of the handout. Point out that Ordinary Time, which occurs twice a year, is the longest Church season.
- Tell the children that “Ordinary” does not mean nothing interesting happens in Ordinary Time. Explain that this word comes from the word *ordinal*, which refers to how we name the Sundays: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and so on.
- Explain that at Masses during Ordinary Time, we hear Gospel stories that are full of Jesus’ teachings and miracles. Tell the children that these stories include stories like today’s Featured Story, when Jesus teaches us what it means to help the least among us.
- Ask the children to brainstorm some ways Jesus served others during his lifetime, and write all reasonable answers on the board. Lead the children to remember examples of Jesus healing the sick, feeding the crowds, and forgiving sins. Emphasize how Jesus showed love for others as he did these things.
- Have the children recall the Great Commandment (see Matthew 22:34–40). Point out that helping others was part of Jesus’ most important teaching in the Great Commandment: that we must love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.
- Tell the children that we often think of helping others mainly during the holidays, especially during Christmas. Explain that Jesus doesn’t limit us to helping people in need only one time of the year. Share that as disciples, we are to love and serve others, especially the needy, throughout the year.
- Review with the children the ideas they have already brainstormed about ways to reach out and show care to others. Encourage them to put some of these ideas into practice right away.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - When is Ordinary Time, and what do we learn during Ordinary Time? (*Ordinary Time is two seasons: between Christmas and Lent, and between Pentecost and Advent. During Ordinary Time, we learn about Jesus’ teachings and miracles.*)
 - What does the second part of Jesus’ Great Commandment say we should do? (*The second part says we should love our neighbors as ourselves.*)
 - What time of the year is the best to focus on helping others? (*We are called to love and serve others throughout the whole year.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the “People of Faith” section. Add any other information you know about Blessed Frederic Ozanam, and encourage the children to say, “Blessed Frederic, pray for us” during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following articles and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "The Cardinal Virtues," pages 69–70
- "The Old Law and the New Law," page 66
- "The Beatitudes" + activity, pages 67–68

Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Ordinary Time is the season of the year when we learn more about Jesus' life and teachings.
 - Caring for others was a key part of Jesus' life and teaching.
 - There are many ways we can care for people in need all through the year.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - Lord, you taught us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Help us to serve you when we see someone hungry or thirsty. Help us to serve you when we see someone cold or ill. Help us to serve you when we see someone lonely or left out. Help us to serve you, Lord, by showing us how to reach out to others in need. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord.
- Invite the children to respond with "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

The Least of These

Ask for five volunteers. Give the volunteers, respectively, a slice of bread, a glass of water, a coat, a box of bandages, and a drawing of a smiley face. Tell them that they will each bring their gift up and place it on the prayer table when they are invited at the appropriate time.

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make the Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: Jesus, you told us that when we show love to our neighbor in need, we show love to you. Today we ask you to open our hearts to see how we can help others.

All: Help us to serve you, Lord.

Leader: When we see those who are hungry . . . *(invite child with bread to place bread on the prayer table)*

All: Help us to serve you, Lord.

Leader: When we see those who are thirsty . . .

All: Help us to serve you, Lord.

Leader: When we see those who are cold . . .

All: Help us to serve you, Lord.

Leader: When we see those who are sick or injured . . .

All: Help us to serve you, Lord.

Leader: When we see someone lonely or left out . . .

All: Help us to serve you, Lord.

Leader: Help us to serve you, Lord, when we reach out to others.

Leader: Let us pray.

All conclude with the Our Father and a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a guest speaker from parish outreach or social justice ministry
- a blank thank-you card

Who Helps in My Parish? (15 minutes)

- Invite a parish outreach or social-justice minister to speak with the children about ways that children and their families can help those in need in your parish or throughout your community. Advise the minister that he or she will have 10 to 15 minutes to talk with the children.
- Introduce the speaker to the group, and remind the children to listen respectfully. Have the speaker give her or his presentation. Allow the children to ask questions at the end, if time allows.
- Invite the children to sign a thank-you card for the speaker at the end of class.

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*

Act It Out (15 minutes)

- Arrange the children into five small groups. Tell them that they will develop 1-minute skits to show one way to be righteous people, as Jesus teaches in the Featured Story on page 1510 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.
- Give each group one of the following works from the Featured Story. Allow a few minutes for the groups to develop their skits for their assigned topic:
 - See someone hungry and feed him or her.
 - See someone thirsty and give him or her water.
 - Meet and welcome a stranger.
 - See someone cold and give them warm clothing.
 - See someone sick or injured and help them.
- Allow each group to present its skit. Invite the other children to discuss how each skit showed disciples reaching out to someone in need.

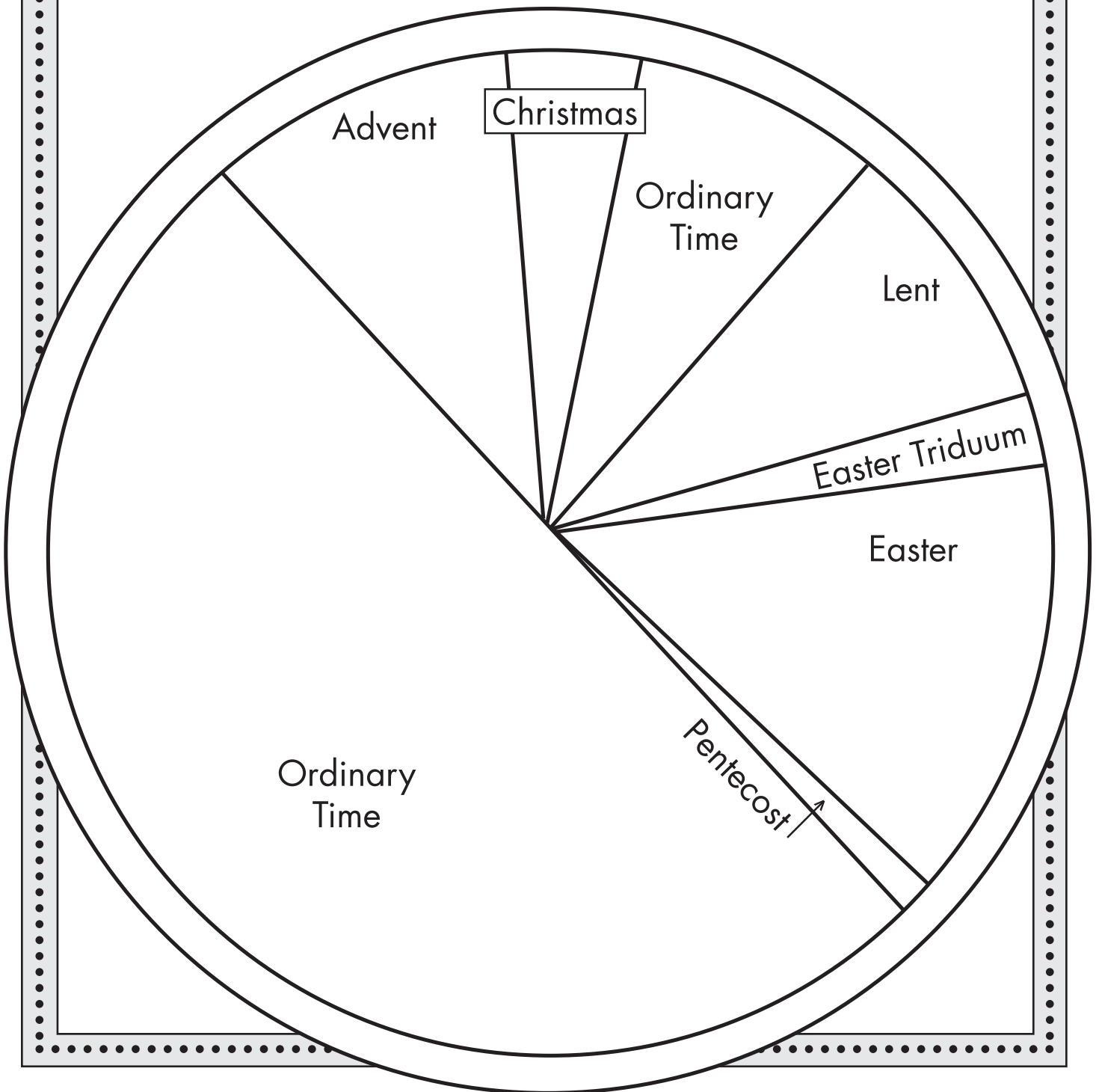
Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

The Coat (15 minutes)

- Show the video "The Coat: A Story of Charity" (YouTube, 2:08) to the group.
- Ask the children to summarize what good work they saw in the video. Invite them to reflect on these questions: How did the child who gave the coat feel? How did the child who received the coat feel? How did the mother feel when she learned her son gave his coat to someone in need?
- Remind the children that the gesture in the video, giving someone a coat, seems simple, but it is a great example of living Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves.
- Invite the children to tell the group about a time when someone shared something with them. Ask the volunteers to tell about their feelings, both at the time and now as they remember the event.

Church Year Calendar



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The second excerpt on page 30 and the excerpt on page 34 are from *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum, 1965)*, numbers 25 and 12, in *Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations*, Austin Flannery, general editor (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1996). Copyright © 1996 by Reverend Austin Flannery.

The excerpt on page 38 is from "The Word of the Lord" ("*Verbum Domini*"), number 42, at www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20100930_verbum-domini_en.html. Copyright © 2010 LEV.

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The questions on page 141 are based on the *Rite of Baptism for Children* © 1969, International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), numbers 57–58, as found in *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, volume one, prepared by the ICEL, a Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990). Copyright © 1990 by the Order of St. Benedict, Collegeville, MN.

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Endnote cited in excerpt from "The Word of the Lord"

1. *Propositio 29*.