

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Catechist Guide



Don't Miss This!

Handouts and other teaching resources
are available online at
www.smp.org/discover_grade2.



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 engaging 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. In addition to the twenty core chapters, there are 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)

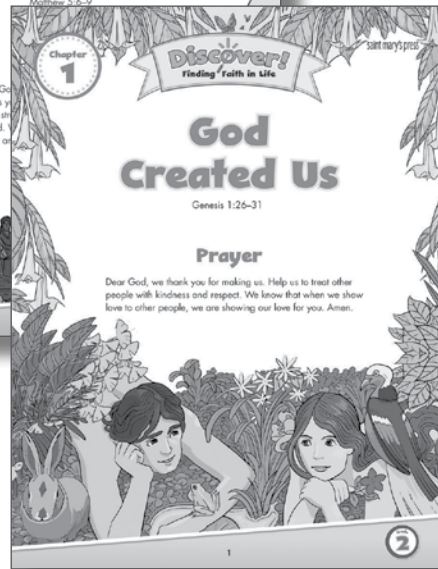
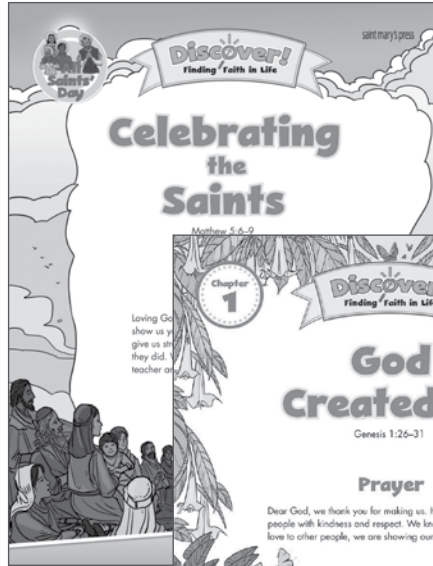
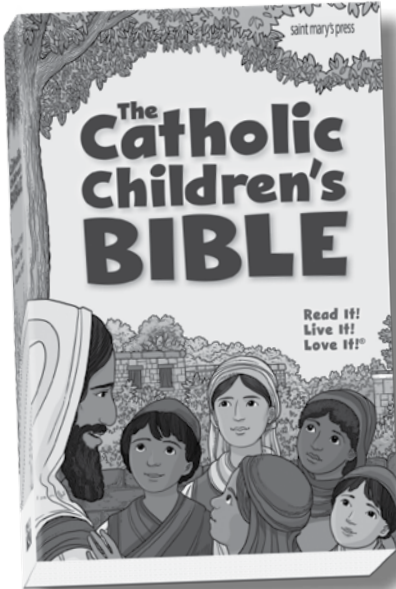
Family Support

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_grade2.

Program Components

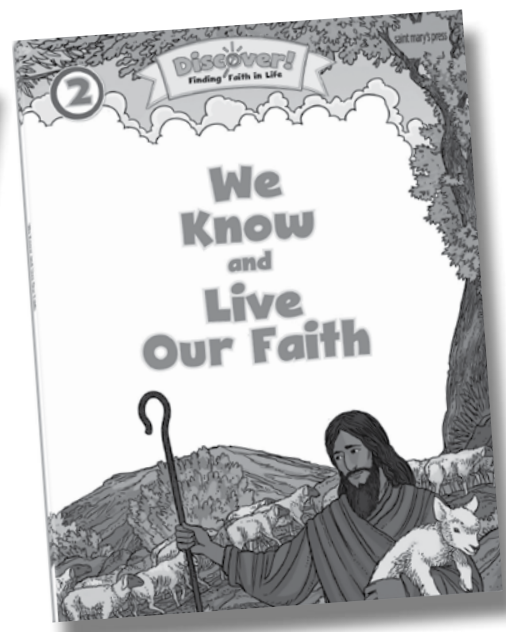
The Catholic Children's Bible



Activity Booklets



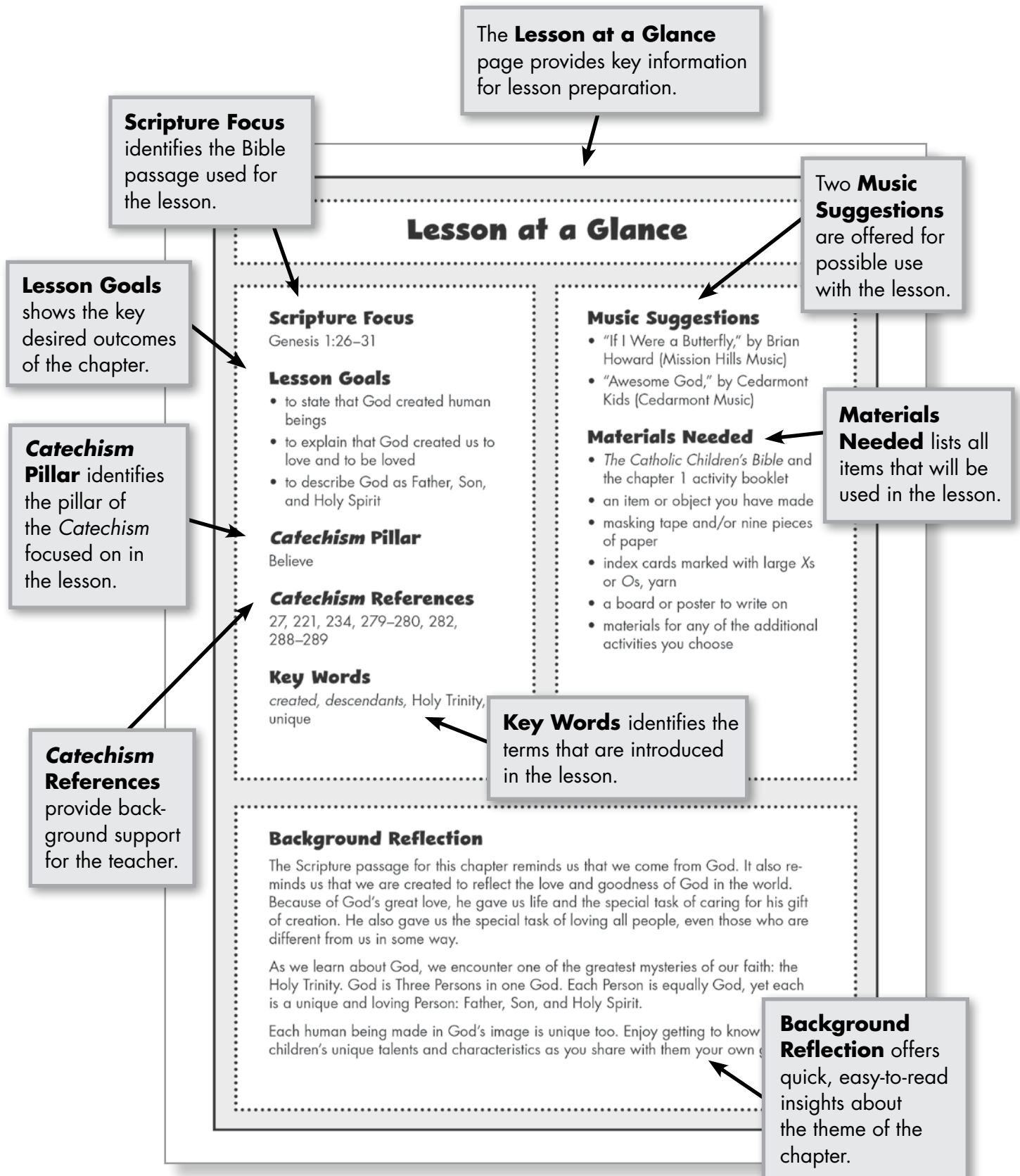
Special Feature



We Know and Live Our Faith Resource

Understanding the Components

Catechist Guide



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

46 Unit 1: God's Love Calls Us Together

Chapter 1

Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

God Made Each Person Unique

- Prepare a large tic-tac-toe grid on the floor in advance. This can be done by creating a 3-by-3 grid with masking tape or by taping down nine pieces of paper in a grid form.
- Prepare index cards by marking half with Xs and half with Os. String them with yarn so they can be hung around the children's necks.
- Divide the group into two teams. Give each member of the first team an index card with a large "X." Give each member of the second team an index card with a large "O."
- Introduce the activity by telling the children that we are going to get to know each other. Explain that you will go down each line, child by child, asking each child to tell the group his or her name and something he or she like to do or are good at doing. Encourage the group to listen in order to remember an about the other children.

names and favorite activities or talents on a piece of see so you can use this to test the children.

you will now call out the name of a child. The first O line should raise her or his hand and call out the named mentioned. The rest of the team can help, but they should whisper so that the other team

ut the activity is correct, she or he can move to one d. If the person is not correct, she or he goes to ind the children the goal of the game is to fill three ntally, or diagonally. The first team to do this will

ne until one team gets a tic-tac-toe and earns one en on the grid to go to the back of their lines. Play allows, and add up the total number of points at the

ch person is God's creation and share the following

ch of us, he created us with gifts and talents that e. This means we are each special and different. e in the world is different, we are all special to God, of us. Being special and different is something we

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: God's Love Calls Us Together

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 all the children to say "Amen," and close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Begin by showing the group something that you have made. It might be something drawn, sewn, baked, etc. Share why this is special and important to you.
- Ask the children to share some things that they have made. Write a list of their responses on the board. Ask the following questions as volunteers offer their responses:
 - > How did you feel about your item when you made it?
 - > Did you do anything special with it once you made it?
 - > How would you choose someone to take care of what you made? Why?
- Tell the group that today they are going to read in the Bible about something very special and important that God has made. Explain that they will also learn that when God makes something, it is always precious to him.

Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Explain to the group that the word *genesis* means creation or beginning. The first book of the Bible is named Genesis because it is the story of the beginning of the world.
- 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 of the passage on page 21 and at the end of the passage on page 24.
- 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 previous pages.
- Invite the children to look at the artwork on pages 22 and 23 and to describe what they see.

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.

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

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

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

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

God Created Us 47

Chapter 1

- Ask the children the following questions:
 - How did the game help you understand that God made everyone special and unique? (*Everyone had different interests and talents.*)
 - Why do you think God loves all people? (*Because he made each person unique. He loves each person and each person is precious to him.*)
- Ask the children to repeat after you, "I am special and different. I am unique!"

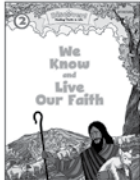
Additional Activity Options
If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 49 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that God made all of creation, including people. Tell them that God has given us the special task of loving and respecting all people, the ones we know and the ones we don't know.
- Remind the children that we use the term *Holy Trinity* to describe God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We remember the Holy Trinity each time we pray the Sign of the Cross.
- Remind the children that there are three Persons in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God the Father created us out of love and is with us all the time. Jesus was sent to us by God the Father to show us how much the Father loves us and to teach us about God's great love. The Holy Spirit was sent from God to be with us all the time, to remind us that God loves us, and to help us love God in return.

48 Unit 1: God's Love Calls Us Together

Chapter 1




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:

- "God Made the World," page 6
- "God Made You" + activity, pages 7-8
- "God Wants You to Know Him and Love Him," page 9
- "Three Persons in One God" + activity, pages 10-11

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 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 created human beings.
 - God created people to love and be loved.
 - God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Invite the children to locate the turtle on the lower left of page 22 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find the image of the turtle on their folders. It can be found in five different places.

Closing Prayer

- Begin the 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 find the prayer in the Live It! on page 23 of the Bible. Follow the prayer pattern praising God but, rather than naming elements of the Earth, remind the group that they are all created by God. Name each child, and ask the group to say the response after each person's name. At the words "glory to you, God," invite the children to raise their arms in a sign of praise.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.



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

God Created Us 49

Chapter 1

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- crayons

Materials Needed

- large sheets of drawing paper
- crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- scissors, one for each child
- a large piece of poster board

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*
- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank paper
- crayons or markers
- paperclips or clothespins
- a length of rope or clothesline

A Holy Trinity Tree (15 minutes)

- Give each child a sheet of blank paper and crayons.
- Show the children how to draw a large tree trunk with three large branches.
- On the trunk write the words "Holy Trinity."
- On each branch write the name of one of the persons in the Trinity: "God the Father," "God the Son," "God the Holy Spirit."
- Have the children draw leaves on the tree branches, being careful not to cover the writing.

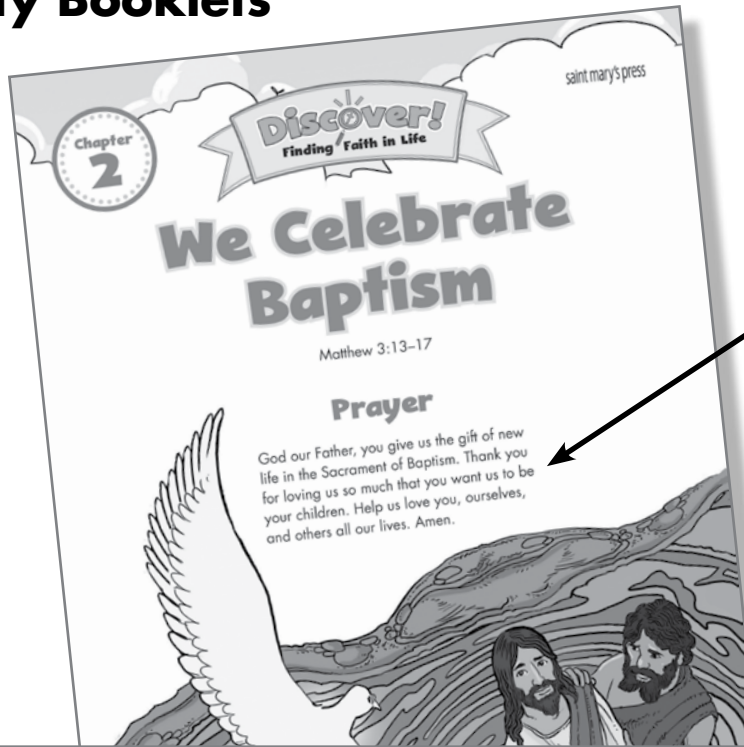
We Are Wonderfully Made (15 minutes)

- Distribute a large sheet of drawing paper; crayons, markers, or colored pencils; and a pair of scissors to each child.
- Invite the children to trace their hand and part of their arm, almost to the elbow. They might want to help each other with the tracing.
- Encourage the children to write their names on the hand/arm and what is "wonderful" about them: their talents, abilities, likes, etc. They can then color their hand/arm and cut it out.
- Prepare a large poster board by writing "We Are Wonderfully Made" on top. Help the children tape or glue their drawings onto this poster board.
- Display the poster where all can see it.

God Made Everything (15 minutes)

- Read aloud the Genesis account of Creation (Genesis 1:1–31).
- Show the video "How God Made Everything [MUSIC VIDEO]" (YouTube, 5:36). Invite the children to sing along with the chorus.
- Distribute blank paper and crayons or markers, and invite the children to draw something from creation that they love.
- Help the children display their drawings by using paperclips or clothespins to attach them to a length of rope or clothesline.
- Ask each child to name what they drew, and invite the group to respond with the prayer: "Thank you, God, for making [name the item from creation]."

Activity Booklets



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

Use the Featured Story on page 1452 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Matthew 3:13-17) to find the answers. Write the answers in the squares.

baptize Jordan dove pleased
obey water Son

1	2					
3		4				
5						
		6				
		7				

Down

- Jesus wanted to _____ his heavenly Father.
- A voice from Heaven said, "I am _____."

Across

- John was baptized in the river called the _____.
- Jesus asked John to _____ him.
- John baptized Jesus with _____.
- A voice from Heaven said, "This is my own dear _____."
- The Holy Spirit came down from Heaven like a _____.

Unscramble the word at the end of the sentence, and write the letters in their correct order on the lines.

- A sacrament is a meeting with _____.
USJSE
- The Sacrament of _____ makes us children of God. **AMTBPSI**
- The Sacrament of Baptism makes us _____ followers of Christ. **CSIHRTSNIA**
- The holy water of Baptism gives us God's _____. **FLEI**
- In Baptism, our _____ are forgiven. **NSIS**
- In Baptism, we become members of the _____. **HUCRHC**

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. This page is a prayer in the liturgical season lessons.

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

We are drawn to, attracted by, and even fascinated with water. Whether it is a gurgling stream, a placid lake, or a mighty ocean, we want to be near it and even in it. Water also fulfills a physical human need that ensures our very survival. Simply put, water gives life.

Just as water gives us physical life, the waters of Baptism give us spiritual life and eternal life. The waters of Baptism invite us into community with God through his Son, Jesus Christ and with one another as the people called by God to bring his love into the world. This community is the Church. Just as water cleanses dirt from our bodies, the blessed waters of Baptism cleanse us from sin and bring us God's forgiveness.

"Come, everyone who is thirsty—here is water!" proclaims the prophet Isaiah (55:1). This is the message of this lesson. Come to the Sacrament of Baptism. Explore the depths of our human need for water, for life, for God.

Family Activities

- Show your child items from his or her baptismal day. These might include pictures, white clothing, and the baptismal candle. Share your memories of that special day. Mark the date of your child's Baptism on the family calendar. Make plans to celebrate this day of beginning new life with God in the Catholic Church.
- Watch the video "Catholic Baby Baptism" (YouTube, 9:17) together. Begin at the 3:30 point to show the entire Baptism. Point out the anointing with oil, the pouring of water, the white garment, and the baptismal candle. Allow the video to bring back memories of your child's Baptism, and share those memories aloud.
- Read together the Featured Story on pages 1452–1453 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Matthew 3:13–17). Invite your child to tell you what she or he remembers about the meaning of this Scripture passage.

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



People of Faith

Saint John the Baptist (first century)

Saint John was Jesus' cousin. He prepared the way for Jesus. He told people to change their hearts and turn away from sin. John baptized Jesus and heard God the Father say that Jesus is his beloved Son. We celebrate the birthday of Saint John the Baptist on June 24.

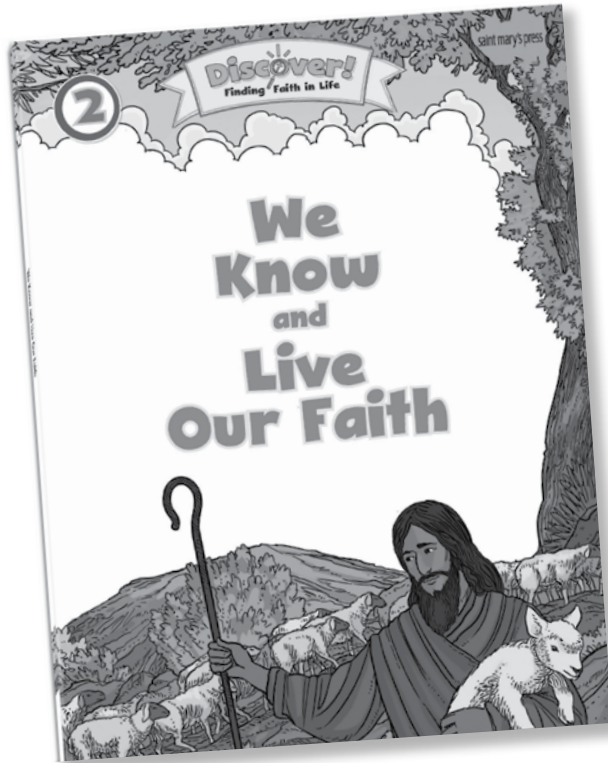
Prayer

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

Dear God, thank you for the gift of this child who is such a blessing to our family. Guide and bless _____ every day as she or he learns more and more about our Catholic faith. Help us always to remember that we are your children and you are our loving Father. Amen.

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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.

ACTIVITY

On the line below each drawing, write the name of the Person of the Holy Trinity whom the child is honoring with the Sign of the Cross. The last picture shows the end of the prayer, when we say, "Amen." This word means "Yes! So be it."

Three Persons in One God


As we grow, we will come to understand more and more about God. But some of the truths about God we call "mysteries of faith." We know them to be true, but they can be difficult for us to understand. The biggest and most important mystery of faith is that God is one in three Persons. This is called the mystery of the **Holy Trinity**. We know that there is only one God. We learn this from the **Bible** (see Deuteronomy 6:4). But God has also shown himself to be three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God the Father is the First Person of the Holy Trinity. **God the Son**, Jesus, is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. **God the Holy Spirit** is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. Each Person of the Holy Trinity is God. Each Person of the Holy Trinity is equal.

The three Persons are one God. They work together in every way. But each Person of the Trinity has his own special work. God the Father is the Father of the Trinity. God the Son is Jesus, the only Person of the Trinity who is both God and man. God the Holy Spirit is the Person of the Trinity who is given to us as God's gift of love and courage.


When we make the Sign of the Cross, we honor God by praying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." In this way, we proclaim that we believe in the three Persons in one God.

1.




In the name of the _____

2.




and of the _____

3.




and of the _____

4.



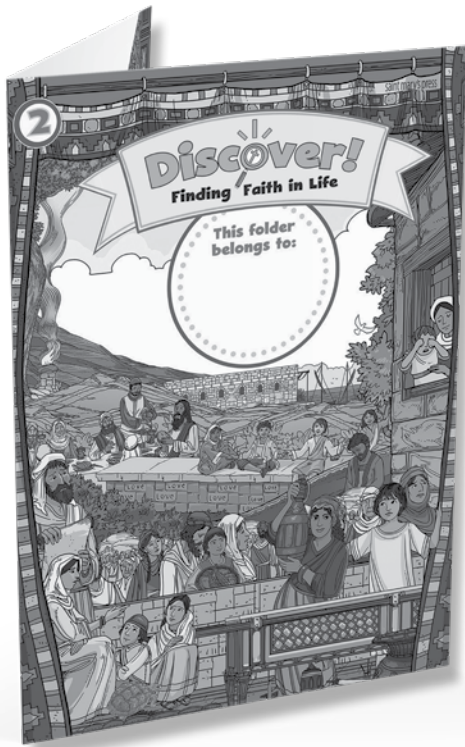
5.



A _____

10
11

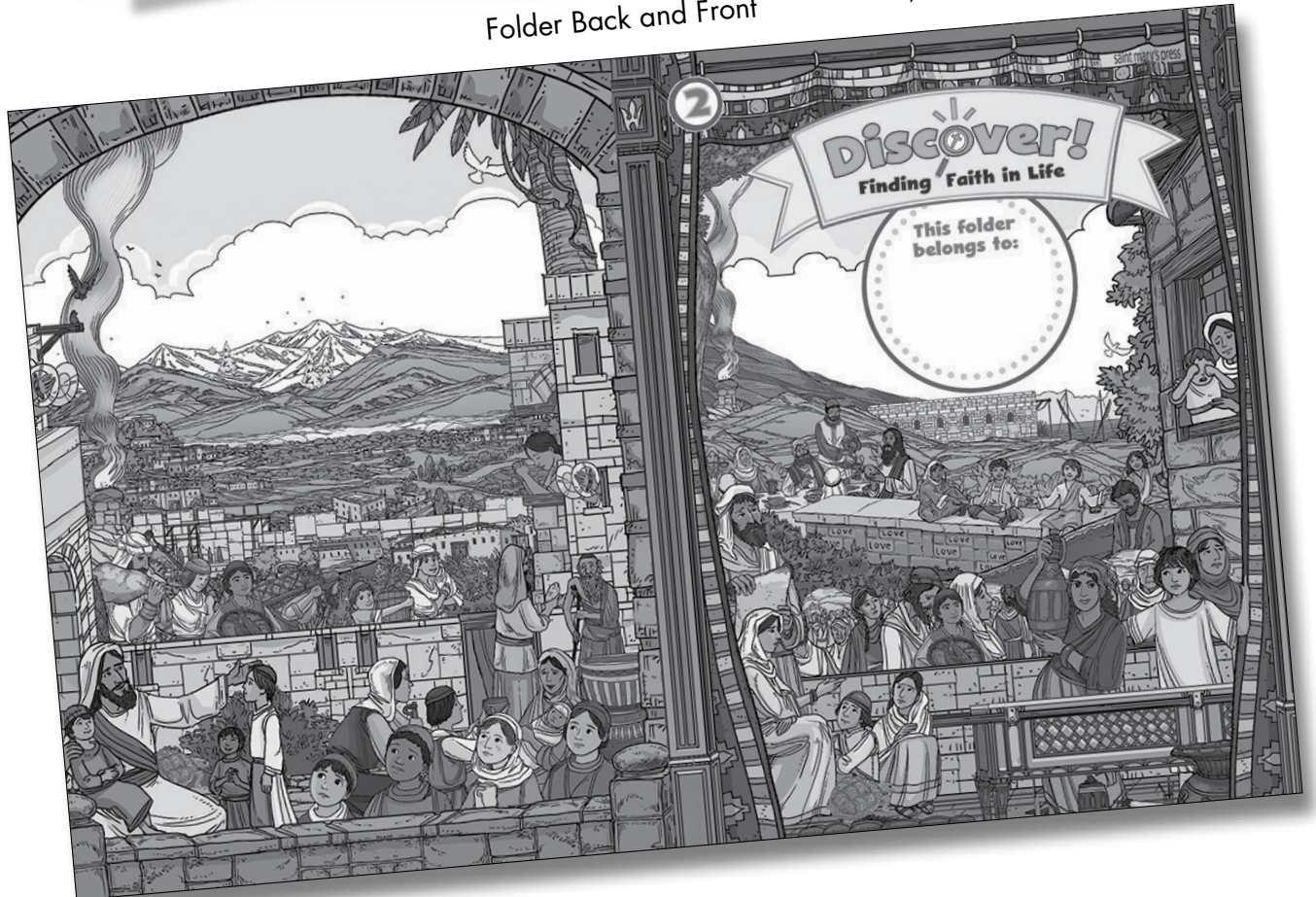
Special Feature for Grade 2



Folder

At the end of each of the twenty core chapters, the children will be given a specific image to look for on their folders. It will be hidden among many other images, so they will have to look carefully!

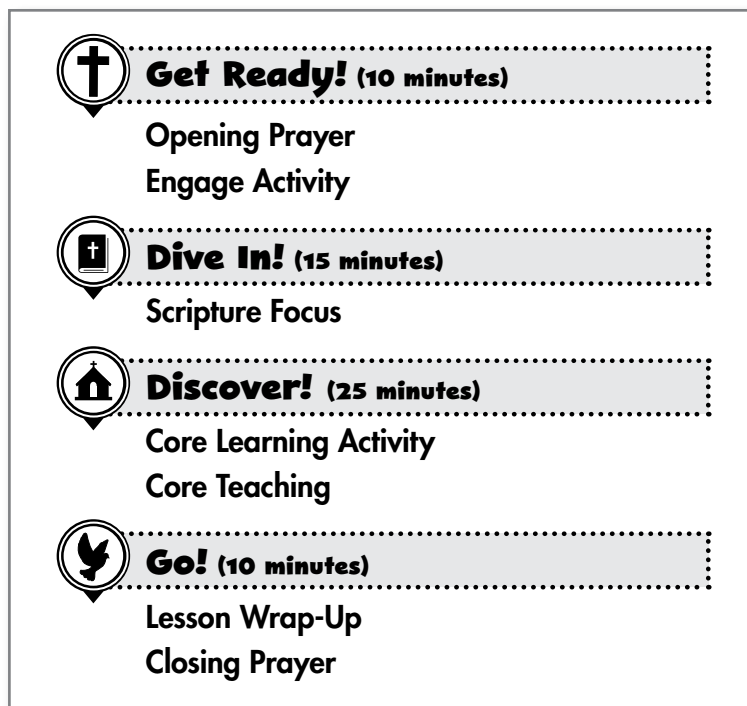
Folder Back and Front



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 2

In this grade, each lesson of the twenty core chapters ends with a fun search activity. The children will be given a specific image to look for on their folders that relates to the chapter. It will be hidden among many other images and may occur several times, so they will have to look carefully to discover it. These images may be located on the front, back, and inside flaps of the folders.

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_grade2. 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_grade2.

Handouts

Some chapters include additional handouts for the lesson. These handouts can be accessed three 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_grade2.
3. They can be accessed individually at www.smp.org. Click on "Resource Center," and then type the document number (such as TX006169) into the search bar.

Grade 2

Scope and Sequence

Unit 1: God's Love Calls Us Together					
Chapter Number and Title	1. God Created Us	2. We Celebrate Baptism	3. We Belong to the Church	4. We Celebrate and Care for All Creation	5. We Pray Together
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	27 221 234 279–280 282 288–289	535–537 694 1131 1210–1216 1224	777 790–791 792–796 947	2402 2456–2457	1156 1191 2639 2649
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that God created human beings to explain that God created us to love and to be loved to describe God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify sacraments as meetings with Jesus to state that the Sacrament of Baptism makes us children of God and Christians to explain that in Baptism, our sins are forgiven, and we are promised eternal life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify why the Church is also called the Body of Christ to indicate that each member of the Church has different gifts to state that each one of us is needed in the Church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that the entire universe and all creatures praise God by their very existence to explain that God loves everything he has made, so we should take care of it to affirm that in caring for the environment, we are caring for ourselves and our earthly home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain that praise is a form of prayer to name some of the reasons that God deserves our praise to identify that we praise God together as a Church through music and song
Scripture	Genesis 1:26–31 (p. 22)	Matthew 3:13–17 (p. 1452)	1 Corinthians 12:14–18, 27 (p. 1808)	Psalms 148:3–13 (pp. 956–957)	Psalms 150:1–6 (p. 958)
Key Words*	<i>created</i> <i>descendants</i> Holy Trinity unique	<i>lighting</i> sin Christian sacraments Sacrament of Baptism	Body of Christ	psalm praise prays	<i>Temple</i> <i>supreme</i> <i>lyre</i> Liturgy of the Hours
People of Faith	Saint Kateri Tekakwitha	Saint John the Baptist	Saint Joseph	Pope Saint Paul VI	Saint David the King

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

Unit 2: Jesus Shows Us God’s Love					
Chapter Number and Title	6. Jesus Welcomes Everyone	7. We Celebrate Reconciliation	8. Conscience Is a Gift of God’s Love	9. We Are Called to Kindness	10. We Ask for Forgiveness
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	541–544 699	1440–1470 1849–1864	1776–1778 1783–1785 2056 2058 2064–2068	1822–1829	1451–1454 1469 2616 2631
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that Jesus shows us God’s love for us to identify that Jesus loves and welcomes everyone, including children to explain that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those with a childlike faith 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that we can ask for God’s forgiveness at any time to explain that we celebrate the forgiveness of our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation to state that the Sacrament of Reconciliation brings us peace and joy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that the Ten Commandments are God’s loving rules to keep us safe and happy to summarize that the Ten Commandments teach us right and wrong to explain that when we follow our conscience, we are doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that our kindness to others shows God’s love to indicate that Jesus gave us an example of love and kindness to follow to discuss that love and kindness can heal hurts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that God will always love us and forgive us to explain that we can use reason, free will, and conscience to live in right relationship with God to name that we can ask God for forgiveness in our prayers
Scripture	Matthew 19:13–15 (p. 1496)	Psalm 51:4, 7–10 (p. 878)	Exodus 20:2–3, 6–8, 12–17 (p. 132)	Ephesians 4:1–6 (p. 1846)	Luke 15:11, 20–24 (p. 1620)
Key Words*	childlike childish	<i>consider</i> <i>loyal</i> venial sin mortal sin reconciliation	<i>worship</i> <i>generation</i> <i>accuse</i> Ten Commandments conscience	<i>humble</i> <i>tolerant</i> <i>preserve</i> <i>unity</i> dignity	<i>pity</i> <i>prize</i> free will reason contrition
People of Faith	Saint John Baptist de La Salle	Saint Dismas the Good Thief	Moses the Patriarch	Saint Mother Teresa of Kolkata (Calcutta)	Saint Augustine and Saint Monica

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

Unit 3: We Meet Jesus in the Eucharist					
Chapter Number and Title	11. Jesus Gives Us Himself	12. We Celebrate the Eucharist	13. We Grow Strong in Christ's Love	14. We Share Love with Our Community	15. We Pray the Lord's Prayer
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	1322–1419	1135–1162 1391 1408 1416	1134 1394 1694	791 1396 1407	2759–2865
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain that Jesus gave us his Body and Blood at the Last Supper to articulate that in every Mass Jesus gives himself to us as he did at the Last Supper to state that ordinary bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ at every Mass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recall that the Eucharist nourishes our souls and brings us closer to God to explain that Jesus feeds people all over the world with the Eucharist at Mass to name the four different parts of the Mass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that Jesus lives in our hearts through the Eucharist to state that we are strengthened and grow in Christ's love by receiving the Eucharist to name that one way we grow in faith and love is through practicing virtue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that the Eucharist brings us together as a community of faith to identify that members of the community help us grow in faith and hear God's voice to state that we must help all members of our community, especially the youngest and the oldest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to review the meaning of prayer as talking and listening to God to state that Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer to his followers to explain the basic meaning of each part of the Lord's Prayer
Scripture	Mark 14:22–24 (p. 1560)	John 6:8–11 (p. 1666)	Ephesians 3:14–19 (p. 1844)	1 Samuel 3:8–10 (p. 372)	Matthew 6:9–13 (p. 1460)
Key Words*	<i>disciple</i> <i>covenant</i> Eucharist Holy Communion consecration	<i>disciple</i> <i>barley</i> <i>distributed</i>	virtue	Israelites	<i>will</i> <i>Evil One</i>
People of Faith	Saint Cyril of Jerusalem	Saint Juliana of Liège	Saint Alphonsus Liguori	Saints Joachim and Anne	Saint Matthew the Evangelist

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

Unit 4: We Follow Jesus					
Chapter Number and Title	16. Jesus Died and Rose for Us	17. We Are Strengthened in Confirmation	18. We Are Disciples	19. We Love Those in Need	20. Praying with Mary
Catechism Pillar	Believe	Celebrate	Live	Live: Catholic Social Teaching	Pray
Catechism References	638–658	731–741 767 1285–1321 2623	849–856 905 2044–2046 2471–2472	786 2447	965 967–969 973–975
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that Jesus died and rose for us to recall that we each have a personal relationship with Jesus to identify that Jesus is with us in good times and bad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to explain the event of Pentecost as the time when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples to recall that the Holy Spirit strengthens us in the Sacrament of Confirmation to identify that we are called to be disciples and tell others about Jesus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify the work that the early disciples did to state that we bring others to Jesus by learning about him, talking about him, and living the way he taught to explain that Jesus promised to be with us and help us live as his disciples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to indicate that Jesus is a king who identifies with the least important people to explain that we should serve those in need as followers of Jesus to state that people often have needs that cannot be seen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that prayer can help us be open to God’s plan to state that Mary is an example of complete trust in God to recall that we can always call on Mary to help us trust in God
Scripture	Mark 16:1–6 (p. 1568)	Acts 2:1–6 (p. 1714)	Matthew 28:16–20 (p. 1520)	Matthew 25:34, 37–40 (p. 1510)	Luke 1:30–33, 38 (p. 1574)
Key Words*	<i>anoint</i> <i>tomb</i> <i>alarmed</i> Resurrection Alleluia	<i>Pentecost</i> <i>tongues of fire</i> <i>Holy Spirit</i> Sacrament of Confirmation	<i>disciple</i> <i>doubted</i> <i>authority</i>	<i>righteous</i> Works of Mercy	<i>gracious</i> <i>ancestor</i> <i>descendants</i>
People of Faith	Saint Teresa of Ávila	Saint Arnold Janssen and Others	Father James Walsh, Father Thomas Price, and Mother Mary Joseph Rogers	Saint Benedict Joseph Labré	Our Lady of the Rosary

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

Liturgical Season Lessons				
Liturgical Season	All Saints' Day	Advent	Christmas	Lent
Chapter Title	Celebrating the Saints	Welcoming Jesus	Celebrating the Birth of Jesus	Preparing for Easter
Catechism References	946–948 954–962 1023–1029	484–495 522–524 721–726	456–460	1094–1095 1217–1220 1438
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that holiness is happiness according to the teachings of Jesus to state that on All Saints' Day we celebrate all the holy people in Heaven, even the ones that the Church has not officially canonized to state that our goal in life is to follow Jesus and to become saints, that is, holy people who love God, ourselves, and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify the Angel Gabriel as a messenger from God to Mary to explain that Mary agreed to become the mother of God's Son, Jesus to state that we can prepare for Christmas during Advent by saying "yes" to God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify that Christmas is the season when we celebrate the birth of Jesus to explain that Jesus was born in poor circumstances to compare the poverty of Jesus with the poverty of people in need today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that Lent is a season of preparation for Easter to explain that during Lent we remember that we went through the waters of Baptism and were saved by God to state that in Lent we recall that Jesus saves us through his death and Resurrection
Scripture	Matthew 5:6–9 (p. 1456)	Luke 1:30–33, 38 (p. 1574)	Luke 2:1–7 (p. 1576)	Genesis 7:1–5 (p. 34)
Key Words*	<i>merciful</i> <i>pure in heart</i> Beatitudes canonized Communion of Saints	<i>gracious</i> <i>ancestor</i> <i>descendants</i>	manger poverty	<i>unclean animal</i> <i>reproduce</i> Passion Resurrection Holy Week penance
People of Faith	All Saints	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Saint Joseph	Saint Brigid of Ireland

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

Liturgical Season Lessons				
Liturgical Season	Easter	Pentecost	Ordinary Time	Mary
Chapter Title	Jesus Is Risen!	Come, Holy Spirit	Learning about Jesus	Mary Is Our Mother
Catechism References	638–658	731–747 797–801	543–550 2840–2845	487–511 721–726 1335 1613 2617–2622
Lesson Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that during the Easter season we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead to explain that Jesus' friend Mary Magdalene was filled with joy when she recognized that Jesus was resurrected to identify that we too are friends of Jesus who celebrate his Resurrection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to state that the feast of Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the disciples to identify that the Holy Spirit helps the Church to spread the Good News of Jesus to explain that the Holy Spirit was given to us at our Baptism and will strengthen us in Confirmation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify Ordinary Time as the time of year when we learn more about the life of Jesus and his teachings to identify that forgiveness is one of the most important teachings of Jesus to state that Jesus expects us to forgive an endless amount of times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to name the role of Mary as our helper and intercessor to state that Jesus performed the miracle of turning water into wine at the request of his mother, Mary to identify that we honor Mary with various titles
Scripture	John 20:11–14, 16 (p. 1702)	Acts 2:1–6 (p. 1714)	Matthew 18:21–22 (p. 1492)	John 2:1–11 (pp. 1650–1651)
Key Words*	<i>tomb</i> <i>Lord</i> grieving	<i>Pentecost</i> <i>tongues of fire</i> <i>Holy Spirit</i>	boundaries	devotions intercede immaculate
People of Faith	Saint Mary Magdalene	Saint Peter	Saint Jane Frances de Chantal	Our Lady of Lourdes

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

Support Articles

Characteristics of Second Graders

Second graders are lively, yet more grown-up and serious compared to the less confident first graders they were just a year ago. Now that second graders have had a couple years of elementary school experience, they are more settled and comfortable in their learning environment. The seven- to eight-year-old typically appreciates the order and structure of a classroom or catechetical setting. Thus, your being organized and well-prepared will help your second graders to feel relaxed, content, and ready to learn.

Physical Characteristics

Most second graders have good hand-eye coordination and, therefore, are fairly adept at writing, painting, drawing, cutting, and pasting. Because they are still growing rapidly, they may be somewhat awkward at some of these tasks. However, in general they have good large- and small-muscle motor skills.

Intellectual Characteristics

Second graders are concrete thinkers, but they do have some analytical skills and can organize their thoughts. For example, they can make comparisons and think reflectively. Yet most of their thinking is concrete and focuses on the physical things that they can see or imagine. They might have trouble imagining something with which they are unfamiliar (see *Grade-by-Grade Learning* at pbs.org). For example, they may have trouble imagining a desert if they have never seen one. So if knowing what a desert is like is an important part of a lesson, you may need to show them a picture or a video clip of a desert.

Furthermore, second graders have the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, although they will not always understand the consequences of their actions. They do, however, like to please adults.

Social-Emotional Characteristics

The second-grade child is developing a sense of self. Interaction with classmates helps the child, but there are times when a second grader may want to be alone. And friendships can change quickly in second grade. At the same time, the seven- or eight-year-old child likes to play and work with friends. For this reason, second graders do best working with a partner or in a small group. Also, this is the period when the division of sexes begins, meaning that children prefer to play or work with others of the same sex. Given that there is a heightened interest in friendships at this age, it is a good time to talk about Jesus as friend.

Summary

These are all general characteristics of second graders. Although these characteristics might not describe every child, an awareness of these qualities will help you 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 [faith education] 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 child 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

God's Love Calls Us Together

Chapter 1

God Created Us 42

Chapter 2

We Celebrate Baptism 50

Chapter 3

We Belong to the Church 58

Chapter 4

We Celebrate and Care for all Creation . . 66

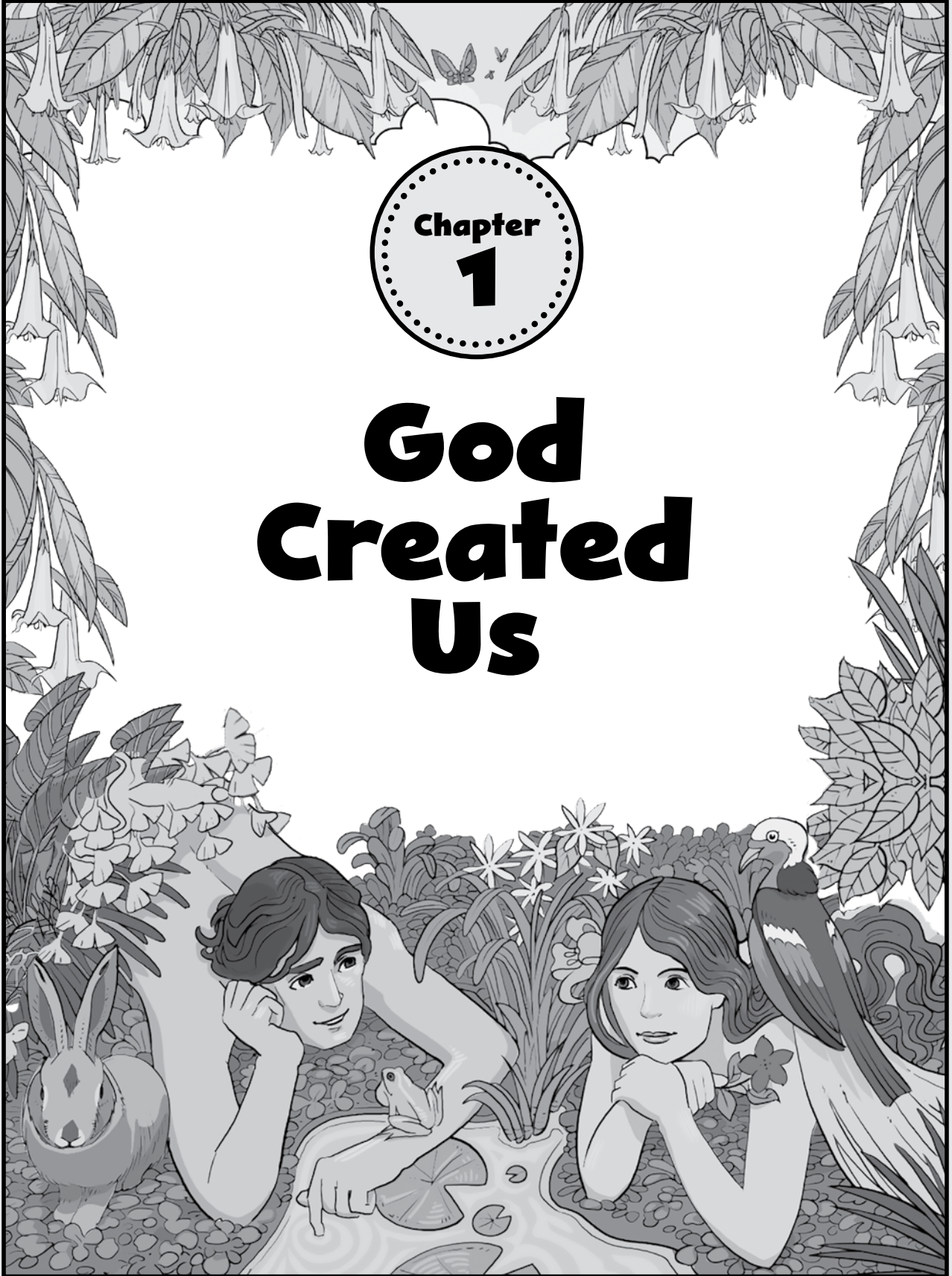
Chapter 5

We Pray Together 74

Chapter

1

God Created Us




**Chapter
1**

Lesson at a Glance

Chapter 1

Scripture Focus

Genesis 1:26–31

Lesson Goals

- to state that God created human beings
- to explain that God created us to love and to be loved
- to describe God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

27, 221, 234, 279–280, 282, 288–289

Key Words

created, descendants, Holy Trinity, unique

Music Suggestions

- “If I Were a Butterfly,” by Brian Howard (Mission Hills Music)
- “Awesome God,” by CedarMont Kids (CedarMont Music)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 1 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- an item or object you have made
- masking tape and/or nine pieces of paper
- index cards marked with large Xs for half the children
- index cards marked with large Os for half the children
- a hole punch
- a skein of yarn
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The Scripture focused on in this chapter reminds us that we come from God. It also reminds us that we are created to reflect the love and goodness of God in the world. Because of God’s great love, he gave us life and the special task of caring for his gift of creation. He also gave us the special task of loving all people, even those who are different from us in some way.

As we learn about God, we encounter one of the greatest mysteries of our faith: the Holy Trinity. God is Three Persons in one God. Each Person is equally God, yet each is a unique and loving Person: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Each human being made in God’s image is unique too. Enjoy getting to know the children’s unique talents and characteristics as you share with them your own gifts.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Begin by showing the group something that you have made. It might be something drawn, sewn, baked, etc. Share why this is special and important to you.
- Ask the children to share some things that they have made. Write a list of their responses on the board. Ask the following questions as volunteers offer their responses:
 - How did you feel about your item when you made it?
 - Did you do anything special with it once you made it?
 - How would you choose someone to take care of what you made? Why?
- Tell the group that today they are going to read in the Bible about something very special and important that God has made. Explain that they will also learn that when God makes something, it is always precious to him.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Explain to the group that the word *genesis* means "creation" or "beginning." The first book of the Bible is named Genesis because it is the story of the beginning of the world.
- 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 of the passage on page 21 and at the end of the passage on page 24.
- 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 previous pages.
- Invite the children to look at the artwork on pages 22 and 23 and to describe what they see.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What does the passage tell us that God made? (*human beings; animals and plants*)
 - What did God say about human beings? (*They will be like God; they will have many descendants.*)
 - How did God feel about what he made? (*He was very pleased.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. human beings; 2. children (or descendants); 3. in charge; 4. grain, fruit; 5. pleased*

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:
 - There is only one God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Three Persons in one God are called the **Holy Trinity**.
 - God created the universe, including the first man and woman. He loved them very much.
 - God loves each person very much!
 - God has given us the freedom to choose how we think and act.
 - God has given us the power to love God and others.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 23, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the group to read the prayer of praise together. At the words “glory to you, God,” invite the children to raise their arms in a sign of praise.
- Invite a few volunteers to name other parts of creation they might want to add to the prayer. Ask the group to respond with the same words and gestures.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 23. (*Image 1 shows God’s creation. Image 2 shows Adam and Eve, the first human beings. Image 3 shows God saying he was very pleased with everything he had made.*)
- Invite the children to find a partner and, using the images in Tell It!, retell the Scripture passage.
- Ask a few volunteers to share their summary of the Bible reading, using the images in Tell It!



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

God Made Each Person Unique

- Prepare a large tic-tac-toe grid on the floor in advance. This can be done by creating a 3-by-3 grid with masking tape or by taping down nine pieces of paper in a grid form.
- Prepare index cards by marking half with Xs and half with Os. Punch a hole at the top of each and then string them, individually, onto lengths of yarn so they can be hung around the children's necks.
- Divide the group into two teams. Give each member of the first team an index card with a large "X." Give each member of the second team an index card with a large "O."
- Introduce the activity by telling the children that we are going to get to know one another. Explain that you will go down each line, child by child, asking each child to tell the group his or her name and something he or she like to do or is good at doing. Encourage the group to listen in order to remember as many things as they can about the other children.
- Keep a running list of names and favorite activities or talents on a piece of paper that only you can see so you can use it to test the children.
- Explain to the group that you will now call out the name of a child. The first person in the X line and O line should raise her or his hand and call out the activity or talent the child named mentioned. The rest of the team can help the first person in the line, but they should whisper so that the other team doesn't hear.
- If the person who calls out the activity is correct, she or he can move to one of the squares on the grid. If the person is not correct, she or he goes to the back of the line. Remind the children that the goal of the game is to fill three squares vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. The first team to do this will earn one point.
- Continue to play the game until one team gets a tic-tac-toe and earns one point. Invite all the children on the grid to go to the back of their lines. Play the game again, as time allows, and add up the total number of points at the end to declare a winner.

Process the Activity

- Remind the group that each person is God's creation, and share the following points:
 - When God made each of us, he created us with gifts and talents that make us each **unique**. This means we are each special and different.
 - Even though everyone in the world is different, we are all special to God, and God loves each of us. Being special and different is something we should celebrate.

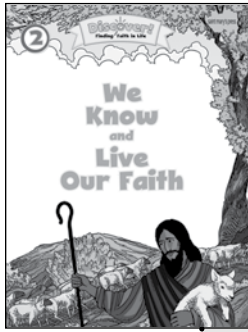
- Ask the children the following questions:
 - How did the game help you understand that God made everyone special and unique? (*Everyone had different interests and talents.*)
 - Why do you think God loves all people? (*Because he made each person unique. He loves each person and each person is precious to him.*)
- Ask the children to repeat after you: “I am special and different. I am unique!”

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 to the children that God made all of creation, including people. Tell them that God has given us the special task of loving and respecting all people, the ones we know and the ones we don’t know.
- Remind the children that we use the term *Holy Trinity* to describe God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We remember the Holy Trinity each time we pray the Sign of the Cross.
- Remind the children that there are three Persons in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God the Father created us out of love and is with us all the time. Jesus was sent to us by God the Father to show us how much the Father loves us and to teach us about God’s great love. The Holy Spirit was sent from God to be with us all the time, to remind us that God loves us, and to help us love God in return.
- Tell the children that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all work together in love. God wants his people to work together in peace and love, like the Holy Trinity.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How can you show people you know that you love and respect them? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
 - How can you show love and respect for people you don’t know? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
 - Who are the Three Persons in one God? (*God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit*)
 - What is the name of the Three Persons in one God? (*Holy Trinity*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Holy Trinity*
- 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 Kateri Tekakwitha, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Kateri, 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:

- “God Made the World,” page 6
- “God Made You” + activity, pages 7–8
- “God Wants You to Know Him and Love Him,” page 9
- “Three Persons in One God” + activity, pages 10–11

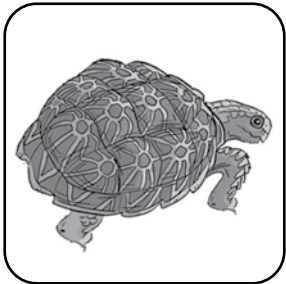
Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin an activity, or have them complete the activities with their families at home.



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 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 created human beings.
 - God created people to love and be loved.
 - God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Invite the children to locate the turtle on the lower left of page 22 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find the image of the turtle on their folders. It can be found in five different places.



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 find the prayer in the Live It! on page 23 of the Bible. Follow the prayer pattern praising God but, rather than naming elements of the Earth, remind the group that they are all created by God. Name each child, and ask the group to say the response after each person's name. At the words “glory to you, God,” invite the children to raise their arms in a sign of praise.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- crayons

A Holy Trinity Tree (15 minutes)

- Give each child a sheet of blank paper and crayons.
- Show the children how to draw a large tree trunk with three large branches.
- On the trunk, have them write the words “Holy Trinity.”
- On each branch, have them write the name of one of the persons in the Trinity: “God the Father,” “God the Son,” “God the Holy Spirit.”
- Have the children draw leaves on the tree branches, being careful not to cover the writing.

Materials Needed

- large sheets of drawing paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- scissors, one for each child
- a large piece of poster board
- tape or glue

We Are Wonderfully Made (15 minutes)

- Distribute to each child a large sheet of drawing paper; markers, crayons, or colored pencils; and a pair of scissors.
- Invite the children to trace their hand and part of their arm, almost to the elbow. They might want to help each other with the tracing.
- Encourage the children to write their names on the hand/arm and what is “wonderful” about them: their talents, abilities, likes, etc. They can then color their hand/arm and cut it out.
- Prepare a large poster board with “We Are Wonderfully Made” written at the top. Help the children tape or glue their drawings onto this poster board.
- Display the poster where all can see it.

Materials Needed

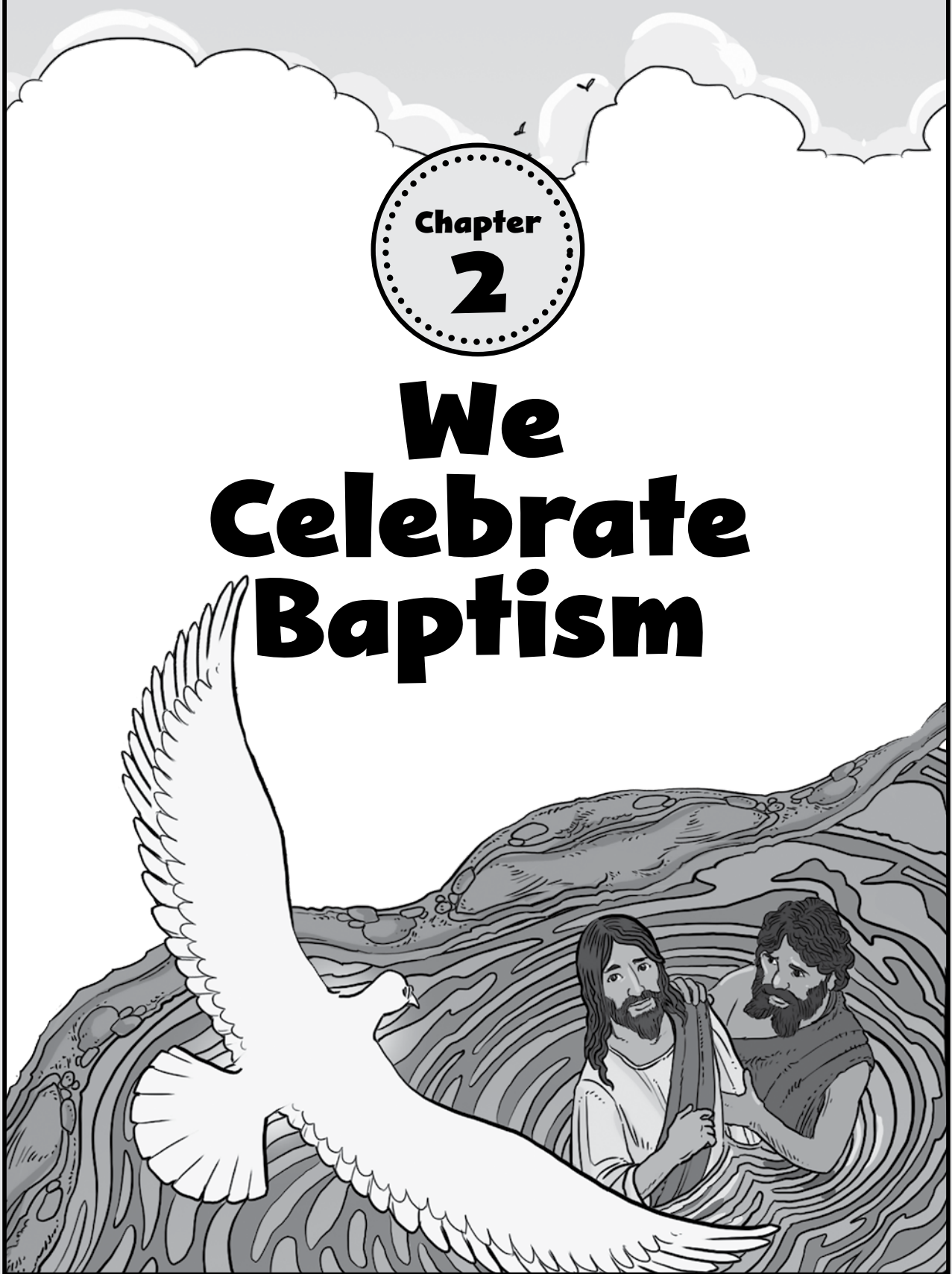
- *The Catholic Children’s Bible*
- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank paper
- markers or crayons
- paper clips or clothespins
- a length of rope or clothesline

Sing Along: God Made Everything (15 minutes)

- Read aloud the Genesis account of Creation (Genesis 1:1–31).
- Show the video “How God Made Everything [MUSIC VIDEO]” (YouTube, 5:36). Invite the children to sing along with the chorus.
- Distribute blank paper and markers or crayons, and invite the children to draw something from creation that they love.
- Help the children display their drawings by using paperclips or clothespins to attach them to a length of rope or clothesline.
- Ask each child to name what he or she drew, and invite the group to respond with the prayer: “Thank you, God, for making [name the item from creation].”

Chapter
2

We Celebrate Baptism




 Chapter
2

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 3:13–17

Lesson Goals

- to identify sacraments as meetings with Jesus
- to state that the Sacrament of Baptism makes us children of God and Christians
- to explain that in Baptism, our sins are forgiven, and we are promised eternal life

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

535–537, 694, 1131, 1210–2016, 1224

Key Words

lighting, sin, Christian, sacraments, Sacrament of Baptism

Music Suggestions

- “When I Am Baptized,” by Clive Romney (Shadow Mountain Records)
- “We Are Your People,” by News At Eleven (News At Eleven)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 2 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a clear glass or plastic pitcher of water
- a paper cup for each child
- a small bottle of holy water, a small bottle of oil, a baptismal candle, and a white garment
- one copy of the baptismal promises (from the *Rite of Baptism*, Easter missalette, or online)
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

We are drawn to, attracted by, and even fascinated with water. Whether it is a gurgling stream, a placid lake, or a mighty ocean, we want to be near it and even in it. Water also fulfills a physical human need that ensures our very survival. Simply put, water gives life.

Just as water gives us physical life, the waters of Baptism give us spiritual life and eternal life. The waters of Baptism invite us into community with God through his Son, Jesus Christ, and with one another as the people called by God to bring his love into the world. This community is the Church. Just as water cleanses dirt from our bodies, the blessed waters of Baptism cleanse us from sin and bring us God’s forgiveness.

“Come, everyone who is thirsty—here is water!” proclaims the Prophet Isaiah (55:1). This is the message of this lesson. Come to the Sacrament of Baptism. Explore the depths of our human need for water, for life, for God.



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.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children if they have ever done something just because it would make their parents happy.
- Invite them to share what they did and why they did it. Encourage them to share how their parents reacted and what the outcome was.
- Tell the group that today they are going to read in the Bible about a time that Jesus did just what they did. Explain that he wanted to make God his Father happy by obeying him.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 3:13–17 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1451). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1452. 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 1452–1453 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key word with the children. Also explain that the Jordan is the name of a river in the place where Jesus lived. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why did Jesus go to John? (*to be baptized*)
 - What was John's reaction when Jesus asked to be baptized? (*John tried to make Jesus change his mind.*)
 - What happened when Jesus came up out of the water? (*Heaven opened, the Spirit of God came down like a dove, and a voice came from Heaven.*)
 - What did the voice from Heaven say? (*"This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased."*)

- Add a bit more depth, using the following as possible points:
 - At first, John did not want to baptize Jesus. John was offering a baptism to show sorrow for **sin**. Sin is saying, thinking, or doing something against God's Law.
 - Jesus was free of all sin, so he really didn't need to show sorrow for sin. But Jesus wanted to be baptized because he was both God and a human being.
 - Jesus wanted to show us that he was with us, even though we are sinners.
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. Jordan, 2. obey, 3. baptize, 4. pleased, 5. water, 6. Son, 7. dove*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1453, 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:
 - By having John baptize him, Jesus was obeying God, his heavenly Father.
 - Jesus showed that he is a loving Son.
 - When someone is baptized, their sins are forgiven, and they become a child of God and a **Christian**. A Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ.
 - When a person is baptized, God says, "This is my own dear child, with whom I am pleased," just as he said about Jesus at Jesus' Baptism.
- Explain to the children that most people are baptized as babies, but some people are baptized as children or as adults.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1453, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to quietly consider each of the questions as they are read. Give them a minute after reading each of the questions to think. Then invite them to share their thoughts as time permits.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1453. (*Image 1 shows Jesus meeting John at the Jordan. Image 2 shows John baptizing Jesus. Image 3 shows the Spirit of God coming down like a dove on Jesus.*)
- Invite one child to start to retell the Scripture passage using the images. After one sentence, call on another child to tell the next part. Continue to call on children to tell just one sentence about the images until all the children have had a turn or the story has been completed.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Water in the Desert

- Place a clear glass pitcher of water on a table in front of the room. Place a paper cup for each child on the table. Have a wastebasket nearby.
- Announce to the children that each of them will be getting a cup of water from this pitcher. Then pour the water into the cups as the children watch.
- Explain that before we drink the water, we will need to go into the desert, where there is no water. Ask, "What is the desert like?" Solicit examples from the group of what "desert life" is like. (*very hot, no water, sandy, full of cacti, perhaps an oasis that turns out to be imaginary, etc.*)
- Ask the group to line up in the back of the room so that every child has a clear path toward the front of the room.
- Explain that you are the leader of this expedition. You will allow people to reach the water, but only after they follow instructions. Tell the children they are lost in the desert and very weak and thirsty, and suddenly they see a beautiful stream ahead of them. (Point to the water pitcher.) They need the water very badly. But they are too weak to walk anymore. They must *crawl* to the beautiful stream to get a drink.
- Continue to explain the game as a "Mother, may I?" game. Give each child an instruction like, "Robert, crawl two arms' length forward." Robert must respond, "Teacher, may I?" (or use your name). Answer, "Yes, you may." If a child forgets to say "Teacher, may I?" she or he must go back to the starting line.
- Continue down the row of children, giving them instructions to keep them moving toward the goal. Repeat until all have reached the front of the room.
- Congratulate them for making it through the desert, and invite them to enjoy a cup of water as a reward.

Process the Activity

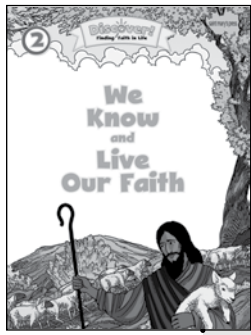
- Ask the children how they felt while they were pretending to be in the desert. (*hot, thirsty, tired from crawling, etc.*)
- Ask the children how they felt while they were drinking the water. (*much better, happier, thankful for water, not thirsty anymore, etc.*)
- Explain that water is a great gift from God and that we need it for drinking and keeping clean. Remind the children that we can't live without water!
- Explain that God gives us another great gift, the waters of the Sacrament of Baptism. Continue by telling the children that now that they have made it through the desert, they are ready to learn more about God's great gift of Baptism.

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

- Explain that Baptism is one of the seven **sacraments** in the Church. Tell the children that a sacrament is a meeting with Jesus and that in every sacrament we come to know Jesus better and become more like him. Share that every sacrament is a sign of God’s love for us.”
- Note several examples of signs that we use to remind us of some idea or feeling. A birthday cake is a sign of celebration and that someone is a year older; the American flag is a sign of our country; a cross is a sign of Jesus; and so on. Explain to the children that a sacrament is something like those examples, except that a sacrament has power to do something. Explain that a sacrament is an outward sign, or symbol, that gives God’s life.
- Remind the group of the desert activity, and remind them that water is necessary for life. Explain that without water, people, animals, and plants cannot live. Connect this with the Sacrament of Baptism. Use the following points:
 - When we are baptized, water is poured over us.
 - The holy water that is poured over us actually does something. It gives us God’s life inside us.
- Explain to the group that the **Sacrament of Baptism** is the sacrament that makes us children of God, gives us God’s life, forgives our sins, and makes us members of the Church. Tell the children that in Baptism, we are promised that we will live with God forever!
- Share with your group, if time permits, that we use several smaller signs to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism. As you share this information, you might want to show pictures or actual items to the children:
 - Holy water is a sign of life.
 - A lit candle reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World and we want to follow him.
 - Holy oil (or Sacred Chrism) is used to anoint us (or mark us with oil) as a sign of Christ’s strength in our lives.
 - A white garment is a sign of putting on Christ and being clothed in Christ’s love.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is a sacrament? (*a meeting with Jesus; an outward sign, or symbol, that gives God’s life*)
 - What is the Sacrament of Baptism? (*This sacrament makes us children of God and Christians, gives us God’s life, forgives our sins, makes us members of the Church, and promises that we will live with God forever.*)
 - What are the signs used in Baptism? (*holy water, a lit candle, holy oil or Sacred Chrism, a white garment*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. Jesus, 2. Baptism, 3. Christians, 4. life, 5. sins, 6. 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 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:

- “The Sacraments” and “The Seven Sacraments,” pages 20–23
- “Baptism” and “The Gifts of Baptism,” pages 24–27

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 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:
 - Sacraments are meetings with Jesus.
 - The Sacrament of Baptism makes us children of God and Christians.
 - In Baptism, our sins are forgiven, and we are promised eternal life.
- Invite the children to locate the dove on page 1452 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find the image of a dove on their folders. It can be found in four different places.



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.
- Explain to the group that when someone is baptized, they make promises to God called baptismal promises. Tell them that when a baby is baptized, parents make the promises on behalf of the child.
- Note that every year at Easter, the whole Church, in every parish, makes these baptismal promises together.
- Tell the children that they will make these promises now. As you read the baptismal promises, ask the children to respond “I do” after each question. You might want to nod as a signal that they are to respond.
- Close prayer by asking the children to make the Sign of the Cross together, the sign that marked them as children of God from the time of their Baptism.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a sheet of poster board
- four or five sticky dots for each child

Materials Needed

- materials for making cards
- decorations such as stickers or rubber stamps, string, ribbon

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- a doll with white clothes
- water and a large bowl to use as a font
- a small bowl or pitcher to pour water

We Use Water (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to help you brainstorm how they use water frequently. As they give you ideas, write them on a sheet of poster board. Ideas might include drinking, bathing, swimming, brushing teeth, washing dishes, watering plants, etc.
- Distribute the sticky dots. Ask the children to think about which of these activities they have done in the past week. Then invite the children, one by one, to approach the chart and place a dot beside the ways they have used water recently.
- Discuss with the group the information shown, and emphasize that water is essential for life.
- Remind the group that water is used in the Sacrament of Baptism. Explain that just as water is necessary for life, so the Sacrament of Baptism is necessary for our belonging to the Church and for life with God, both now and forever.

Thank Your Godparents (15 minutes)

- Explain to the group that at Baptism, godparents are chosen to help the one baptized learn more about Jesus and how to live the Catholic faith.
- Ask the children who their godparents are. If they don't know, remind them to ask their parents.
- Help the children make thank-you cards for their godparents. If the godparents are not married to each other, two cards will be needed, one for the godmother and one for the godfather.
- Brainstorm together a short message that the children might use in the cards. Write this message on the board.
- Instruct the children to either deliver the cards to their godparents or mail them.

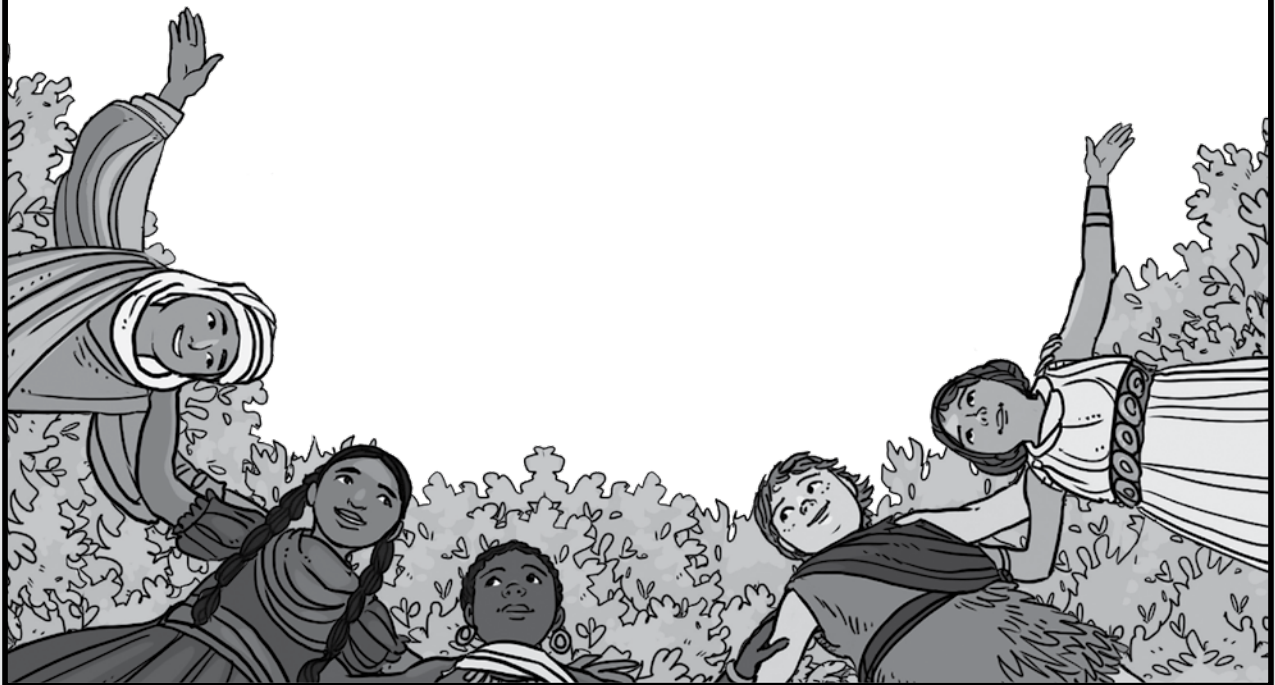
Dramatize a Baptism (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Catholic Baby Baptism" (YouTube, 9:17). Begin at the 3:30 marker to show the entire Baptism.
- Point out to the children the white garment, the anointing with oil, the pouring of the water, and the baptismal candle.
- Invite the children to help reenact a Baptism with you, using a doll, bowl, and pitcher of water. Assign roles and practice the words of the Sacrament: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (*Rite of Baptism for Children*).
- Tell the children that we remember our own Baptism every time we make the Sign of the Cross and pray, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Chapter

3

We Belong to the Church




 Chapter
3

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

1 Corinthians 12:14–18, 27

Lesson Goals

- to identify why the Church is also called the Body of Christ
- to indicate that each member of the Church has different gifts
- to state that each one of us is needed in the Church

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

777, 790–791, 792–796, 947

Key Word

Body of Christ

Music Suggestions

- “We Are the Body of Christ,” by Rob Baker (Tate Music Group)
- “We Belong to God’s Family,” by Owen Alstott (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 3 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a large sheet of newsprint to prepare a life-sized puzzle in the shape of a child’s body
- strips of paper with an action to pantomime on each one
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Background Reflection

We have heard it proclaimed many times: We are the Body of Christ! We’ve sung it, we’ve read it, and we’ve been taught it in our own faith formation. Is it just an empty phrase? Hopefully not. The Scripture passage for this lesson opens up its full meaning.

Saint Paul first describes our own human body as a harmonious whole with many parts. Then he compares that wonderful body to the harmonious whole that is Christ’s body, the Church. Each baptized person, great or small, belongs to the Body of Christ. As members of Christ’s Body, we are to use our God-given gifts to live our lives as followers of Christ, doing the work Christ calls us to do.

Many people today seem to suffer from a feeling of not belonging, for many reasons. How different Saint Paul’s vision of the Church is! In the Church, we all belong—from the newest baptized baby to Pope Francis in Rome. In the Body of Christ, we belong, we are loved, we are needed.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to share some of their favorite activities. Encourage them to mention sports, games, hobbies, and so on.
- Give several children a strip of paper with an action written on it (batting a ball, swimming, jumping jacks, kicking a ball, reading a book, etc.).
- Invite volunteers to pantomime their actions for the group, and have the other children guess what each action is.
- Ask if any of the children have had a broken arm, leg, or some other injury. Invite them to share how this injury affected them and their ability to do their favorite activities.
- Explain that if a part of the body is injured, the other parts of the body try to make up for it. But we know that this often does not work as well. Tell them that the other parts have their own jobs to do and can't do the job of the broken part.

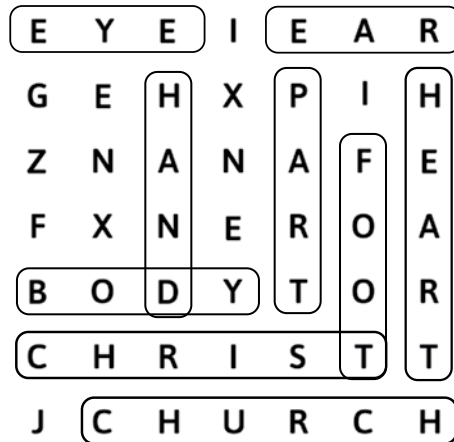


Dive In! (15 minutes)

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 and describe what they see. Ask them the following questions:
 - What are the hands doing? (*They are holding onto each other.*)
 - Are all the hands the same? (*No, they are different colors and are holding on in different ways.*)

- Draw the group's attention to the word *Corinthians* on the brown tabs along the side of pages 1808–1809. Explain that this is the name of one of the books of the Bible written by Saint Paul. Explain that the Scripture passage on this page is part of a whole Letter to the Corinthians that Saint Paul wrote to help the early followers of Christ understand more about Jesus and the Church.
- Read, or ask a volunteer to read, the title on this page. Explain that this Scripture passage will tell us more about what it means to be part of the Church.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did Saint Paul say about our human bodies? (*They are made of many parts; God put every different part in the body just as he wanted it to be.*)
 - What is Christ's Body made up of? (*All of us. Each one of us is part of Christ's Body.*)
- 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 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 our body is important to us. Each has a special job to do.
 - The Church is also called the **Body of Christ**. Each member of the Church, including ourselves, is an important member of the Body of Christ.
 - God gave you special gifts to use to help the Body of Christ. Each one of us is important to the whole Church!

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1809, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to name some ways they think people can be good members of the Church.
- Write their responses on the board or in a place where they can see them.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1809. (*Image 1 shows a body made up of different parts. Image 2 shows us that the foot is its own important part of the body. Image 3 shows that an eye needs an ear to hear. Image 4 shows that we are all part of Christ's body.*)
- Draw attention to the final frame. Ask the children to explain what the final frame is showing. (*We are part of the Body of Christ.*)
- Allow the children to retell the Scripture story to a partner using the images in the frames.

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity****Parts of One Body**

- Prepare in advance a life-size outline of a child's body on a large sheet of newsprint. Cut out the figure, and then cut out a heart-shaped piece at the appropriate place on the figure. Write "We Are the Body of Christ" on the heart, and then set the heart aside to show to the group later.
- Cut the figure into as many puzzle-style pieces as the number of children in your group.
- Give one puzzle piece to each child. Instruct the children to decorate their pieces with their names. Ask them to write or draw some of their special gifts or talents on the puzzle piece (not just natural abilities but qualities like kindness, sense of humor, helpfulness, etc.).
- Invite the group to put the puzzle together as a team, in one large or several small groups.
- Draw attention, when the puzzle is finished, to the heart-shaped hole in the figure. Show that piece to the group and invite them to read the words on the heart. Put it in the heart-shaped hole.

Process the Activity

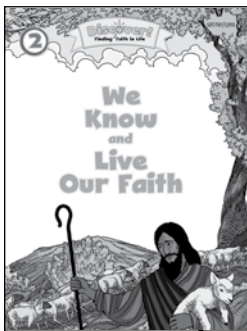
- Invite the group to share how a person's body is like the Body of Christ. (*It has many parts, and each part is important.*)
- Ask the children why they think you had them write or draw their talents on their puzzle piece. (*Each person has special gifts from God. All of our gifts are important to the Body of Christ.*)
- Explore with the group what would happen if someone didn't put their puzzle piece with the others. (*The body would not be whole.*) Remind the children that without every piece, the Body of Christ is not complete.

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

- Explain to the group that we became members of the Body of Christ at Baptism. Consider including the following points:
 - Every person who is baptized is an important member of the Church.
 - The Church is called the Body of Christ. Jesus is the Head of the Body, and we are the members.
 - We are the hands and feet and voice of Jesus on Earth.
- Remind the children that God has given each person special gifts and that every gift is important for the Body of Christ. Explain that every gift or talent that we have can be used to help the other members of the Church and the whole world.
- Refer back to the puzzle in the Live It! and the core learning activity. Remind the group that if “UR” missing from the Church, the Church is not complete. Recall that if a piece is missing from a puzzle, the puzzle is not complete.
- Remind the children about the talents they wrote on their puzzle pieces. How can their talents help the people of God? Accept reasonable responses.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - When does someone become part of the Body of Christ? (*at Baptism*)
 - Why is everyone important to the Body of Christ? (*Because each person is a gift of God and each person has something special to give.*)
 - Who is the head of the Body of Christ? (*Jesus Christ*)
- 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 and activity in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “The Gifts of Baptism,” page 25
- “The Character of Baptism,” page 26
- “Who May Be Baptized?” + activity, pages 26–27

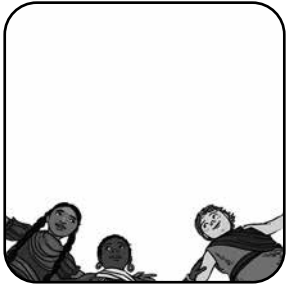
Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin the activity, or have them complete it with their families at home.



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 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 Church is also called the Body of Christ.
 - Each member of the Church has different gifts.
 - Each one of us is needed in the Church.
- Invite the children to locate the three children in the bottom of the main image on page 1808 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.



Chapter 3

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.
- Explain to the group that you will name a specific group of people in the Church, and the children are to respond after each statement by saying, "We are the Body of Christ!" You might want to instruct the children to clap out their response in rhythm or include gestures.

Leader: We remember the people of (name your parish).

Children: We are the Body of Christ!

Leader: We remember those who help us learn about our faith.

Children: We are the Body of Christ!

Leader: We remember our priests.

Children: We are the Body of Christ!

Leader: We remember all of the leaders of the Church.

Children: We are the Body of Christ!

Leader: We remember all people, young and old, who have been baptized.

Children: We are the Body of Christ!

- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a copy of the painting *In His Image*, by William Zdinak, found online
- outlines of Jesus on 8½-x-11-inch pieces of paper, one for each child
- markers or crayons
- a song or video about the Church as the Body of Christ and appropriate equipment for playing it

Sing and Move Along: United in the Body of Christ (15 minutes)

- Display a copy of the painting *In His Image* for your group, talking about the many faces in the painting.
- Distribute the outlines of Jesus and markers or crayons to the children. Explain that they should fill the outline of Jesus with drawings of their friends and family.
- Remind the children that the drawings show that we are all united and part of the Body of Christ.
- Play a song or video that reinforces the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, inviting the children to sing along and to create hand motions that go along with the music.

Materials Needed

- two spoons
- two ping-pong balls

Body of Christ Relay (15 minutes)

- Create two lines of children. Explain to them that the first person in each line will be given a spoon and a ping-pong ball. Tell them that they must carry the ping-pong ball on the spoon to the other side of the room and then return to their group without dropping it. Explain that they will then hand the spoon and ping-pong ball to the next person in line, who will then take their turn.
- Play the game two times. The second time, tell the children that you will call out a body part for each child as they are completing the relay. Explain that when you call out a body part (for example, left eye, right hand, left foot, etc.) they cannot use that part of the body as they are carrying the ping-pong ball back and forth.
- Reflect on the experience with the group after all teams have reached the goal. Invite them to consider how it felt not to have the help of their entire body working together. Ask them what this might teach about everyone and their gifts being needed in the Church, the Body of Christ.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- a device for recording video

One Body, Many Parts (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "One Body Many Parts" (YouTube, 1:57).
- Help the children recreate a similar line of actions, and consider making a video of the children.
- Repeat the activity again, but have one of the children leave the line so that the action stops before completing the line.
- Discuss what happened when someone was missing from the group, and ask the children to share how this activity reminds them of the Body of Christ.

Chapter

4

We Celebrate and Care for All Creation




**Chapter
4**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Psalm 148:3–13

Lesson Goals

- to state that the entire universe and all creatures praise God by their very existence
- to explain that God loves everything he has made, so we should take care of it
- to affirm that in caring for the environment, we are caring for ourselves and our earthly home

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Care for God's Creation

Catechism References

2402, 2456–2457

Key Words

psalm, praise, prays

Music Suggestions

- "All Part of God's Creation," by Drew Lane and Friends (Butterfly Music)
- "Care for Life," by Michael Mangan, Catholic Classroom Collection (AvilaRose, Inc.)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 4 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- blank paper
- markers or crayons
- small items from nature
- a board or poster to write on
- index cards with actions written on them
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Since childhood, we've been taught that God is the Creator of the universe and that creation is God's gift to us. No matter where we are in the natural world—on vacation trips, in city parks, or in our own backyards—we teach our children to enjoy and respect creation as a gift from God.

Psalm 148 calls all of creation to sing God's praises. But how can hills and mountains, trees, and the sun praise God? Everything in creation praises the Creator by being what they were created to be and doing what they were created to do. People, as part of creation, praise God in the same way: by being truly human and by striving to live a life of goodness and godliness. But we human beings are also called to be the caretakers of creation. By loving and protecting all that God has made, we are living up to our own human dignity and sacred worth. In this way, we praise God the Creator of all!



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Prepare by gathering some small "nature pieces." These might include a plant, leaves, pinecones, seashells, flowers, rocks, fruit, and so on. You might want to have enough objects so that each child can hold onto one or two while you discuss them.
- Share these natural objects with your group, and engage the children in a discussion of how varied nature is. Stress the differences of each of the objects.
- Invite the children to share some of the beautiful or interesting places or animals they have seen. Welcome their stories, and encourage them to talk about why they were impressed with what they saw.
- Remind the group that God created everything that they have just held and talked about.
- Invite the children to gently place the natural objects in the area where your group gathers for prayer.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Psalm 148:3–13 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 956–957).
- Read the Scripture passage to the children.
- Explain that this Scripture passage is from the Book of Psalms, using the following points:
 - Just as we sing in church, the People of God would sing to God too. These "songs" are written in the Book of Psalms.
 - A **psalm** is a song or poem-prayer to God. Some psalms thank God, while others praise God or ask for forgiveness.
 - This reading is a psalm of praise.

- Explain the difference between the words *praise* and *prays*:
 - **Praise** means to show someone love and approval, in words and actions.
 - **Prays** means that someone speaks or listens to God.
- Write these words on the board, and ask volunteers to use each of them in a sentence to check for understanding.
- Ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What are some things in creation that can praise the Lord? (*angels, sun and moon, stars, waters, sea monsters, lightning, snow, etc.*)
 - How can animals and other creatures praise the Lord? (*by being alive, by running and jumping, by being companions, by being wild animals*)
 - How can all people praise the Lord? (*by singing and dancing, by being good people, by treating others as we would like to be treated*)
 - How can you praise the Lord? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Have the children turn to page 2 of the activity booklet and complete the activity. *Answers: drawn pictures of sun, stars, lightning, clouds, trees*

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:
 - All of creation praises the Lord.
 - Children praise the Lord too. (*Point out some of the ways mentioned.*)
 - We can praise the Lord just by being our best selves.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute a sheet of blank paper and some crayons or markers to each child, and instruct the children to follow the directions in the Live It!
- Give the children a few minutes to complete this activity.

Tell It!

- Invite several volunteers to retell the psalm in their own words.
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Caring for Creation Charades

- Prepare ahead of time a set of index cards describing ways of caring for the Earth. These should be creation-friendly actions that children can do to take care of their environment, such as: planting a garden, raking leaves, feeding a pet, watering grass, taking out the trash, turning off lights when leaving a room, riding a bike, picking up litter, shoveling snow, and so on.
- Divide the group into pairs, and give one card to each pair. Allow them a few minutes to plan to pantomime the action that is written on the card. Then allow each pair to act out their pantomime with no speaking.
- Encourage the other children to guess the Earth-friendly action that is being pantomimed.
- Invite the group, after each pair gives its pantomime, to share if they care for the Earth in that same way. On the board, keep a tally list of actions and how many children already do those actions on their own or with their family.
- Encourage the children, if time allows, to describe other actions they do to care for the Earth. Add these to your tally list and survey the group to ascertain a number.

Process the Activity

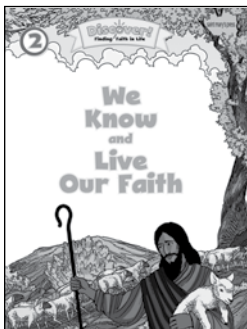
- Discuss the actions and the tally chart you wrote on the board.
- Ask the children to share why it is important that we take care of the Earth.
- Invite the group to share what might happen if no one took any of the actions they acted out to care for the Earth.
- Explain to the group that the Earth is our home and that God made the Earth and everything on it for us. Tell them that by caring for the Earth, we are thanking God for his gift of creation.

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 group that in Psalm 148 we read that all of creation praises God.
- Explain that God has given the special responsibility to care for creation to people. Tell the children that this is just one of the ways that we can praise God.
- Remind the group that creation is a sign of God’s love for each of us. Recall with the group that God loves everything that he has made.
- Explain that when we love and protect the environment, we show our love for God and praise him for making us and all of creation.
- Point out that by caring for creation, we are taking care of our own home.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How can creation praise God? (*Each part of creation praises God by being what it is and doing what God made it to do: the sun and moon give light, water gives us drink when we are thirsty and is also very beautiful, etc.*)
 - What is one important way people praise God? (*by caring for creation*)
 - How can we be responsible and care for creation? (*“Reduce, reuse, recycle”; do not throw trash on the ground; help animals; use compost bins; collect rainwater, etc.*)
 - When we care for creation, what are we caring for? (*our own home*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: happy face for taking out trash and raking leaves; sad face for throwing down trash and walking away from running water*
- 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 Saint Paul VI, and encourage the children to say, “Pope Saint Paul VI, 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:

- “God Made the World” + activity, pages 6 and 8

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 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 entire universe and all creatures praise God by their very existence.
 - God loves everything he has made, so we should take care of it.
 - By caring for the environment, we are caring for ourselves and our earthly home.
- Invite the children to locate the two children on page 1 of their activity booklets. Encourage them to find this image on their folders, and tell them the children are facing a different direction. The image can be found in one place.



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.
- Read the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read this.
- Encourage the entire group to respond "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- pictures of beautiful places and things in nature
- colored construction paper
- several bottles of glue
- markers
- a hole punch, and yarn, ribbon, or binder rings (*optional*)

Materials Needed

- a safe space for an outdoor walk
- white paper plates, one for each child
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- several bottles of glue

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- small pieces of paper, one for each child

Write a Psalm (15 minutes)

- Before the session, gather pictures of nature from magazines, calendars, or the internet. These might include a waterfall, ocean or lake, flowers, trees, insects, animals, forest, clouds, sunrise or sunset, mountains. You will need enough images for each child in your group to have one, plus a few extra ones so that the children can choose one that they like.
- Explain to the children that they are going to write their own psalm of praise to God. Have each child choose a nature picture and mount it on a piece of construction paper. Distribute markers, and show the children a template for writing a sentence above or below their picture: (Name of picture), praise the Lord!
- Read the finished pages together, allowing each child to name his or her picture and inviting the group to respond, "Praise the Lord!"
- Consider binding these pictures together. This can be done with a hole punch and either yarn, ribbon, or binder rings to connect the pages and form a book. Ask one of the children to design a cover for this book of praise.

Nature Walk (15 minutes)

- Take your group outdoors to observe nature. Encourage the children to use all their senses by smelling the flowers, listening to the birds, etc. If possible, instruct the children to bring one small thing from their walk back inside. This might be a few blades of grass, a wildflower, a stone, a leaf, a pinecone, and so on.
- Distribute the paper plates, drawing materials, and bottles of glue when you return from the walk.
- Have the children write in a circle around the edge of the paper plate: "Creation praises God!"
- Invite the children to glue the object from their walk onto the paper plate and write a few words or a sentence about what they have found. If they did not bring something from the nature walk, instruct them to draw something they saw.
- Encourage the children to share their drawings with the rest of the group.

Sing Along: Earth Care Promise (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "Mother Earth Song with Lyrics | Earth & Environment Song for Kids" (YouTube, 1:48). Encourage the group to sing along.
- Ask the children to name one thing that they will each do to care for the Earth, our home, during the next week.
- Give each child a small piece of paper. Instruct them to write their action for the Earth on this paper. Instruct the children to take the promise paper home and put it in a place where they will see it. Tell them that the paper will remind them to carry out their promises.

Chapter

5

We Pray Together




 Chapter
5

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Psalm 150:1–6

Lesson Goals

- to explain that praise is a form of prayer
- to name some of the reasons that God deserves our praise
- to identify that we praise God together as a Church through music and song

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

1156, 1191, 2639, 2649

Key Words

Temple, supreme, lyre,
Liturgy of the Hours

Music Suggestions

- “Alleluia Praise God—Ps. 150,” by Michael Mangan (World Library Publications)
- “God Is Good All the Time,” by John Angotti (World Library Publications)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 5 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- cards with positive words written on them, one word per card
- markers or crayons
- a board or poster to write on
- sample rhythm instruments
- rulers or chopsticks
- paper cups, dried pasta or beans, plastic wrap, and rubber bands
- plastic containers with lids
- empty paper towel tubes
- joyful instrumental music
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Because the natural world comes from God, nature has the power to touch our hearts. When we see a beautiful sunset, the view from a mountaintop, or the first flower of spring, our thoughts turn immediately to God. We marvel at the beauty of creation and praise God for the wonders before us.

During the *Eucharist* (a word that means thanksgiving), the priest invites us to lift up our hearts to God. He also calls us to give thanks to the Lord our God, to which we respond, “It is right and just” (*Roman Missal*). It is indeed right and just that we praise God for all of the wonders around us, as well as for the ordinary gifts that we might not always notice.

God and his gifts are all around us! Praise God! It is right and just!



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Prepare in advance a set of cards with a word written on each card. These words should name positive characteristics of the children in your group: *friendly, helpful, kind, cheerful, fun, happy, honest, smart*, etc. Be sure to include a few extra blank cards so the children can choose other appropriate words.
- Ask the children to help you decide which word describes each child. As you discuss each word with the children, give the card to the child who embodies that characteristic. For example, if the group agrees that Maria is friendly, give her the card with *friendly* written on it. If Eli is identified as happy, give him the card with *happy* on it. Create additional cards as necessary until each child has a card.
- Instruct the children to turn their word cards over, and on the other side, draw an emoji or other picture showing how the word makes them feel about themselves.
- Invite the children to hold up their emojis or pictures for all to see.
- Once this activity is complete, ask the group the following questions:
 - How did it feel to hear your group say nice things about you?
 - Why is it important to say good things about the people we know?
 - What was it like to say good things about the people in your group?
- Summarize by explaining to the children that it is important to them to be praised, not only for the good things they do but also just because they are! God also deserves to be praised, not only for his goodness and love but also just because he is! Explain that this is a very important form of prayer.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Psalm 150:1–6 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 957 and 960). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 958. 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 958–959 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What does the word *praise* mean? (*saying good things about another person, in this case God*)
 - What are some ways to praise God? (*singing, playing instruments, dancing*)
- Recall that the word *praise* is different from the word *prays*, which means talking to God about anything. Write both words on the board or in a place the children can see.
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Temple, mighty, supreme, cymbals, creatures*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 959, 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:
 - Praising people is important.
 - It is important to praise God who is the best of everything. God is the most loving, the most patient, the most kind.
 - Psalm 150 reminds us to praise God in many ways.
 - Just as the angels and saints praise God in Heaven, we praise God when we go to church by praying and singing with our whole hearts.
- Explain to the children that praising God is a way of praying. Remind them that the Book of Psalms includes many prayers of praise to God. Tell the children that when we praise God, we are praying like the People of God who lived long ago.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 959, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to sit quietly as they think about five things for which they can praise God.
- Ask if any of the children wish to share what they would praise God for.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 959. (*Image 1 shows people praising God with music. Image 2 shows some different instruments we can praise God with. Image 3 shows people praising God with drums and dancing. Image 4 shows praising God with cymbals.*)
- Have one or several children retell the psalm to the group using the pictures in the Tell It!



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

We Praise God with Music and Song!

- Gather in advance the following materials for making rhythm instruments:
 - rulers or chopsticks (to be hit together to create a beat)
 - paper cups (to be filled with dried pasta or beans, covered with plastic wrap, and secured with a rubber band for shakers)
 - plastic containers with lids (to be used as drums)
 - empty paper towel tubes (to be used as horns)
- Make one sample of each instrument in advance. Set up four tables or desks with the materials for making each of the four instruments.
- Show the instrument samples to the children, and ask each child to choose an instrument to make. Give simple instructions on how to assemble each instrument.
- Instruct the children to go to that space to assemble the materials they need for making a rhythm instrument.
- Allow a few minutes for the children to make their own rhythm instrument. Encourage them to help one another. They can decorate their instruments with markers or crayons if time permits.
- Invite the children, when they finish, to join you in a circle and prepare to praise God. Explain that they will praise God by using their instruments while you read Psalm 150 aloud for the group.
- Brainstorm some actions the children can do with their hands and instruments that would match the psalm, such as raising their hands to Heaven, dancing, and playing their instruments.
- Instruct the children that whenever you read the words “Praise him,” they should joyfully play their instruments.
- Begin by playing a recording of joyful instrumental music. You may want the children to walk in a circle praising God. Begin to read the words of the psalm, slowly and deliberately, to match the emotion of the psalm. Pause between sentences so that the children have time to use their instruments.

Process the Activity

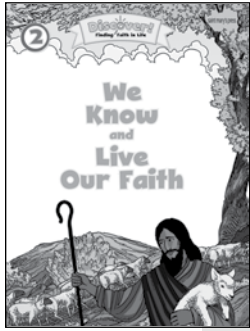
- Together with the group, discuss the activity.
- Congratulate the children on their good work in making their instruments and using them to praise God.
- Ask the children the following questions:
 - What was it like to praise God all together with your instruments? (*fun, loud, joyful, happy, united as one*)
 - What would it have been like if there had been only one instrument playing? (*softer, only one sound, a good sound but not as loud and not all together*)
 - What are some of your reasons for praising God? (*for making me, for giving me my family, my teachers, for making the world, for being 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 81–82 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the group that God is good and has made all things. Tell them that just as they appreciate hearing that they are doing good things, so does God.
- Explain that when we praise God, we are telling him how wonderful he is and how much we appreciate his love for us and enjoy what he has made for us.
- Point out that by praising God, we are reminded of how much we depend on him for all things.
- Explain that when we praise God, we are praying. Tell the children that there are many kinds of prayer, and this is a prayer of praise. Continue by explaining that we can praise God anywhere and at any time.
- Emphasize that we praise God in a special way when we come together for Mass, especially on Sunday. Tell them that we call Sunday “the Lord’s Day” because that is the day we praise God together. Explain that of all the days of the week, Sunday is the one day we set aside to praise God at Mass. Tell the children that we go to church together on Sunday or on Saturday evening.
- Explain that we praise God together at Mass as members of the Church. Tell the group that when we pray at Mass together, we help one another to praise God.
- Remind the children that the Church is the Body of Christ. Explain that we praise God together as the Body of Christ, joyful and united as one.
- Explain that the Church praises God every day at Mass, and seven times a day by praying the psalms. Tell them that the prayer that is prayed during the different hours of the day is called the **Liturgy of the Hours**.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why should we praise God? (*God made us, loves us, and gave us the beautiful world.*)
 - What are some of the things for which you praise God? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
 - When and where can we praise God? (*anytime and anywhere*)
 - What is special about praising God in church? (*We praise God together as members of the Church and as one Body of Christ.*)
 - How should we praise God in church? (*with all our hearts*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answer: We praise the Lord with all our hearts!*
- 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 articles and activities in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource correspond to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “What Is Prayer?” and “We Pray in Church” pages 47–48
- “We Pray with the Church and the Church Prays with Us” + activity, pages 51–53
- “The Church Prays” + activity, pages 54–55

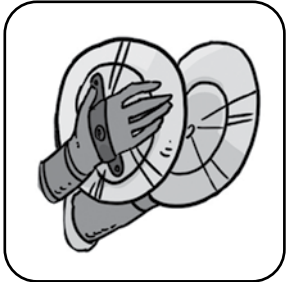
Read the selections aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. Then invite the children to begin an activity, or have them complete the activities with their families at home.



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 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:
 - Praise is a form of prayer.
 - God deserves our praise for many reasons.
 - We praise God together as a Church through music and song.
- Invite the children to locate the different images of cymbals on pages 958 and 959 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find cymbals on their folders. They can be found in two places.



Closing Prayer

- Invite the children to bring their instruments to your prayer space.
- 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 each child to name something that they want to praise God for. Explain that after each child names one thing during the prayer, the group will respond, “Praise the Lord!” while making a joyful noise on their instrument.
- Conclude by saying that you want to praise God for making the wonderful children in your group. Invite everyone to respond, “Praise the Lord!”
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- prepared handouts, one for each child

A Praise Acrostic (15 minutes)

- Prepare ahead of time handouts with the words “PRAISE GOD” written vertically down the left-hand side. Each letter should be followed by one write-on line.
- Distribute the handouts and remind the children of the wonders of creation and the many reasons there are to praise God.
- Explain to the children that they are to make a list of their own reasons to praise God. Tell them that each word they write should begin with the letter on the left side of their paper and should answer the question: “What do I praise God for?” For example, beside the first letter, *P*, they might write *puppies* or *people*.
- Brainstorm a few letters that may be more difficult: the letter *I* could begin the word *islands*, *inchworms*, or *ice cream*. The letter *O* might begin *octopi*, *oceans*, or *otters*.
- Encourage the children to share their “Praise God” papers aloud, as time permits. Ask them to take their papers home to share with their families.

Materials Needed

- copies of the Gloria (Glory to God) from a missalette

Praising God with the Gloria (15 minutes)

- Distribute copies of the Gloria (Glory to God) from a missalette. Read the prayer for the children, and ask them if they have ever heard this prayer before.
- Explain to the group that when we praise God, we are giving glory to God. Tell them that this is a special prayer, called the Gloria or the Glory to God, that we pray together when we are at Mass.
- Remind the children that the Gloria is a song of praise. Explain that it was first sung by the angels on the night Jesus was born. Invite the children to find these words in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (see page 1576, Luke 2:14).
- Invite the children to find words or phrases in the Gloria that give praise to God. Write these on the board.
- Ask the children to pray along with you as you read the Gloria together.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- small pieces of paper cut into squares or rectangles (about 3-x-4-inch)
- pieces of curly ribbon for making bows, one for each child
- tape or glue
- a basket (*optional*)

A Gift to God (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "A Gift To You | 1 | kwscm (YouTube, 2:53).
- Talk about the ways we give gifts to God by doing what he made us to do, by being the best person we can be. Explain to the group that this is a way of praising God for us.
- Distribute small pieces of paper, and invite each child to write on it what special gift they will give to God. You might need to give a few examples to help the children, such as helping care for a little brother or sister, listening to their parents, working hard in school, and so on.
- Help the children tie a piece of ribbon into a bow and tape or glue it onto the paper to make it look like a gift.
- Ask the children to take the papers home as reminders of their gifts to God. Alternatively, you may want to collect them in a basket and place them in the prayer space as a symbol of their offering.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Unit 2

Jesus Shows Us God's Love

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Jesus Welcomes Everyone 84

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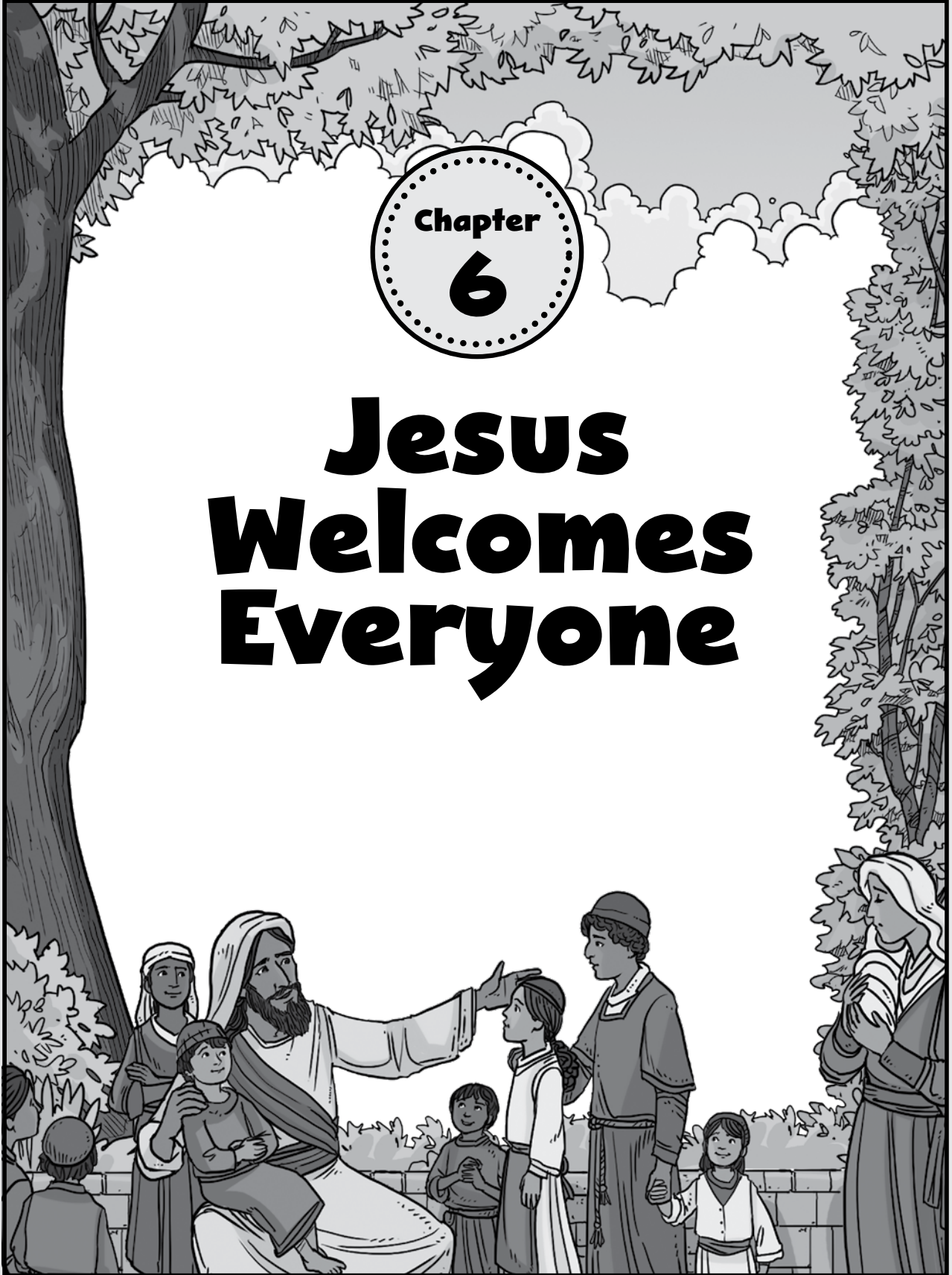
Chapter 10

We Ask for Forgiveness 118

Chapter

6

Jesus Welcomes Everyone




 Chapter
6

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 19:13–15

Lesson Goals

- to state that Jesus shows us God's love for us
- to identify that Jesus loves and welcomes everyone, including children
- to explain that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those with a childlike faith

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

541–544, 699

Key Words

childlike, childish

Music Suggestions

- “Jesus Loves the Little Children,” by The Wonder Kids (Wonder Workshop)
- “Jesus Loves Me,” by Hillsong Kids (Hillsong Church)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 6 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a gift box, wrapped with a sign inside that says “The Kingdom of Heaven”
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Do you remember what it was like when you were a young child? Remember when the adults around you would talk about things that were over your head? Maybe you felt left out or ignored. These are probably not your favorite childhood memories.

Try to put your childhood self into the reading from Matthew's Gospel in today's lesson. Imagine you are one of the children being nudged away by the grown-ups. They are talking about you, scolding your parents, and trying to send you away because Jesus is tired and needs his rest. “Jesus has no time to bother with little kids,” they say. And then you hear a voice—Jesus' voice—calling you over, “Come here, children, I want to see you.” And then there's that smile—warm, open, kind.

This is the Jesus who welcomes you every day. This is the Jesus who has time for you and is never too tired to bless you. This is the Jesus who looks at you and sees your childlike goodness. This is the Jesus who wants to lead you into his Father's Kingdom.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children if they have ever been ignored by an adult or someone older than they are. Invite them to share their experiences.
- Ask, "Have you ever ignored anyone or pushed anyone away?" Invite them to share some examples (*a smaller child, someone they did not want to play with, etc.*).
- Guide the children to focus on the feelings connected to both being ignored and ignoring someone else.
- Tell the group that everyone has had a similar experience of being ignored by someone they want to talk to or play with. Explain that sometimes this is because the other person is busy or distracted.
- Tell the group that today they are going to read a story about a time that Jesus paid special attention to the children who did not seem important to the other grown-ups around Jesus.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 19:13–15 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1494). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1496. 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 1496–1497 and 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:
 - Why did the people bring their children to Jesus? (*to have him place his hands on them and pray for them*)
 - What did Jesus' disciples do when the people brought the children? (*scolded the people*)

- What did Jesus say about the children? (*“Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.”*)
- How do you think Jesus treated the children? (*He loved the children, he was kind, he blessed the children, and so on.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: children, pray, disciples, Kingdom, heaven, hands*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1497 to the children, 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:
 - All people, including children, are important to Jesus.
 - Jesus blessed the children and made them an example for everyone. He said that people who are like children will enter Heaven.
- Explain to the children that Jesus was teaching those around him that it is important to be **childlike**. Explain that *childlike* doesn't mean to be young or small, but rather trusting and loving. Tell them that even adults can be childlike (trusting, loving) in their faith.
- Tell the children that being childlike is different than being **childish**, which could mean “acting like a spoiled child.” Point out that even older people can be childish at times, when they don't get their way or are impatient.
- Talk with the group about the difference between the two words and emphasize that being childlike, trusting God, is good.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1497, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to create a quiet atmosphere. Ask them to sit calmly and close their eyes.
- Help the children to follow the directions in the Live It!, guiding them through the activity by speaking the directions quietly and slowly. Allow enough time between directions for the children to follow along. Place special emphasis on the last direction that invites the children to listen to Jesus in their heart.
- Once you have finished the activity, instruct the children to slowly open their eyes and to remember their quiet time with Jesus. Invite volunteers, as time permits, to share their experiences.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1497. (*Image 1 shows a disciple sending the children away. Image 2 shows Jesus stopping the disciple. Image 3 shows Jesus blessing one of the children.*)
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story using the images in the Tell It!
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Finding the Kingdom of Heaven

- Prepare ahead of time a small treasure box by wrapping a gift box with wrapping paper and a bow so that it looks beautiful. Inside the box put a sheet of plain white paper with the words “The Kingdom of Heaven” written on it.
- Show the wrapped gift box to the children, and explain that you are going to play a seeking game. Explain that you will hide the gift somewhere in the room, and they will help someone find it.
- Invite one child to leave your learning space and wait outside the door while you hide the gift. Allow the other children to see where it is hidden.
- Invite the child who has left the room to return. Tell this child to find the gift box while the other children give clues.
- Instruct the rest of the children that they are to speak softly and say “warm” when the seeker is near the gift and “cold” when the seeker moves far away.
- The activity ends once the gift is found. If possible, play several times.

Process the Activity

- Invite the child who was the gift seeker to share how difficult or easy it was to follow the clues of the group.
- Ask the children to guess what the gift box might have inside.
- Unwrap the box and show the piece of paper with the words “The Kingdom of Heaven.”
- Explain that it is always important to seek the Kingdom of Heaven.

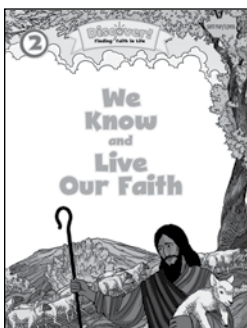
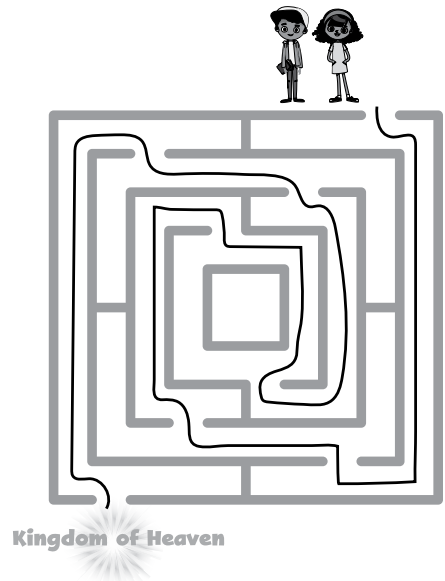
Additional Activity Options

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 91 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that Jesus came to live among us to show us God's love for us
- Remind the group that in the Scripture reading, Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like children. Ask the group what they know about the Kingdom of Heaven. *(The children may mention clouds, golden streets, etc. Affirm their answers but explain that Heaven is life forever with God. We compare Heaven to the beautiful things we can imagine.)*
- Explain that the gift box in the core activity was like the Kingdom of Heaven and that the Kingdom of Heaven is also beautiful and a gift from God.

- Explain the Kingdom of Heaven using the following points:
 - Jesus taught that the Kingdom of Heaven is a community of peace, mercy, and love.
 - The Kingdom of Heaven begins here. We do not have to wait until we get to Heaven. We can be peaceful, merciful, and loving right now!
 - We become part of the Kingdom of Heaven by believing in Jesus, being baptized, and living our lives like Jesus.
 - Jesus wants us to know that all people who do their best to love God, themselves, and others are welcome in the Kingdom of Heaven. No matter what our age, we can all be part of the Kingdom of Heaven right now.
- Ask the group for examples of ways they can be part of the Kingdom of Heaven. How can they always be childlike and trusting in God? Write the responses on the board.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is the Kingdom of Heaven? (*a community of peace, mercy, and love*)
 - When does the Kingdom of Heaven start? (*Right now! When we are peaceful, merciful, and loving, we show we are part of God's Kingdom.*)
 - Who are welcome in the Kingdom of Heaven? (*Those who do their best to love God, themselves, and others.*)
 - What must someone do to be in the Kingdom of Heaven? (*have childlike faith and trust in God, love others; accept reasonable responses*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution at right.*
- 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 article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Jesus Became Human to Make Us More Like God," activity pages 14–15

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 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 God's love for us.
 - Jesus loves and welcomes everyone, including children.
 - The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those with a childlike faith.
- Invite the children to locate the image of Jesus with the child on his lap on page 1496 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.



Closing Prayer

- Explain to the group that the group will be saying a special prayer called a litany. Explain that when you say the first part of each sentence, they are to respond, "Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven." Practice this response with the children.
- 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.

Leader: We are your children.

Response: Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Leader: We trust in you.

Response: Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Leader: We try to be like you.

Response: Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Leader: We help our family.

Response: Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Leader: We care for our friends.

Response: Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Leader: We include others to make new friends.

Response: Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Leader: We love you, O Lord.

Response: Welcome us, O Lord, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

- Invite everyone to say, "Amen," and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- index cards, one for each child
- paper strips to make headbands, one for each child
- markers or crayons
- tape or a stapler
- a device for recording video

Acting Out Scripture (15 minutes)

- Tell the group they are going to act out the Scripture passage from Matthew.
- Ask the group to help you make a list of who is in the story as you write the characters on the board. Try to include enough characters so that each child has a part. There can be any number of children, parents, and disciples. Choose one child to be narrator.
- Assign parts, and distribute the index cards, paper strips, and markers or crayons. Direct the children to make a headband with their character's name on it. Help them staple or tape their index card to the paper strip, and then adjust the length of the strip to fit around the child's head. The children should write their characters' names on the index cards and then wear their headbands.
- Instruct the group to act out the passage as the narrator reads from the Bible.
- You might want to make a video of the children's performance to be used at a later time.

Materials Needed

- a picture book
- colored paper, one sheet for each child
- several pairs of scissors
- markers or crayons

Little Ones Make a Difference (15 minutes)

- Read a picture book to the group with this theme: the smallest character can make the biggest difference. (Examples: the folktale "The Great Big Enormous Turnip," or Aesop's fable "The Lion and the Mouse.")
- Lead the group in a discussion of the way the smallest character made the biggest difference in the story.
- Invite the children to brainstorm ways that they can make a big difference in someone's life.
- Distribute the colored paper, scissors, and markers or crayons. Show the children how to trace one of their hands on the paper. Have the children cut out the hand. Instruct them to write their name on the hand and write or draw one way that they can make a difference by helping someone they know.
- Challenge the children to do the action they described on their handprint during the following week.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- preprinted and tied scrolls, one for each child
- markers or crayons

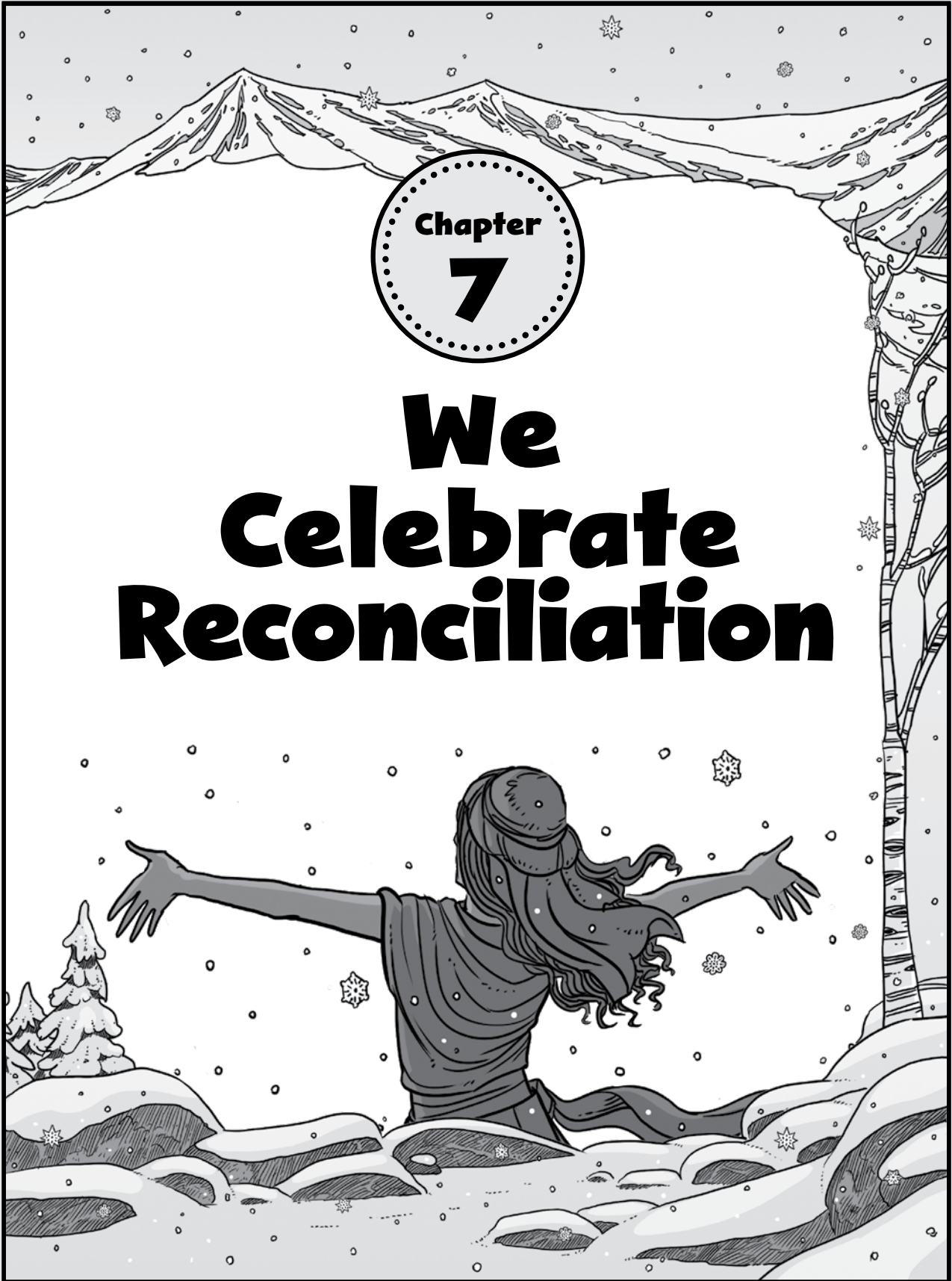
Let the Children Come to Me (15 minutes)

- Prepare an 8½-x-11-inch piece of paper with open block letters: "Jesus says: Come to me." Make copies, one for each child. Roll each copy into a scroll and tie it with ribbon.
- Watch the video "Luke 18 | Suffer the Little Children to Come unto Me | The Bible" (YouTube, 2:41).
- Invite the children to react to the video.
- Give each child a scroll and some markers or crayons. Invite the children to write the Scripture citation (Matthew 19:14) beneath the quote. Allow the children to color the letters.

Chapter

7

We Celebrate Reconciliation




 Chapter
7

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Psalms 51:4, 7–10

Lesson Goals

- to state that we can ask for God’s forgiveness at any time
- to explain that we celebrate the forgiveness of our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- to state that the Sacrament of Reconciliation brings us peace and joy

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

1440–1470, 1849–1864

Key Words

consider, loyal, venial sin, mortal sin, reconciliation

Music Suggestions

- “Create in Me a Clean Heart (Psalm 51:10),” by Thing-a-ma-Kid (Thingamakid)
- “Create a New Heart: Ps.51,” by Michael Mangan (World Library Publications)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 7 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- recycled bottles (ten), bangle bracelets, dry beans (*optional*), masking tape
- a small piece of creation such as a seashell, pinecone, stone, or flower
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

When reading the Psalms, we realize that people have suffered, sinned, celebrated, and praised God throughout the centuries. We are left with the sense that sin and suffering are ageless and timeless—that throughout the ages, people have sinned and have rejoiced in the fact that God is merciful.

When reading Psalm 51, we feel humbled as we reflect on our own shortcomings, imperfections, and the tendency to give in to the temptations around us. This psalm can be a profound meditation on our sinful ways. As we share this psalm with children and teach the meaning of sin, we must also teach empathy and compassion as “preventive medicine” for self-centered thoughts and actions—a good prescription for both adults and children!

Whatever our age, we can find it reassuring to recognize ourselves in this psalm as one of the People of God. We too, like those throughout history who struggled and failed, long for God’s loving forgiveness. We can take heart in knowing that God’s mercy is constant throughout the ages.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Explain to the children that they often have a choice. Make a list on the board of some of the things that children can choose, such as what to eat or drink, what to wear, what games to play, what books to read, and so on.
- Ask the children what some of their favorite choices are.
- Ask them if they have ever chosen something that they soon discovered they didn't like, such as a different topping on their pizza, or shoes that hurt their feet, a book that quickly became boring, etc.
- Explain that in today's lesson, they will be learning that some of the choices people make turn out to be poor or hurtful choices. Tell them that they will learn how they can ask God to help them when that happens.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Psalm 51 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 877). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the psalm.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 878. 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 878–879 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bolded key words. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who is the writer speaking to in this passage? (*God*)
 - What will happen if God removes the writer's sin and makes him clean? (*He will be clean and whiter than snow. Explain that "white as snow" does not mean the color of his skin, but means that he will be forgiven and will have a clean and pure heart.*)
 - What does the writer mean by "loyal" spirit? (*faithful to God, listening to and following God's Word, etc.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answer: Create in me a pure heart, O God.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 879 to the children, 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:
 - Everyone sins. *Sin* means to choose to do something that is wrong even when you know it is wrong. It is not a mistake or an accident. It is a choice.
 - Sin hurts our relationship with God and with other people.
 - When someone wants to make things right again, they apologize to the person they've hurt, as well as to God. We ask God to forgive us and give us a clean heart.
 - After we receive forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we find peace and joy.
- Remind the children that in a past lesson about the Sacrament of Baptism, they learned that a sacrament is a sign of God's love for us and an experience where we can know Jesus in a very special way.
- Explain that when someone sins, they seek God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Tell them that in Reconciliation, we confess, or tell, our sins to a priest and ask God's forgiveness. Continue by explaining that the priest blesses us and says the words of forgiveness. Tell the group that after receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we feel close to God again and we find peace and joy.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 879. As you read, pause after each of the questions posed.
- Invite the children to read the Scripture passage again with you as written on page 878. Explain that they are to read it as a prayer, asking God to forgive them.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 879. (*Image 1 shows the man praying and telling God about his sin. Image 2 shows that he prays to be white as snow. Image 3 shows the man with a pure heart and a new spirit.*)
- Invite several children to retell the psalm using the Tell It! illustrations.
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Making the Mark

- Prepare by making a ring toss game using empty recycled plastic bottles and plastic bangle bracelets. You may want to put some dry beans in each bottle, or fill them with water, so they don't tip over. Make sure the tops are on tight.
- Set up the bottles in an array like bowling pins. Make a line for standing with tape on the floor. Have one child stand behind the line.
- Explain that each child will have five chances to throw in order to get the rings around the necks of the bottles.
- Give a point for each ring that lands around a bottle. You might want to ask one child to keep score on the board.

Process the Activity

- Ask the group if it was easy or hard to get a ring around a bottle.
- Ask the children how it felt when they scored a point. Ask how it felt when they missed scoring a point.
- Explain to the group that trying to get a ring around a bottle is a little like making choices. Use the following example:
 - It's fun to play when you make the mark by getting a ring around a bottle. This is a lot like making a good choice. It gives you a good feeling; it's the way you like to play the game.
 - Sometimes people miss the mark even when they want to do well. In the game, it is hard to control where the rings land. But when people do something that is wrong on purpose, they are missing the mark on purpose. It would be like throwing the ring across the room. This is their choice. This is a sin.

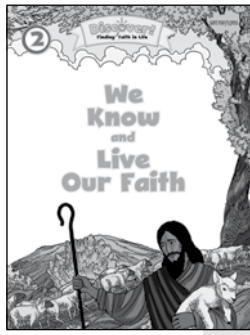
Additional Activity Options

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

- Explain to the group that sinning is a way of missing the mark. Explain the following points:
 - Even though people want to do well and make good choices, they are sometimes tempted to make poor choices and hurt others or themselves.
 - When this happens and when someone chooses to do something that is wrong, this is a sin.

- There are two kinds of sin: **venial sin**, which is a less serious sin that weakens but doesn't completely break our loving relationship with God, and **mortal sin**, which is a very serious kind of sin, committed on purpose, which breaks our relationship with God. When people sin, they usually feel bad and want to make things right again.
- When people sin, they hurt their friendship with God and also with other people around them. We know this from family life. When someone in the family does something wrong, everyone gets a little bit upset. Because we belong to God's family, the Church, our sins hurt the other members of the Church as well.
- When we love God and one another, we are strong. When we hurt one another, we weaken the bonds of love and unity that we share.
- A sin is not the same as a mistake or an accident. If you accidentally drop a dish and it breaks, that is not a sin. If you are angry with someone and throw their property on the floor and break it, that is a sin. It is a deliberate action.
- When we sin, we can and should pray to God and ask God to forgive our sins. We can ask God's forgiveness at any time.
- Tell the group that the Sacrament of Reconciliation helps us when we sin. Make the following points:
 - The word **reconciliation** means "to bring back together." The Sacrament of Reconciliation brings us back together with God and the Church.
 - We tell the priest the sins we've committed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We ask God to forgive us, and we tell him we are sorry. God, through the priest, forgives us.
 - The Sacrament of Reconciliation has four parts: thinking about our sins, telling them to a priest, being sorry for our sins, and receiving God's forgiveness.
 - When someone receives the Sacrament of Reconciliation, he or she experiences the peace and joy of God's loving forgiveness.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is a sin? (*choosing to do something that is wrong even when you know it is wrong*)
 - What is the difference between a venial sin and a mortal sin? (*A venial sin is a less serious kind of sin that hurts our relationship with God. A mortal sin is a serious sin that breaks our relationship with God.*)
 - What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation? (*a sacrament of God's forgiveness that brings peace and joy; accept any reasonable explanation*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. Reconciliation, 2. venial, 3. mortal, 4. forgives, 5. accident*
- 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 Dismas, the Good Thief, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Dismas, 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 Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation” and “Returning to God,” page 35
- “The Gifts of Penance and Reconciliation” and “Forgiveness of Venial Sins and Grave Sins,” + activity pages 36–38

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 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:
 - We can ask for God’s forgiveness at any time.
 - We celebrate the forgiveness of our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
 - The Sacrament of Reconciliation brings us peace and joy.
- Invite the children to locate the snow-covered trees on page 878 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Encourage them to find snow-covered trees on their folders. There are three trees.



Closing Prayer

- Prepare by gathering an object from creation (a flower, seashell, pebble, etc.). Have this ready.
- 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.
- Continue by saying, “Today we learned that when we sin, God will forgive us when we ask. Let us talk to God now, quietly in our hearts, asking for his forgiveness for the sins we’ve done.”
- Pause for a few moments so that children have time to pray quietly.
- Explain to the children that you will pass the object and whoever is holding this piece of creation may say, “Thank you, God, for your forgiveness.”
- Invite everyone to say, “Thank you, God our Father, for your loving forgiveness. Amen.”
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a list of actions common to the children—some sins, some mistakes
- white paper plates, one for each child
- markers or crayons

Mistake or Sin? (15 minutes)

- Prepare a list of actions that would be common to the children. Some should be mistakes such as forgetting to take out the trash, dropping and breaking a dish while clearing the table, spilling a drink on the floor, and so on. Others should be deliberate actions that would be sinful such as talking back to a parent, choosing not to do their homework, saying mean words, and so on.
- Give each child a white paper plate and a marker or crayon. Instruct them to write “Sin” on one side of the plate and “Mistake” on the other.
- Remind the children of the difference between a sin and a mistake.
- Read each of the actions from your list, and have the children show the side of the paper plate with the word that matches the action. Discuss the reason the action is a sin or a mistake.

Materials Needed

- white fabric
- disappearing ink (can be found online)
- a hairdryer (*optional*)

God’s Love Is Stronger Than Sin (15 minutes)

- Gather the children around, and show them the white fabric. Compare the clean, pure fabric to when they were baptized. Remind the children that they were filled with God’s life within them, which we call *grace*. Then begin to tell them that as they grew older, they began to choose to do things that were wrong—this is sinning.
- As you name some sins that are typical for children this age (telling a lie, fighting with a brother or sister, talking to their parents in a mean way, etc.), drop one drop of disappearing ink on the white cloth.
- Call attention to how the cloth is changing and getting stained. Compare this to what happens to our relationship with God when we sin.
- Tell the children that when we know that we are no longer in a close and loving relationship with God, we want to change and be close to God again. Explain that when we feel sorry, we ask God to forgive us.
- Dry the ink by blowing on it or using a hairdryer. As the ink begins to fade, tell the children that God forgives our sins when we are sorry and promise to try not to sin again. Tell them that we are made whole and clean once again.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

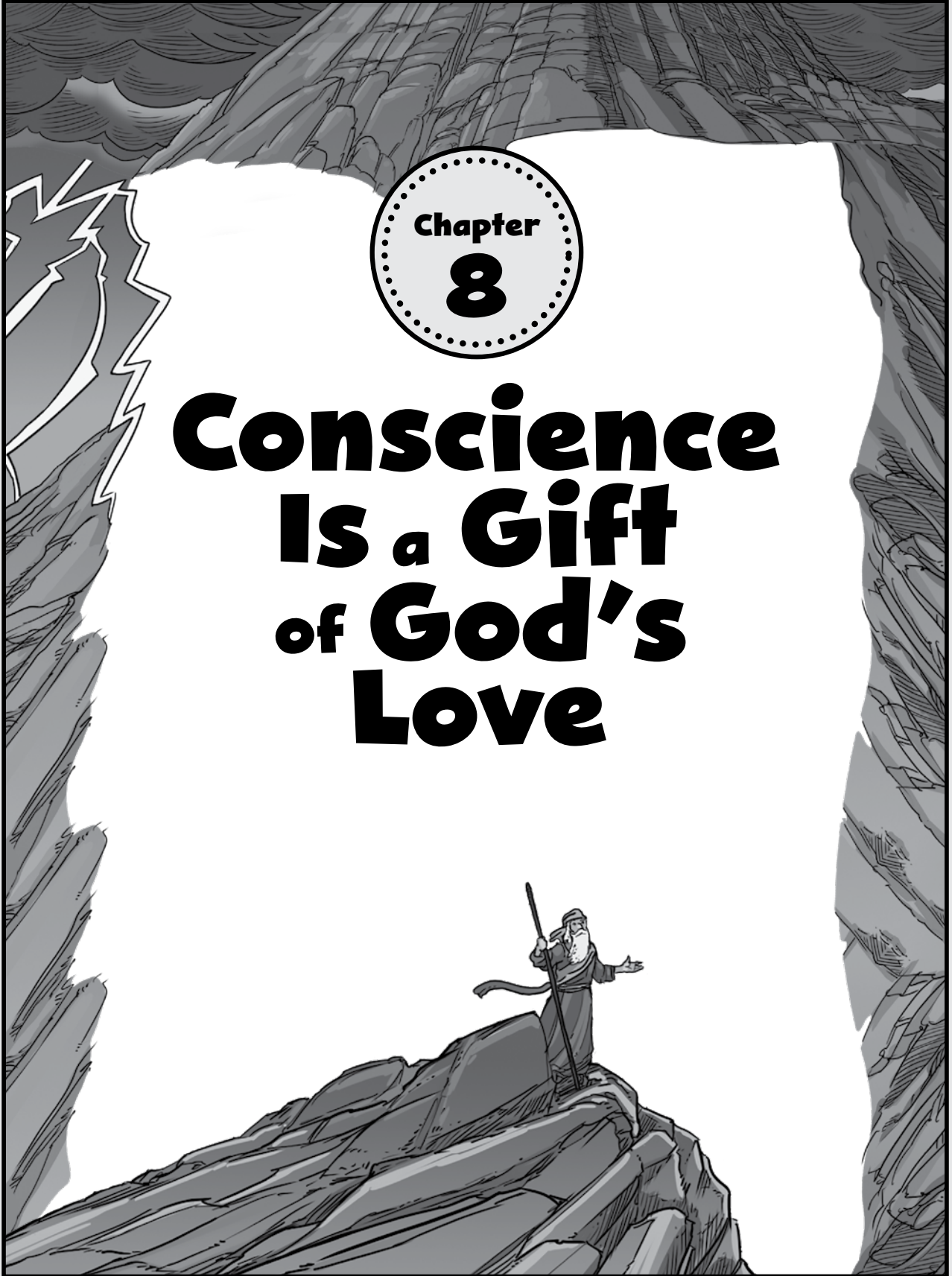
Being Forgiven (15 minutes)

- Watch the video “Forgiveness | Sunday School Lesson for Kids,” by Douglas Talks (YouTube, 6:49).
- Invite the children to share whether Douglas breaking his friend’s toy car was a sin or an accident. Explain that even if something is an accident, we should still be sorry that it happened and can ask for forgiveness.
- Ask, “What did Douglas do when his little brother broke his toy?” Explore with the children how Douglas reacted at first and then what he learned from the experience.
- Invite the children to share about a time they did something that needed forgiveness. Ask how it felt to be forgiven.

Chapter

8

Conscience Is a Gift of God's Love




**Chapter
8**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Exodus 20:2–3, 6–8, 12–17

Lesson Goals

- to identify that the Ten Commandments are God's loving rules to keep us safe and happy
- to summarize that the Ten Commandments teach us right and wrong
- to explain that when we follow our conscience, we are doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

1776–1778, 1783–1785, 2056, 2058, 2064–2068

Key Words

worship, generation, accuse, Ten Commandments, conscience

Music Suggestions

- "Step by Step," by Cedarment Kids (Cedarment Music, LLC)
- "Walk With God," by Go Fish (GFK Records / Go Fish Resources)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 8 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a sheet of poster board or newsprint
- sticky notes, one for each child
- a set of index cards
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

God has given us the Ten Commandments so that we can know what is right and wrong. But it can still be difficult to know what is truly the right choice in a particular situation. It is then that we need to rely on our conscience.

A well-formed conscience is not merely a little voice inside us. Forming a conscience requires prayer, reading of Scripture, an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church, and an openness to the Holy Spirit in our lives. Forming a conscience is a lifelong task and requires attention.

Children are just beginning this lifelong task of conscience formation. As you take these early steps with them in the formation of their conscience, use this lesson as an opportunity to focus on tending to the continual forming of your own conscience.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Prepare a poster divided into three parts. Write one word at the top of each section of the chart: *home, school, community*.
- Ask the group to think about rules that they are expected to follow.
- Give each child a sticky note. Ask the children to write on the note one rule that they follow.
- Draw the children's attention to the poster. Ask a volunteer to read the three words.
- Ask each child to read the rule he or she has written and place the note on the poster in the section where the rule applies: home, school, or community.
- Talk with the children about why the rules they wrote on the notes are important.
- Congratulate the children on helping to make better homes, better schools, and a better community by following the rules.
- Explain that one of the reasons we have rules at home is because parents love us and want us to be safe and happy. Then share the following:
 - Just as there are rules to follow at home, school, and in the community, God has given us rules too.
 - These rules from God are called the **Ten Commandments**. The Ten Commandments are rules that God gave to us through Moses. They are one of the ways God shows his love for us by telling us how to act so that we can be safe, happy, and get along with others.
 - Today we will read about the time God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses.



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 pages 131 and 134.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 132–133 and describe what they see.
- Read the key words with the group and find each word in the text on page 132. Ask volunteers to use each word in a sentence of their own to check for comprehension.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is one commandment that tells us how to treat God? (*Worship no God but me; Do not use my name for evil purposes; Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy.*)
 - What is one commandment that tells us how to treat other people? (*Respect your father and your mother; Do not commit murder; Do not commit adultery; Do not steal; Do not accuse anyone falsely; Do not desire another man's house, wife, slaves, cattle, donkeys or anything else he owns.*)
 - What does it mean to worship God? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Worship, generations, name, Respect*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 133, 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:
 - Just like parents have rules to keep you safe, God gave rules to Moses for everyone to follow to keep us safe and happy.
 - The first three commandments teach us how to treat God.
 - The last seven commandments teach us how to treat other people.
 - When we follow the Ten Commandments, we show God that we want to be with him in Heaven.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 133, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to sit quietly and think about the ways they are following the Ten Commandments.
- Invite them to talk quietly in their hearts to God about the commandments and ask him to help them follow the commandments.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 133.
- Explain that the first picture shows Moses when God gave him the commandments, the middle picture shows people worshipping only God, and the third picture shows a child following one of the commandments by respecting and helping his parent.
- Instruct the children to turn to a neighbor and tell how they will obey one of the commandments not pictured in the Tell It!

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity****Listen Up!**

- Prepare a set of index cards corresponding to the number of children in your group. On each card should be written a temptation or wrong choice: for example, talk back to your mom, forget your homework and play a video game instead, steal something from your sister, be mean to someone on the playground, throw a tantrum, tell a lie. On another index card, write: Do what you know is right.
- Explain to the group that they are going to do a listening activity. Choose one child to be "It." Ask this child to stand out of earshot while you give further instructions to the group.
- Give the other children in the group an index card of temptation, except for one child who should be given the card on which you have written, "Do what you know is right."
- Bring "It" back to the group. Tell the child who is "It" that he or she is to find the one child who is saying, "Do what you know is right."
- Begin the game by having the children stand in various places around the room. Tell them that when you ask, "What should I do?" they are to read their words or phrases in a loud voice (except for the child with the card that says, "Do what you know is right.") The student with that card that says, "Do what you know is right" should repeat that phrase very quietly. Ask the child who is "It" to circulate around the room and listen to the voices of the various members of the group.
- Give several chances for the quiet reader to be discovered by asking, "What should I do?" several times. Encourage the child who is "It" to walk around

and listen carefully to each reader. When the quiet reader is discovered, the activity ends.

Process the Activity

- Ask the child who was “It” to describe how difficult it was to hear the quiet voice that was saying to do the right thing.
- Ask the children who were reading temptations how they felt about telling another person to do something wrong.
- Ask the children if they’ve ever had the experience of wanting to do something but not doing it because they knew it was wrong—not because they would get into trouble if they did it, but because it seemed wrong to them. Allow the children time to share their experiences.

- Tell the group that the quiet voice reminds us of a gift that is given to each of us to help us know good from bad.

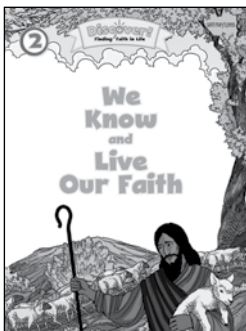
Additional Activity Options

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 108–109 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that we all have an ability inside of us of to learn and know what is right and what is wrong. Tell them that this is called our **conscience**.
- Make the following points about our conscience:
 - Just as it was difficult to hear the quiet voice of the child in the group, it is often difficult to hear our conscience helping us know the difference between right and wrong.
 - We can strengthen our conscience by praying, learning what our Church teaches, and asking the advice of trusted adults.
 - Our conscience helps us know the difference between what is right and wrong.
 - When we listen to our conscience, we are at peace.
- Tell the children that the Ten Commandments help us to have a good conscience by telling us the right way to act.
- Explain that our conscience also tells us to avoid, or stay away from, what is wrong. Tell them that sometimes we can avoid angry words by counting to ten; sometimes we can avoid sin by reminding ourselves that other people have feelings that we need to respect.

- Explain to the children that when they pray and when they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, they should examine their conscience. Tell them that this is a way to think about their actions and think about what they have done wrong. Explain that after this examination, they can ask God to forgive their sins.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is your conscience? (*knowing the difference between right and wrong*)
 - How do the Ten Commandments help us? (*by telling us the right way to act*)
 - What are some ways to avoid sin? (*by counting to ten or thinking of other people's feelings*)
 - Why did God give the Ten Commandments for us to follow? (*to help us know what is right or wrong, and to help us be safe and happy*)
- 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. Explain that the word *patriarch* is another name for *father*.



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 Gift of Conscience," page 41

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 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 Ten Commandments are God's rules to keep us safe and happy.
 - The Ten Commandments teach us right and wrong.
 - When we follow our conscience, we do what is right and avoid what is wrong.
- Invite the children to locate the image of Moses on the mountain on page 132 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.

**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.
- Help the children find the Ten Commandments on page 1988 in the back of *The Catholic Children's Bible*, under "Catholic Practices."
- Read the Ten Commandments together, pausing slightly after each one to provide some time for reflection.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*
- colored paper hearts, folded in half, one for each child
- copies of the Ten Commandments as written in *The Catholic Children's Bible*, one for each child
- several pairs of scissors
- several bottles of glue

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*
- board or poster to write on

Learning the Commandments (15 minutes)

- Instruct the children to find the Ten Commandments in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1988).
- Choose several children to read the Commandments aloud.
- Explain that the first three commandments show us how to love God, and the final seven commandments show us how to love others.
- Distribute a large cutout heart, folded in half down the middle, to each child.
- Show the children how to write "Love God" at the top of the left side of the heart and "Love Others" at the top of the right side of the heart.
- Distribute the printed list of the Ten Commandments to each child along with scissors and glue.
- Instruct the children to cut out the commandments and glue each one onto the heart. Remind them that commandments 1–3 should be on the left side of the heart and commandments 4–10 on the right side of the heart.

The Most Important Commandment (15 minutes)

- Help the children find Mark 12:28–31 on page 1554 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Read this passage to the children.
- Explain that by "the most important commandment," Jesus means that loving is the most important thing we can do in our lives.
- Remind the children that by loving God and loving others, we are following the Ten Commandments.
- Write on the board two headings: "Love God" and "Love Others."
- Write a list on the board under each heading of ways to follow the two commandments. Allow the children to help brainstorm these ideas.
- Ask the children to choose one loving action that they will work on until the next time you meet as a group. Invite them to write or draw their action on paper and take it with them as a reminder.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- small slips of paper, one for each child
- a trash can

An Examination of Conscience (15 minutes)

- Explain that a way to think about our sins is to examine our conscience. Remind the children that this is a way to reflect on our actions.
- Tell the children that you are going to play a video that will help the group to better understand the Sacrament of Reconciliation and how to examine their conscience. Explain that you will read to them and they should not worry if they don't understand all of the questions. Encourage them to reflect on their actions.
- Watch the video "Examination of Conscience for Kids" (YouTube, 2:54).
- Download the Examination of Conscience that accompanies the video. Read the questions to the children, giving them enough time to reflect on each one.
- Distribute a small slip of paper to everyone and invite them to write one way they may not have lived up to being who God wants them to be. Promise that you will not read it.
- Instruct the children to tear their paper into pieces and place them in the trash can, one at a time, as they say: "My God, I'm sorry. Please forgive me and help me to do better."
- Explain that by throwing this paper away, we are reminded of the fact that God is always ready to help us start again.

Chapter

9

We Are Called to Kindness



Chapter

9

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Ephesians 4:1–6

Lesson Goals

- to state that our kindness to others shows God's love
- to indicate that Jesus gave us an example of love and kindness to follow
- to discuss that love and kindness can heal hurts

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Rights and Responsibilities

Catechism References

1822–1829

Key Words

humble, tolerant, preserve, unity, dignity

Music Suggestions

- "Be Patient (Ephesians 4:2)," by Wonder Kids (Wonder Kids)
- "Kindness," by Scott Perry (Scott Perry)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 9 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a list of prepared scenarios
- a pair of scissors
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Wouldn't it be wonderful to live in a world where people treated one another with kindness in a humble, gentle, and patient manner? a world where people were tolerant of one another and did their best to preserve the unity that binds them together as human beings and as children of God? In a few short but significant verses from the Letter to the Ephesians, we are urged to act with kindness and preserve unity through peace.

Fortunately, the Holy Spirit will help us to create this wonderful world. Preserving unity through peace is not always easy. When we are less than loving, we can ask forgiveness from those we have hurt. When we are hurt, we can be the one who forgives. As you present this lesson to your group, together think of ways you can help bring living as one community within reach.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to share about the kindest person they know.
- Ask them why they chose that person as an example of kindness. Explain that *kindness* comes from the word *kin*, or family. Tell the children that when we are kind to others, we treat them like family. Remind the group that we certainly should be kind to our own family.
- Ask volunteers to share who they know from the Bible who was kind.
- Explain that in this lesson they will be reading a passage from the Letter to the Ephesians. Tell the children that the Ephesians were people who lived in a city in Greece named Ephesus. Continue by sharing that in this letter, the children will learn how we are to treat one another so we can be in union with one another and with God.



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 a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the previous pages. (You may want to draw attention to the three dots in verse 1 on this page. This shows that part of the sentence has been omitted.)
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1846–1847 and 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 does it mean to be humble, gentle, or patient? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
 - How can we show our love? (*by being kind, tolerant, preserving unity*)

- The word *one* appears in this passage often. What is the author telling us there is “one” of? (*body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, God*)
- What do you think it means to be one? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answer: body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, Baptism, God*

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 people are mean or unkind to one another, it’s not possible to be one, or at peace.
 - Even though it’s sometimes difficult, we must find a way to be kind and gentle with one another. By getting along, we are at peace with others.
 - If we are unkind and hurt someone else, we can create peace again by saying, “I’m sorry,” and promising to do better.
 - The Holy Spirit will help us find a way to be at peace with other people.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1847 together as a prayer.
- Emphasize that we are asking Jesus to help us to be kind to everyone.
- Begin and end the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1847. (*Image 1 shows a mother comforting her child. Image 2 shows two friends reconciling. Image 3 shows Jesus loving the whole world.*)
- Ask what the pictures in the cartoon look like to them.
- Invite the children to tell a friend about what other pictures they would include in this cartoon to depict the Scripture reading.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Kindness Matters

- Prepare in advance by creating a list of scenarios given on a separate sheet of paper (see the list below for possible examples). Then cut out each scenario separately.
- Begin the activity by reminding the children that it is always good to show kindness. Explain that they will each work in a group to show how patience, kindness, and tolerance can look.

- Arrange the children into small groups. Give each group a scenario, explaining that the people in these stories are making poor choices. Here are some example scenarios:
 - Your teacher assigns a partner for each person in your group. You really don't want to work with the partner chosen for you, so you refuse to do the project. You and your partner both get a poor grade.
 - Your little brother wants to tag along with you and your friends. You really wish you could just be with your friends, so you call him a pest, yell at him, and run off with your friends, leaving him behind.
 - In the school lunchroom, you just heard one of the girls tell another that she won't be her friend anymore. You can see that the girl is about to cry, but you don't want to get involved, so you move to a different table.
 - Your mom has had a busy day at work and looks very tired. She is taking a long time to get dinner on the table because your little sister keeps interrupting her. You are angry that dinner is late, so you complain to your mom.
 - Your favorite aunt gives you two candy bars after supper, one for you and one for a friend. After supper you meet your friend Josh outside, and another friend, Trevor, is with him. You give one candy bar to Josh to eat and you eat the other one. "Sorry," you say to Trevor, "my aunt only gave me two."
- Explain to the groups that they should talk about ways they could revise the scene so that it shows kindness, patience, and tolerance. Invite them to create a skit, acting out the revised scene.
- Give each group of children some time to talk about and prepare their scene.
- Ask a volunteer group to be first. Read aloud the original scenario. Then invite the group to act out the scenario, showing kindness.
- Invite the children to comment on the choices made in the scene. Compare the good choices made to the original story.

Process the Activity

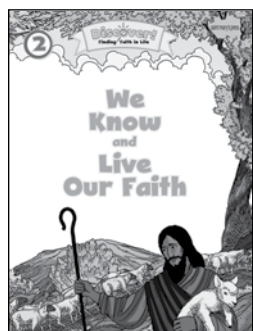
- Thank the groups for using their gift of creativity to make the scenarios come alive for us. Ask the children to explain how the groups changed the stories. (*Affirm examples given.*) Emphasize that the better choices included kindness, patience, and tolerance.
- Ask the group to think about the stories and what they tell us about what kindness is.
- Begin a list on the board by writing "Kindness is . . ." at the top. Ask for volunteers to finish the sentence. Write their input on the board. (*For example: caring about others, being willing to cooperate, being helpful, comforting those who are sad, playing with younger brothers and sisters, sharing what we have, etc.*)
- Remind the children that God sent Jesus to show us how to be kind and loving, and to show how kind and loving God is!

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 117 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that God wants us to treat others with love and kindness so we can be at peace with others and show them God’s love. Emphasize the following points:
 - God sent Jesus to show us how to treat others. There are many examples in the Bible of how Jesus treated others in a kind way. He was patient with those around him, welcomed all people, helped those who were sick, and forgave sinners.
 - By being kind to others, we create unity and peace. We become one.
 - Even though it’s not always easy to be kind to everyone, God wants us to remember that he created everyone, even the people we might not like. Our kindness to others shows God’s love. When we are kind, we give God’s kindness to others.
 - Because everyone was created by God, they have **dignity**. This means they are worthy of kindness and respect.
 - When we are unkind to others, it is important to ask for forgiveness. We should say we are sorry when we hurt others.
- Emphasize that we should forgive those who hurt us, just as Jesus forgave sinners. Remind the children that if someone is hurting us by bullying, or forcing us to do something wrong, then we need to tell a trusted adult about it.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why does God want us to be kind and patient with other people? *(so we can be at peace with others; so we can show his love)*
 - How did Jesus show us how to be kind to others? *(Accept reasonable responses.)*
 - When we hurt someone else, what must we do? *(say we are sorry, ask for forgiveness, treat that person with extra kindness)*
 - How can kindness and love heal our hurts? *(Kindness makes us feel better; love helps us know that we are important to God and to the people in our lives. Kindness and love help us know that life is good and we are loved.)*
- 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 Mother Teresa of Kolkata (Calcutta), and encourage the children to say, “Saint Mother Teresa, 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:

- “Everyone Has Equal Dignity” + activity, pages 45–46

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 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:
 - Our kindness to others shows God's love.
 - Jesus gave us an example of love and kindness to follow.
 - Love and kindness can heal hurts.
- Invite the children to locate the image of the mother and child in the Tell It! box on page 1847 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders, and tell them it is facing a different direction. It can be found in one place.



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.
- Read “A Prayer to Jesus,” which can be found on page 1993 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- none

A Little Kindness Goes a Long Way (15 minutes)

- Remind the children that kindness helps people feel connected and at peace.
- Arrange the large group into several small discussion groups. Explain that you will read a few scenes.
 - On the first day of school, you notice a new child in your class.
 - A friend is sad because his parents fight often.
 - An older person is struggling to get her packages through the door.
 - You were rude to your friend and hurt his feelings.
- Have the children discuss in their small group an action they can take to show kindness in each situation.
- After a few minutes, ask one person from each group to be the reporter and share what action their group suggests for each situation.

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- markers or crayons

Kind Words (15 minutes)

- Distribute a sheet of blank paper and some markers or crayons to each child. Instruct the children to write their name on the top of the paper using the markers or crayons. Encourage them to decorate their name. Display these papers around the room.
- Explain to the children that often we forget to be kind to the people closest to us. Instruct them that they are to walk around the room, stopping at each child's paper, and write a positive word or phrase about that child on their page. Brainstorm some examples about what they might want to write.
- Distribute the papers back to the owners after the children have written on each person's paper. Allow them a few minutes to read the comments.
- Invite the children to share their reactions to having good things written about them.
- Remind the children to say good things about their family and the people they see every day. Tell them that when they do this, they are being kind and acting like Jesus.

Materials Needed

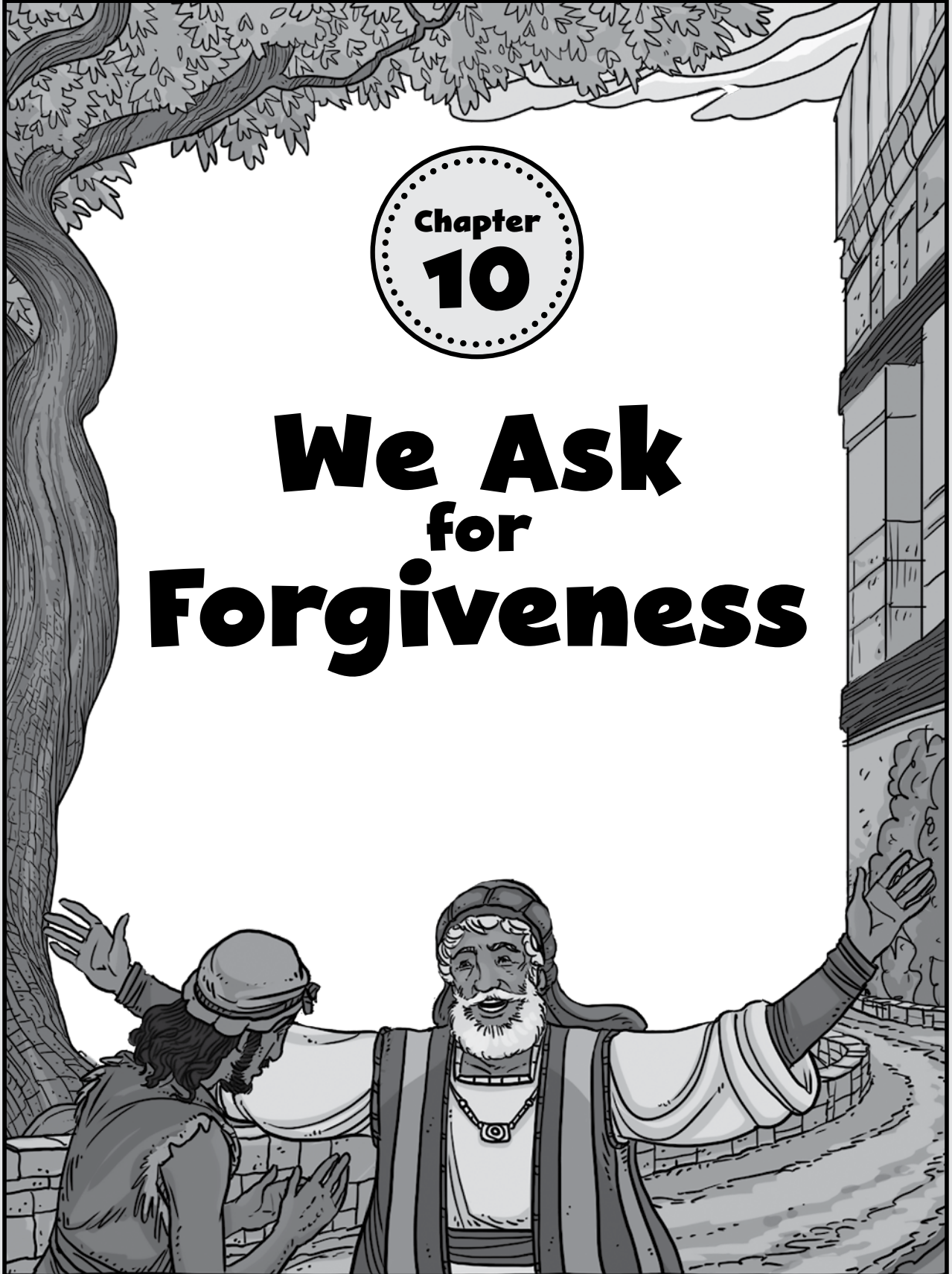
- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- small slips of paper
- a board or poster to write on

All About Kindness

- Prepare in advance by creating small squares of paper, several for each child, or have the children do this if there is time.
- Show the video "All About Kindness (song for kids about doing good deeds)" (YouTube, 2:41).
- Instruct the group to watch and listen carefully to the acts of kindness shown in the video.
- Ask the group to add their own ideas. Make a list on the board.
- Distribute the slips of paper. Direct the children to write down one act of kindness, either from the video or from their own list on the board. Ask them to take their paper home, put it where they will see it, and do this act of kindness before the next group meeting.
- Select volunteers, if time permits, to share their proposed acts of kindness.

Chapter
10

**We Ask
for
Forgiveness**




**Chapter
10**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Luke 15:11, 20–24

Lesson Goals

- to state that God will always love us and forgive us
- to explain that we can use reason, free will, and conscience to live in right relationship with God
- to name that we can ask God for forgiveness in our prayers

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

1451–1454, 1469, 2616, 2631

Key Words

pity, prize, free will, reason, contrition

Music Suggestions

- “Return to God,” by John Angotti (World Library Publications)
- “Go Now in Peace,” by WLP Choir (World Library Publications)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 10 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- several dominoes
- several small balls, each one unique
- a basket to collect the balls
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The Parable of the Forgiving Father is one of the most familiar passages in the New Testament. In this parable, Jesus reveals what true mercy looks like. The forgiving father does not wait for his son to come to him and ask forgiveness. The father runs to his son as soon as he sees his son returning home. Even though the son has a speech prepared to ask for his father’s forgiveness, the father never gives him a chance to deliver it. The father has already forgiven his son and is ready to celebrate his return.

In this parable, the forgiving father—who represents God, the Father of all—shows immense and extravagant love. The father demands no explanations, no accountability, no restitution. He just forgives his wayward son and throws a party! Through forgiveness, God welcomes us back whenever we turn away from him. We only need to return home to him.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Allow the children to watch as you quietly set up a row of dominoes (close enough that when you tap the first one, the rest will fall).
- Remind the class that a sin is something wrong that we choose to do. Invite the children to quietly think of something they did that was a sin.
- Tell the children that when we choose to sin, we often hurt other people in the process.
- Ask the children to think of who might have been hurt by their actions: parents, siblings, friends, others.
- Tap the row of dominoes, and ask the children to watch them fall.
- Explain that a bad choice often affects many other people, just as one domino causes all the others to fall. Remind them that a good choice often affects many other people also.
- Explain to the class that today they will read a story that Jesus told about a father who forgave his son, even though the son hurt the father badly.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to turn to Luke 15:11–32 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1619 and 1622). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1620. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on pages 1619 and 1622.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1620–1621 and describe what they see.
- Explain that they will read a Scripture story about a young man who ran away from home. Tell the children that he ran away because he was selfish and did not want to live under his father's rules anymore.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did the forgiving father do when he saw his son? (*He took pity on him; he ran and put his arms around his son; he welcomed him.*)
 - What did the son say to his father? (*"I have sinned against God and against you; I am no longer fit to be called your son."*)
 - How did the father celebrate his son's return? (*with a new robe, ring, shoes, by giving a feast*)
 - What did the father mean when he said, "This son of mine was dead, but now he is alive"? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. pity, 2. feast, 3. alive, 4. ring, 5. sinned*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1621, 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:
 - After the son left home, he spent all the money his father gave him. He was starving and broke, so he decided to go home.
 - Instead of being angry, his father welcomed him home because he loved him so much. He had a big party to celebrate the son's homecoming.
 - The father in this story reminds us of God. No matter how we sin, God always loves us and forgives us.
- Explain to the children that Jesus wanted to teach us about what God is like. Tell them that this story is one way Jesus tells us how much love God has for each of us.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1621, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to tell about a time they were forgiven by a parent, grandparent, or teacher.
- Ask them to share, if they want to, how that helped them.
- Invite the children to take a moment of silence to thank God for loving them.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1621. (*Image 1 shows the father watching for his son and seeing him from afar. Image 2 shows the son being sorry for what he had done. Image 3 shows the ring, the robe, and new shoes. Image 4 shows the food for the feast.*)
- Invite several children to retell the story in their own words.
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

The Lost Ball

- Prepare by hiding several balls around the room (as many balls as small groups or “search teams” that you will assign). Each ball must be unique. Place a basket on your desk to receive the balls as they are found. The basket should be labeled “Home.”
- Ask the children to turn to page 1619 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Ask them to find chapter 15 on that page. Explain that there are three stories on the page that begin with “The Lost . . .”
- Invite volunteers to share the three titles on this page. (*The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin, and The Lost Son*) Explain that they have just finished reading the story of the Lost Son, which is also called the Forgiving Father.
- Arrange the group into search teams for as many balls as you have hidden. Assign each team to a particular ball and explain, “Team A, find the blue ball. Team B, find the striped ball,” and so on.
- Explain that if a team should find another ball, they should quietly leave it where it is and not tell the other teams. Remind them that each team must find the ball assigned to it.
- Note the beginning time on the board. Tell the children that as soon as a team finds its ball, they should announce immediately, “We have found our lost ball!” Explain that the team should then put the ball in the basket. Put the “finding time” on the board to add a sense of urgency to the hunt.
- Congratulate each team as it finds its ball. Encourage the group to clap for the teams as they place their balls into the “home” basket.

Process the Activity

- Invite the children to think about the following questions and ideas:
 - How does this activity remind you of the story we read today? (*The ball was lost and then it was found.*)
 - How did you feel when you found the ball? (*happy*)
- Have the children imagine how excited the father in the story was when his son came back to him. Share with them that we are happy when we find lost things, but the father was overjoyed when his lost son came back to him.

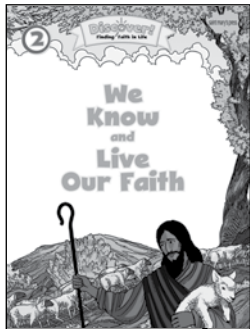
Additional Activity Options

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 126 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the class that they learned about having a conscience. Write the word *conscience* on the board, and invite the children to share what they remember about what a conscience is. (*that ability which helps us to know the difference between right and wrong*)
- Explain that when God made us, he gave each person the gift of **free will**. Write *free will* on the board. Explain as follows:
 - Free will is the ability to choose how we act.
 - Having free will allows us to choose right or wrong, kindness or unkindness.
 - When we sin, we are using our free will to choose to do something hurtful or wrong.
- Explain that God gave us another gift, besides conscience and free will, and that is the gift of **reason**. Write this word on the board. Tell the children that using reason means that you put on your thinking cap and use the brain God gave you. Explain that we especially use the gift of reason before we make decisions. Tell the group that using our reason means that we can think through the likely results of our actions.
- Explain that when we use these gifts of God, we can stay close to God. Tell the children that if we don't use these gifts, we end up easily going down the wrong path like the son in the story.
- Explain that when we go down the wrong path, or sin, we can tell God we are sorry and ask for forgiveness. We can do this in many ways:
 - We can ask forgiveness when we pray. We can pray the Our Father, and pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."
 - We can pray the Hail Mary: "Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death." We can ask forgiveness during the "Lord, have mercy" at Mass.

- We can ask forgiveness by praying an Act of Contrition. Explain that the word **contrition** means “sorrow.” Have the children turn to page 1993 of *The Catholic Children’s Bible* to read the Act of Contrition.
- Tell the children that they can pray the Act of Contrition anytime to tell God that they are sorry for any unkind things they may have done during the day and to ask God to forgive them. Explain that when we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we pray the Act of Contrition as part of this sacrament.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is free will? (*the ability to choose how we act*)
 - What is reason? (*being able to think; being able to understand the consequences of an action*)
 - How can we pray for forgiveness? (*We can pray the Our Father; the Hail Mary; or the Lord, Have Mercy at Mass. We can pray an Act of Contrition.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. conscience, 2. reason, 3. free will, 4. pray, 5. loves*
- 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 Monica and Saint Augustine, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Monica and Saint Augustine, 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 Gift of Our Minds,” page 40
- “The Gift of Free Will,” page 40
- “The Gift of Conscience,” page 41
- “Using God’s Gifts” + activity, pages 42–43

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 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 will always love and forgive us.
 - We can use reason, free will, and conscience to live in right relationship with God.
 - We can ask God for forgiveness in our prayers.
- Invite the children to locate the image of the father with outstretched arms on page 1620 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.



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.
- Pray an Our Father, Hail Mary, or Act of Contrition as found in the back of *The Catholic Children's Bible*, pages 1990–1991 and 1993.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a roll of wide masking tape
- heavy art paper or cardstock
- markers or crayons

A Forgiveness Cross (15 minutes)

- Prepare a paper for each child by using wide masking tape to form a large cross on a piece of heavy art paper or cardstock.
- Explain to the children that they will make a Forgiveness Cross as a reminder for us to ask for God's forgiveness.
- Distribute the markers or crayons, and explain to the children that they can color around and over the cross, filling in as much space as possible.
- Help the children, after they are finished coloring the page, to peel off the tape. The result will be a large white cross in the middle of the colored page.
- Write the following on the board, and direct the children to write it inside the white cross: "I am sorry. Father, forgive me."
- Ask the children to take the crosses home and hang them in their rooms. Explain that the cross is a sign of God's love and forgiveness.

Chapter 10

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible*
- a board or poster to write on
- blank paper
- markers or crayons

The Whole Story (15 minutes)

- Read the full Parable of the Forgiving Father (Luke 15:11–32) with the class.
- Invite the children to name some other events that are in the fuller account but omitted in the passage read earlier in class. List these events on the board. Verses 25–32 describe the father's interactions with the elder son. Including these verses may extend the time allotted to this activity.
- Distribute the blank paper and markers or crayons, and instruct the children to draw one of the scenes from the fuller account of the parable. The children can work in teams or independently, whichever works best for your group.
- Help the children arrange the pictures in sequential order along a wall or on tables or desks. Invite the group to tour the pictures.
- Ask the children how knowing the whole story makes the parable more meaningful.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Saying "I'm Sorry" (15 minutes)

- Explain to the children that the story of the Forgiving Father is also sometimes called The Lost Son or The Prodigal Son. Tell them that *prodigal* means "spending money wastefully."
- Prepare the group by telling them that the video they are going to see tells the longer version of the story.
- Show the video "God's Story: Two Sons and a Father (Prodigal Son)" (YouTube, 4:07).
- Encourage the children to share examples of how at different times they may be like the younger brother (the prodigal son), the older brother, and the father. Help them understand that, at times, we can be like each of these characters in the story.
- Remind the children that this story recalls how God loves us so much and is always excited to welcome us back after we sin. Explain that we can ask for God's forgiveness in our prayers and in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Unit 3

We Meet Jesus in the Eucharist

Chapter 11

Jesus Gives Us Himself. 128

Chapter 12

We Celebrate the Eucharist 136

Chapter 13

We Grow Strong in Christ's Love 144

Chapter 14

We Share Love with Our Community . . . 152

Chapter 15

We Pray the Lord's Prayer 160

Chapter

11

Jesus Gives Us Himself




 Chapter
11

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Mark 14:22–24

Lesson Goals

- to explain that Jesus gave us his Body and Blood at the Last Supper
- to articulate that in every Mass Jesus gives himself to us as he did at the Last Supper
- to state that ordinary bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ at every Mass

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

1322–1419

Key Words

disciple, covenant, Eucharist, Holy Communion, consecration

Music Suggestions

- “Jesus, Bread of Life,” by James V. Marchionda, OP (World Library Publications)
- “Bread of Life,” by Catholic Kids Worship (Catapult)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 11 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- a dish or plate that has special significance for you and your family
- heart-shaped papers, one for each child
- plans to visit the church or items related to the Eucharist (paten, chalice, vestment, unconsecrated hosts, etc.)
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

It’s impossible to think about the Catholic faith without thinking about the Eucharist. The Eucharist is truly at the heart of our faith. In the Eucharist, we find Jesus. He is as present to us as he was to his disciples long ago. Throughout the ages, the people of God have celebrated the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist as we do today. This draws us together as the Body of Christ and nourishes us to be the hands of Christ in the world.

As you read Mark’s account of the Last Supper, picture yourself in the room with Jesus and his disciples. Imagine your reaction to his words as Jesus breaks the bread and shares the wine. How might this affect your life? How will knowing that Jesus will be with you always through his Body and Blood stay with you as you interact with others? Allow yourself to be immersed in the experience of the Last Supper and hold those thoughts closely as you teach the children in your care that Jesus will always be with them in this special and wonderful way.

**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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Show the special dish or plate that you have brought to class with you. Explain to the class why it means so much to you and your family.
- Ask the children to tell about special meals or family celebrations they might have with their families.
- Encourage them to share about traditional foods, special dishware, or recipes that are brought out for the special event. Ask if they have any special clothes that are part of the celebration.
- Write on the board any interesting details that they share.
- Explain that in today's lesson they will be reading about a special meal Jesus shared with his friends. Point out that at that meal, Jesus did something so important that it still affects us every time we go to Mass.

**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 other pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1560–1561 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who was with Jesus? (*his disciples/Apostles*)
 - What special action did Jesus take with the bread? (*broke it; gave it to his disciples; said "Take it, this is my body."*)

- What special action did Jesus take with the cup? (*handed it to his disciples and said, "This is my blood which is poured out for many, my blood which seals God's covenant."*)
- What is a covenant? (*an important agreement between two people or between God and people*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. this is my body, 2. This is my blood*

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:
 - Because Jesus wants to be with each of us, he gave us a gift at the Last Supper: the **Eucharist**.
 - At every Mass, bread and wine become Jesus' Body and Blood. This is truly Jesus.
 - When we receive **Holy Communion**, Jesus comes into our hearts.
- Write the words *Eucharist* and *Holy Communion* on the board, and explain that these are the words we use to describe that the bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass.
- Remind the class that they have learned that Baptism and Reconciliation are sacraments.
- Invite them to share what they know about sacraments. Remind them that a sacrament can be described as one of the seven holy signs Jesus gave to the Church.
- Explain that the Sacrament of the Eucharist takes place at every Mass.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1561, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the heart-shaped pieces of paper to the children, and invite them to write a short prayer to Jesus. (If they have not yet received First Holy Communion, invite them to write a prayer asking Jesus to help them prepare for this wonderful gift from Jesus.)
- Encourage the children to keep their prayer, take it to Mass on Sunday, and pray the prayer.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1561.
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story in their own words. (*Image 1 shows Jesus taking bread. Image 2 shows Jesus breaking the bread. Image 3 shows Jesus taking the cup. Image 4 shows Jesus giving the cup.*)
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

A Church Visit

- Prepare in advance by arranging a visit to the church with a parish priest, catechetical leader, or someone who would be able to give a brief tour of the church with special emphasis on the parts of church and the implements related to the Eucharist. If this is not possible, arrange to have some of the items used during Mass in your classroom. These could include a chalice, paten, cruets, some kind of vestment, and unconsecrated hosts. Keep the emphasis on the Eucharist rather than the whole liturgy.
- Allow the children to see the items up close.
- Point out the altar if you are in church. Also show the special sink where the Communion dishes are washed. Explain that this is used to treat the Eucharist with special care because Jesus is truly in the Eucharist.
- Explain that the priest wears special clothes, or vestments, during Mass.
- Show the children the unconsecrated hosts, if possible, explaining that they are not yet changed into the Body of Christ. Tell them that this will happen at Mass. Explain that at Mass, at a special time, the ordinary bread, or hosts, will be changed into the Body of Christ.
- Invite the children to ask questions.

Process the Activity

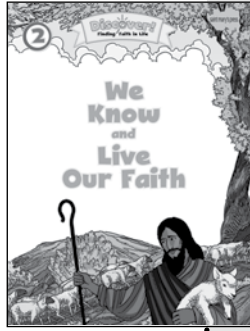
- Ask the children if they remember the words Jesus said at the Last Supper. *(The children might not remember the exact words, but accept reasonable responses.)*
- Explain to the children that when they go to Mass, the words the priest says are the same as the ones Jesus said at the Last Supper.
- Remind the children that Jesus and his disciples sat around a table at the Last Supper, and explain that the altar is sometimes called the “table of the Lord.”

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 135 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that Jesus told his disciples, “This is my body” and “This is my blood,” at the Last Supper.
- Explain that when he said those words, the bread and wine were changed into his Body and Blood. Include the following points:
 - Jesus did this because he wanted to stay with us for all time. By giving his Body and Blood to the disciples, Jesus ensured that he would always be with us.
 - We say that Jesus is present in the Eucharist. This means that he is really Jesus and that the bread and wine have really been changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.
 - Every time we go to Mass, Jesus gives himself to us just like he did to his disciples at the Last Supper.
 - When we receive Holy Communion, we are taking Jesus into our hearts so that he is really with us in a very special way.
- Explain to the children that it is natural to have a hard time understanding how the bread and wine change into the Body and Blood of Christ, but it is our faith that helps us to know this is true, even though we might not understand it completely.
- Ask the children if they have ever seen the priest hold up the Host or the chalice during Mass. Explain that when he does this, the priest is doing what Jesus did at the Last Supper. Tell them that the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ through the words of the priest and the power of the Holy Spirit. This is called the **consecration**.
- Remind the children that before it is consecrated at Mass, the bread is just bread. It is at the consecration of the Mass that the bread is changed into the Body of Christ.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How are the Last Supper and the Mass alike? (*The bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.*)
 - What is the consecration? (*the part of Mass when the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ*)
 - Why do you think Jesus wanted to give himself to us? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Bread—loaf of bread, Chalice—gold cup, Vestment—priest’s clothing, Wine—glass of wine*
- 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 Cyril of Jerusalem, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Cyril, 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 Eucharist,” page 28
- “We Share in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ,” + activity pages 29–31
- “The Special Signs of the Eucharist” + activity, pages 31–33

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 activities, or have them complete it with their families at home.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take 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 gave us his Body and Blood at the Last Supper.
 - In every Mass, Jesus gives himself to us as he did at the Last Supper.
 - Ordinary bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ at every Mass.
- Invite the children to locate the image of Jesus with the bread in the first Tell It! box on page 1561 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders, and tell them that it is facing a different direction. It can be found in one place.



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.
- Pass around a small piece of creation, such as a flower or a seashell. Explain that when a child is holding the object it is his or her turn to speak.
- Ask each child to finish this sentence when it is their turn: “I love Jesus because . . .”
- When everyone has had a turn, close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- matzo bread
- grape juice
- plates, cups, and napkins

Eating Like a Disciple (15 minutes)

- Check for any allergies or intolerances before considering this activity.
- Explain to the class that when Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples, they were celebrating the Jewish Feast of Passover. Remind the children that Jesus grew up in the Jewish faith.
- Show the matzo bread to the class and discuss how it is different from the bread the children eat. Explain that at the Passover meal, the kind of bread that is served is not like the bread we typically eat. Instead, it is flat.
- Tell them that the Feast of Passover celebrates that the Jewish People escaped from captivity. Explain that when they escaped, there was no time to allow the bread to rise, so they made a special bread, without the yeast, or *leaven*, that would make it rise. So the bread came out flat. Point out that this is called *unleavened bread*, which is the kind of bread that Jesus shared with his disciples at the Last Supper, and which we use today for the bread in Holy Communion.
- Explain to the class that you will share a snack with them that can remind them of the meal Jesus shared with his disciples at the Last Supper.
- Pass out the matzo and grape juice. As you enjoy the snack together, engage the children in a discussion about what they think it might have been like to share a meal with Jesus.

Materials Needed

- patterns for a chalice and host
- colored cardstock and white and yellow construction paper, one of each for each child
- markers
- several pairs of scissors
- several bottles of glue

Chalice Art (15 minutes)

- Make a few patterns in advance that the children can use to trace a chalice shape. The patterns should be slightly smaller than the white art paper. Also have circle patterns for a host shape.
- Distribute the cardstock and the markers. Instruct the children to color the whole page with markers. Encourage them to make the page very colorful.
- Distribute the white and yellow construction paper, scissors, and glue. Direct the children to trace a chalice shape on yellow paper and a round shape for a host on white paper. They should then cut out the traced shapes and glue them onto the cardstock so that the host is elevated above the chalice.
- Instruct them to add any details they might like to make their finished project resemble a chalice and host. Encourage adding some of Jesus' words at the Last Supper.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- paper, with *Eucharist* written vertically down the left side, one for each child

A Eucharist Acrostic (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "The E-U-C-H-A-R-I-S-T Song" (YouTube, 2:53).
- Encourage the children to sing along with the video.
- Distribute a paper to each child with the word *Eucharist* written vertically down the left side of the page.
- Instruct the children to write an acrostic poem about the gift of the Eucharist, using the letters in the word *Eucharist* as the first letter in each line of the poem. You may want to brainstorm and choose words as a group, writing each word on the board, so that everyone participates in writing a single poem.
- If time permits, allow the children to share their work.

Chapter
12

**We
Celebrate
the
Eucharist**




**Chapter
12**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

John 6:8–11

Lesson Goals

- to recall that the Eucharist nourishes our souls and brings us closer to God
- to explain that Jesus feeds people all over the world with the Eucharist at Mass
- to name the four different parts of the Mass

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

1135–1162, 1391, 1408, 1416

Key Words

disciple, barley, distributed

Music Suggestions

- “Taste and See,” by Michael Mangan (World Library Publications)
- “In Remembrance of Me,” by Cheri Keaggy (Sparrow Records)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 12 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a set of signs naming the different parts of the Mass
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

When Jesus fed the large crowd, he nourished the people both physically and spiritually. We have this same experience every time we participate in the Mass. Going to Mass and participating in the Holy Eucharist is the foundation of our living faith as Catholics. It is at Mass that we celebrate so much of what we believe: we come together as the People of God, we listen to the Word of God, we share the meal of the Lord, and we are sent out to serve the Lord and put our faith into action.

It is at Mass that we are nourished by Jesus in every sense of the word. Our mind is nourished by the Word of God. Our heart is nourished by the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ. As you pass on these basics of our faith to the children, let yourself be fed by God’s Word and the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

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

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 12 activity booklets.
- 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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to share times when they have been around a large crowd of people, such as a sporting event, a concert, a big city. Invite them to explain what it was like to be around so many people.
- Explain to the group that today they will be reading about a day that Jesus talked to over five thousand people.
- Invite the children to imagine how large that crowd would be.

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

- Invite the children to find John 6:1–15 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1665). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1666. 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 1666–1667 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How many people were in the crowd? (*about five thousand men*)
 - How much food did the boy have? (*five loaves of barley bread and two fish*)
 - Did anyone in the crowd go hungry? (*No, they all had as much as they wanted.*)

- Explain to the children that there were likely more than five thousand people in the crowd because the story says there were about five thousand men. Tell them that this number doesn't count the women and children who were probably there with Jesus as well. (See Matthew's account of this miracle in Matthew 14:21, "not counting women and children.")
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: five, two, enough, grass, thousand, God, fish*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1667, 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 crowd was large, and they were together for a long time. Jesus wanted them to have food.
 - There was a boy with five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus performed a miracle by making sure the food was enough for the large crowd.
 - Because Jesus is God, he is able to feed people all over the world with the Eucharist, Jesus himself, at Mass.
- Ask the children what they remember from the previous lesson (chapter 11) about the Eucharist. *(Accept reasonable responses.)*

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1667, or have a volunteer read it.
- Show the children that they can also find this prayer on page 1993 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.
- Read the prayer together.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1667.
- Invite several volunteers to tell the story using the pictures. *(Image 1 shows Jesus with the boy and loaves and fish. Image 2 shows the large crowd. Image 3 shows Jesus with the bread, giving thanks to God. Image 4 shows Jesus giving the food to the crowd.)*
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

The Mass: Signs Alive

- Prepare in advance a set of signs for the children to either hold in front of them or wear on a loop of yarn around their neck. The signs should name the different parts of the Mass. The number of signs will depend on the number of children in your group. Choose from this list. Be sure to include the parts that are capitalized. The others are optional at this point.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------|
| ◦ GATHERING | ◦ Alleluia | ◦ Eucharistic Prayer |
| ◦ Entrance Song | ◦ GOSPEL READING | ◦ CONSECRATION |
| ◦ Greeting | ◦ Homily | ◦ The Our Father |
| ◦ Penitential Rite | ◦ Profession of Faith | ◦ Sign of Peace |
| ◦ GLORIA | ◦ Prayer of the Faithful | ◦ COMMUNION |
| ◦ Opening Prayer | ◦ LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST | ◦ SENDING FORTH |
| ◦ LITURGY OF THE WORD | ◦ Presentation and Preparation of Gifts | ◦ Greeting |
| ◦ FIRST READING | ◦ Prayer over the Offerings | ◦ Final Blessing |
| ◦ Responsorial Psalm | | ◦ Dismissal |
| ◦ SECOND READING | | |

- Ask the children what they know about the Mass and what happens at Mass.
- Explain that you have written the parts of the Mass for them. Distribute the signs and instruct the children to either hold or wear the signs. Tell them to arrange themselves so that their signs show the order of the Mass.
- Give clues to help them find the correct order, and encourage them to help each other.
- Print out the list above or write the words on a large poster to display after the children have arranged their signs. If some of the signs are out of order, help the children find the correct placement.
- Tell the children that they will learn more about these different parts of the Mass at a later point.

Process the Activity

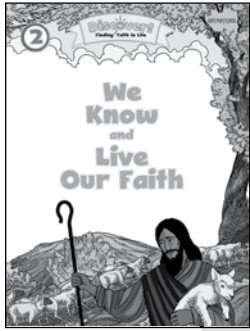
- Ask the children to share which parts of the Mass they remember and what happens during those parts.
- Invite the children to share about their experiences and knowledge of going to Mass.

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 143 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that when people gather for a special meal or celebration, there are often four actions: you greet the guests and make them feel welcome, you talk to each other and hear about what you've been doing (share stories), you share snacks or a meal, and you say goodbye and wish each other well.
- Explain that this is what we do at Mass. There are four basic actions:
 - The Gathering: At this time, we greet one another, the priest greets us (make guests feel welcome), and we prepare to celebrate the Eucharist.
 - The Liturgy of the Word: At this time, we hear the Word of God from the Bible, and the priest explains the readings to us in the homily (share stories).
 - The Liturgy of the Eucharist: At this time, the gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar where they are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Those who are able will receive Communion (share a meal).
 - Sending Forth: At this time, we are given a blessing and sent out to live our lives by serving God and others according to the Gospel (say goodbye and wish each other well).
- Write the name of each part of the Mass on the board as you explain it to the group.
- Explain that just as Jesus fed the large crowd of people a long time ago, he feeds people all over the world in the Eucharist when they go to Mass. Tell the children that the Eucharist nourishes our souls and brings us closer to God.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What happens at Mass during the Gathering? (*The priest greets us and welcomes us, and we prepare to celebrate the Eucharist. Accept reasonable explanations.*)
 - What happens during the Liturgy of the Word? (*We hear the Word of God.*)
 - What happens during the Liturgy of the Eucharist? (*The gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar. They are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.*)
 - What happens during the Sending Forth? (*We are blessed and sent out to live according to the Gospel. Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: top row—2, 3; bottom row—1,4*
- 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 Juliana of Liège, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Juliana, 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 Sunday Eucharist” + activity, pages 29–30
- “The Celebration of the Eucharist,” page 31
- “The Gifts of the Eucharist,” page 34
- “How Often Can We Receive Holy Communion?” page 34

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



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take 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 Eucharist nourishes our souls and brings us closer to God.
 - Jesus feeds people all over the world with the Eucharist at Mass.
 - Name the four different parts of the Mass.
- Invite the children to locate the image of the boy with the loaves and fishes on page 1666 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in three different places.



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.
- Remind the children that we pray the Our Father at every Mass. Tell them you will pray this prayer together. Direct the children to page 1990 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* if they need to follow along.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- several images of the Christian symbol of a fish
- copies of fish symbol printed on art paper, one for each child
- several pairs of scissors
- markers
- several bottles of glue (*optional*)
- small magnets (*optional*)

Fish Symbols (15 minutes)

- Show the class a few images of the Christian symbol of a fish. Explain that in the early days of Christianity, the fish was used as a secret sign for Christians to be able to identify each other as followers of Jesus.
- Distribute the images of the fish symbol.
- Instruct the children to write the letters *J E S U S* in the middle of the fish and to cut the fish out from the paper.
- Invite the children to color the fish with markers. You might also have them glue a small magnet on the back.
- Tell them that this sign can remind them, and others, that they are followers of Jesus.

Materials Needed

- missalettes

Praying with a Misalette (15 minutes)

- Distribute missalettes. Explain to the children that missalettes are often used to help people in church follow along with the Mass.
- Show the children how the book is set up, helping them to locate the prayers of the Mass.
- Together with the class, read a few of the prayers. Allow the children to respond to the prayers that include responses.
- Arrange the children into pairs, and allow each pair to read some of the prayers of the Mass together. Instruct one child in each pair to read the priest's part of the prayers and the other child to read the parts of the people.

Materials Needed

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

Reflection on the Last Supper (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "Last Supper, First Eucharist: time lapse drawing video (good for kids)" (YouTube, 2:15).
- Discuss with the class how the artist in the video helped them understand the Eucharist.
- Distribute the blank paper and markers or crayons, and direct the children to draw a picture that could be included in the video. If time permits, allow the children to share their drawings with the class.

Chapter

13

We Grow Strong in Christ's Love




**Chapter
13**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Ephesians 3:14–19

Lesson Goals

- to identify that Jesus lives in our hearts through the Eucharist
- to state that we are strengthened and grow in Christ's love by receiving the Eucharist
- to name that one way we grow in faith and love is through practicing virtue

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

1134, 1394, 1694

Key Word

virtue

Music Suggestions

- "How Deep Is the Love of Christ," by Special Forces Kids (Rising Sun Records)
- "Think, Love, Live Like Christ (Philippians 2)," by Lumin8 Children's Choir (Calvary Church)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 13 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- red art paper with a large heart shape drawn on it
- scissors
- markers or crayons
- a spinner that shows the names of different virtues
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

We are reminded again and again about the importance of living a healthy life. We have access to so much information about how to eat, exercise, and incorporate healthy habits into our daily routine that it's impossible to ignore the data sent our way.

Unfortunately, we do not have the same reminders about living a spiritually healthy life. In contrast to the information we have about physically healthy living, we are subject to many influences that encourage us to be spiritually unhealthy. Because of this, it is crucial that we pass to our children ways to be close to God and the Church, such as praying, receiving the Eucharist at Mass, and acting in kind and virtuous ways.

As we read in today's Scripture passage, we are not alone in trying to live in Christ's love. Saint Paul tells the Ephesians that God can do so much more than we can ever even ask for. This is a wonderful reminder for us today. How can we fail if God is on our side?



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children what it means to be strong, and encourage volunteers to share.
- Then ask the children what they need to do to be strong. Write their ideas on the board.
- Explain to the group that there are different ways of being strong.
 - There is physical strength, which can be achieved by eating and doing healthy things.
 - There is spiritual strength, which comes from making good choices, staying close to God, and trying to be like Jesus.
- Explain to the children that today's Scripture reading tells us about an Apostle who prayed for Christians long ago that they would be strong in their love for Jesus. We share the same goal with the early Christians—to grow strong in our love for Jesus.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Ephesians 3:14–19 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1844).
- Explain that the writer of this Scripture passage was called Paul and that he was an Apostle who taught people about Jesus. Tell the children that the passage was written as part of a letter to the first Christians. Paul was praying for the first Christians and wrote down his prayer to God in this letter.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is Paul asking God? (*that the readers will have strength in their inner selves*)
 - What does it mean when Paul asks that Christ make his home in the readers' hearts? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
 - What words does Paul use to try to describe how big Christ's love is? (*broad and long, high and deep*)

- Ask the children to act out those words by saying, "Follow my actions: Christ's love is broad (*stretch arms out*), long (*all hold hands together and stretch arms out*), high (*stretch both arms as high as they can go and stand on tiptoe*), and deep (*squat and push on floor with palms of hands*).
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Father, Spirit, Christ*

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:
 - The Apostle who wrote this Scripture prayed for the members of the early Church. But this prayer is for us today as well.
 - He prayed that the Holy Spirit will help Christians have inner strength. This means that people's actions will be rooted in love that comes from Jesus living in their hearts.
 - When we receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion we are filled with Jesus. The Eucharist strengthens us and helps us grow in Christ's love.
- Invite any children who have received their First Communion to share with the group how they feel closer to God because of receiving the sacrament.
- If none of the children has made their First Communion, invite volunteers to share how they think receiving the Eucharist will help them have inner strength.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the red paper and the marker or crayons to the children, and direct them to follow the instructions in the Live It!
- Remind the children to pass on the heart and to pray for the person they give it to.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to talk with a family member about the prayer of the Apostle in Ephesians. Instruct them to look in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1844) for help.
- Explain that they should include as many details as possible when retelling what is in the prayer. Remind them to act out "Christ's love is broad, long, high, and deep" at home.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Word Angel

- Create a spinner in advance of the session by attaching an open “s” paperclip with a brad through a piece of cardboard or paper (you can find examples online). Divide the paper or cardboard into sections and write in different virtues.
- Explain to the group that angels are messengers of God. Tell them that there have been times when God sent a message to a human through an angel. Point out that the word *El* means “God” in Hebrew, and the angels who are named in the Bible (Gabriel, Michael, Raphael) all have names that end in the letters *el*. Explain that this is a reminder that they carry a message from God.
- Tell the children that today they are going to play a new game called “Word Angel.” Explain the game rules:
 - The Word Angel has a message for the group. This is a word that will help us be closer to God. (*Note: The word is VIRTUE.*)
 - You will draw a dash on the board for each letter of the word. The children are to guess the letters and see if they can complete the word from the Word Angel.
 - Each student stands by their seat and takes a turn to guess one letter as you call on them. If that letter is in the word, write it on the corresponding dash. If it is not in the word, draw a body part of the Word Angel.
 - The goal is for the group to guess the word before the drawing of the angel is complete. (*Note: You might need to draw extra feathers on the wings, so the children can succeed and guess the word before you complete the drawing.*)
- Ask if anyone knows the meaning of the word **virtue** after the game is finished. Explain that it means “strength.” Tell the group that virtues are everyday good habits like kindness, patience, honesty, helpfulness, and generosity.
- Show the children the spinner you prepared before the session that shows names of some virtues.
- Invite volunteers to spin the wheel and then either demonstrate by acting out or explaining how they can show the virtue the spinner stopped on. For example, if the spinner lands on *helpfulness*, they can either explain or act out that they are helping a friend who has dropped their backpack.

Process the Activity

- Remind the children that having spiritual strength comes from making good choices, staying close to God, and trying to be like Jesus.
- Ask the children if virtues might help them to be strong in a spiritual way.
- Recall to the children the virtues noted on the spinner: kindness, patience, honesty, helpfulness, generosity.
- Ask volunteers to share which of these virtues they have, or which they know they don’t have.

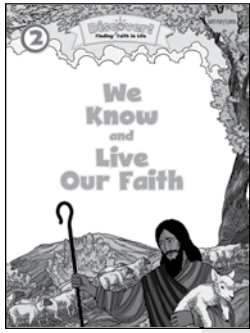
Additional Activity Options

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 it is always good to live out the virtues of being helpful, kind, honest, patient, generous, etc.
- Explain that these virtues are everyday good habits. Compare the virtues to muscles in our bodies, and explain that the more we use our muscles, the stronger our muscles become. Remind the children that the virtues need to be used so that they can grow stronger in us. Explain that practicing virtue is one way to grow in faith and love.
- Remind the children that it is sometimes hard to make good choices. Share that this is why we need strength from God, or virtue, to help us. Tell them that they can always ask God to give them more virtues and more strength.
- Explain to the children that even though they try, it's not always easy to remember to make good choices all the time.
- Reassure the children that they are not alone in trying to make good choices. Explain that Jesus will always help them. Include the following points:
 - Jesus wants to help us make good choices and live out the virtues. That is because he loves us so much.
 - He helps us by being with us when we receive the Eucharist. Every time we go to Holy Communion, Jesus comes to us in a very special way to help us grow and love the people around us.
 - When we go to Mass and receive Holy Communion, Jesus lives in our hearts and helps us to grow strong in our faith and love for God.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What are virtues? (*everyday good habits*)
 - Are we alone in making good choices? (*No. Jesus helps us.*)
 - How does receiving Holy Communion make us closer to Jesus? (*Through Holy Communion, Jesus lives in our heart and helps us to grow strong in our faith and love for God.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution at right:*
- 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 Alphonsus Liguori, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Alphonsus, pray for us," during the next week.

I	V	I	R	T	U	E	S	G	B
C	H	S	H	B	F	L	O	V	E
T	A	A	O	D	R	A	X	S	C
H	F	G	N	T	I	U	H	Y	X
E	X	G	E	N	E	R	O	U	S
L	O	F	S	M	N	N	E	M	X
P	U	M	T	O	D	H	C	X	N
I	P	O	Y	F	L	B	A	P	K
N	Z	C	A	T	Y	Z	R	T	N
G	J	K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S



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 Wants You to Know Him and Love Him," page 9
- "Jesus Became Human to Make Us More Like God," page 14
- "Living in Christ," page 39

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 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 lives in our hearts through the Eucharist.
 - We are strengthened and grow in Christ's love by receiving the Eucharist.
 - One way we grow in faith and love is through practicing virtue.
- Invite the children to locate the image of the children on page 1 of the activity booklet. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.



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 each child to say and complete this phrase: "Dear Jesus, help me be [name a virtue]."
- Once each child has had a turn, conclude by saying a short prayer of thanks to Jesus for helping us to grow in faith and love. Then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a picture book about kindness
- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

A Kind Story (15 minutes)

- Read a picture book about a virtue such as kindness. Some suggestions are: *Mrs. Katz and Tush*, by Patricia Polacco (Random House); *The Christmas Trolls*, by Jan Brett (Penguin Group); *Be Kind*, by Pat Zietlow Miller (Macmillan).
- Read the story to the group, and invite the children to share their ideas about what the message of the story might be.
- Distribute blank paper and drawing materials, and ask the children to draw their favorite scene from the book. If time allows, encourage the children to share their picture with the group, explaining why they chose that particular scene.

Materials Needed

- a board or poster to write on
- paper cut into strips for making paper chains (seven strips for each child)
- staples or glue sticks

A Chain of Goodness (15 minutes)

- Remind the children that whenever they act with virtue, they are helping those around them in some way.
- Ask the group to suggest good or kind actions that they might be able to do. Write their ideas on the board.
- Distribute seven strips of paper to each child (one for each day of the week). Instruct the children to choose seven different actions from the list on the board or add some of their own ideas. These should all be actions that they will do in the next week. Explain that they should write one action on each paper strip and connect the strips into a paper chain.
- Explain that each child should tear off one paper strip a day for the next week and do the action written on that strip.

Materials Needed

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

Pass It On! (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "Life Vest Inside—Kindness Boomerang—'One Day'" (YouTube, 5:45).
- Discuss some of the actions in the video with the children. Ask them how the actions of the people in the video affected those around them.
- While you talk to the group, set up several dominoes in a row so that they are close enough that when you tap the first one, all will fall.
- Explain to the children that just as sin can affect the people around us, good deeds can do the same, which they saw in the video. Tap the first domino and watch as they all fall.
- Invite the children to each name a good or virtuous action they have done for someone in the last week. As they name their good action, have each child carefully place a domino in a row. Once all the dominoes are set up, invite the children to watch as they see how far their good deeds have gone in the past week. Then tap the dominoes so that they fall.
- Ask the children to think of who they can make happy with their good actions (virtues) during the next week. Encourage them to remember that when they make a choice to be kind, helpful, honest, and so on, they are affecting the people around them in a good way and are growing strong in faith and love.

Chapter

14

We Share Love with Our Community




 Chapter
14

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

1 Samuel 3:8–10

Lesson Goals

- to state that the Eucharist brings us together as a community of faith
- to identify that members of the community help us grow in faith and hear God's voice
- to state that we must help all members of our community, especially the youngest and the oldest

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

Catechism References

791, 1396, 1407

Key Word

Israelites

Music Suggestions

- "Help One Another," by Children's Music Series (LifeWay Worship)
- "Serve One Another in Love," by Great Grape (Sparrow Records)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 14 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- blank paper
- markers or crayons
- several plastic cups
- several extra sheets of paper
- a board or poster to write on
- a blindfold
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Have you ever had the experience of feeling you were called to something, but it took the wisdom or perspective of another person to help you see it more clearly? In the Scripture passage for today's lesson, that is exactly what happens. Eli helps Samuel recognize that God is calling him and encourages Samuel to respond to God by showing his openness and attentiveness.

Our faith is not meant to be lived in a vacuum. We are fortunate to be part of a community of faith that is there to support and encourage us as we discern God's voice in our lives. And we, in return, offer our support and encouragement to our brothers and sisters who are walking in faith.

As you approach this chapter, recognize your important role in helping the children to be open and to listen for the voice of God in their lives. And as you continue to discern God's call in your own life, recall that you have a community of faith to support you too.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Tell the children that you are going to play a quick game. Explain that when you call their names, they should stand up and then quickly sit down. Go through the children's names, one by one and in random order.
- Explain to the children that this was an example of them being called. Invite them to share different ways that someone might call them, such as someone calling by phone, a parent or adult calling them to come in from play, or a teacher calling them to listen or answer a question.
- Share that in today's reading they will read about a young boy who was also called, but he was called by God!



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find 1 Samuel 3:1–10 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 371). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 372. 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 372–373. Invite them to share what they notice.
- Tell the children that this passage is in the Old Testament part of the Bible, which means it is a story that was written before Jesus' time.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - When the Lord called Samuel, who did he think was calling him? (*Eli*)
 - What did Eli tell Samuel to do? (*Go back to bed, and if he heard the call again, answer, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."*)
 - What happened when the Lord called Samuel again? (*Samuel answered, "Speak, your servant is listening."*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answer: SPEAK LORD YOUR SERVANT IS LISTENING*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 373, 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:
 - Call attention to the word **Israelites** in the text. These were the first followers of God.
 - God called Samuel when he was a boy. Samuel did not know it was the Lord, but Eli helped Samuel understand that it was God who was calling him.
 - God continued to call Samuel until Samuel answered him.
 - God also speaks to us through the Bible and the people who help us.
- Ask the children how God calls to them. Reread the last sentence in the Understand It! with them for the answer.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 373, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the blank paper and the drawing materials, and instruct the children to follow the directions in the Live It!
- Encourage them to take their poster home and hang it in their room.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 373.
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story in their own words. *(Image 1 shows Samuel waking Eli. Image 2 shows Samuel sleeping. Image 3 shows Samuel responding to God.)*
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

A Trust Walk

- Prepare the room by clearing a space so that children can move from one side of the room to the other without desks or tables being in the way. In the clear path, randomly place some paper or plastic cups to create obstacles.
- Invite the children to form groups of three or four and to move, as a group, to one side of the room.
- Explain that one person in each group will be blindfolded and that it is up to the rest of the group to get that person safely to the other side of the room. Tell them that they have to guide the blindfolded member so that she or he doesn't touch any of the cups or papers along the path.

- Tell the children that they cannot direct the blindfolded group member by touch. They must direct and encourage that person only through their words.
- Distribute the blindfold to the first group and invite them to begin. As soon as they have finished, invite the second team to go. Continue until all groups have had a chance. If there is space and you have extra blindfolds, you could have several groups go at the same time.

Process the Activity

- Invite the children to share how they felt about the game.
- Point out that this was a game of listening and how we are supported and encouraged by other people along a path.
- Make the connection that we are supported in faith by others, much like Eli supported Samuel in listening to God's call. Remind the children that we have a whole community that helps us to grow in faith.

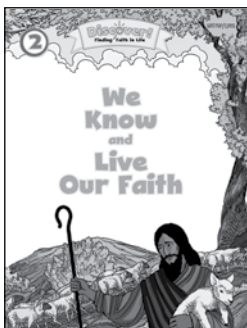
Additional Activity Options

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

- Explain to the children that when we talk about hearing God's voice or God's call, it is not the same as hearing the voice or call from our parents. Tell the children that to hear God's voice means that we have a deep feeling about what God wants us to do.
- Tell the group that like Samuel, we can say to God in our prayer, "Speak, Lord, I'm listening." Tell them that listening means we take time for prayer and learning about God, and we try to understand what we feel deeply in our hearts. Explain that we are called to listen and to try to understand what God wants us to do. Recall that God speaks to us in many ways, including through the world he made, through the Bible, through parents, and through our faith community.
- Remind the children that in the story Samuel needed someone to help him know God's voice. Explain that we have many people who help us to know God's voice in our life. Ask the children if they know who some of these people are (*teachers, parents, grandparents, godparents, priests, members of the church*).
- Point out the fact that in the Scripture story, Eli was older and Samuel was younger. Explain that adults and older people can especially help us to hear God's voice. Tell the group that we, in return, can make sure that we are caring for the oldest and youngest members of our community.

- Recall that the Eucharist brings us together and strengthens us as a faith community. Tell the group that members of that faith community help us to grow in faith and to hear God’s voice.
- Tell the children that being part of a community means that we all do our part to help one another be the best we can. Explain that sometimes we are the ones receiving help, and sometimes we are the ones offering help. Point out that being part of a community means that we do our part no matter what our age.
- Talk to the children about some ways they can be of service to their faith community and their local or neighborhood community. Solicit some ideas from volunteers and write them on the board.
- Identify some community events, such as walks, fundraisers, and so on, that people can take part in to show that they are active and caring members of the community.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What does it mean to hear God’s voice? *(We try to understand what God wants us to do.)*
 - Who can help us to know God and hear his voice? *(our Pope and bishop, parents, grandparents, teachers, priests and deacons, parish community)*
 - What does it mean to be part of a community? *(We all do our part to help each other the best we can. Sometimes we are the one receiving help, and sometimes we are the one offering help.)*
- 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 Saints Joachim and Ann, and encourage the children to say, “Saints Joachim and Ann, 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 Common Good,” page 44

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 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 Eucharist brings us together as a community of faith.
 - Members of the community help us grow in faith and hear God's voice.
 - We must help all members of our community, especially the youngest and the oldest.
- Invite the children to locate the image of Samuel on page 372 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.



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 name someone who is in need of prayer.
- Once every child has had a turn, close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a thank-you card

A Special Visitor (15 minutes)

- Invite a senior member of your parish to visit your class. Ask the visitor to share stories about his or her early faith formation: First Reconciliation, First Communion, and so on.
- Ask your visitor to talk about answering God’s call throughout life and how he or she has tried to be of service to others.
- Encourage the visitor to share any wisdom with the children in how to be the best they can be, how to grow in faith, and how to know what God is calling them to be or do.
- Invite the children to ask questions.
- Have a thank-you card available that the children can sign to give to the visitor in gratitude for his or her sharing.

Materials Needed

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

People Helping Others (15 minutes)

- Remind the children that we are part of a faith community, and we must do our part to be active and caring members of this community.
- Brainstorm with the children different ways they can be helpful members of the community by helping others. Write some of these suggestions on the board.
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials, and invite the children to draw a picture of themselves helping someone else out in some way. Have them include a caption with their picture.
- Encourage the children to share their pictures with the class. Remind the children that there are many ways in which we can help other people in our community.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- a board or poster to write on
- materials to make greeting cards

We Care for the Older Members of Our Community (15 minutes)

- Remind the children that in the Scripture reading from the Book of Samuel, Eli, who was older than Samuel, was the one who helped him hear the Lord’s call. Ask how older people have helped them to know something important. Encourage sharing.
- Watch the video “Hugs Never Age—a moving and beautiful story about when children interact with the elderly” (YouTube, 1:47).
- Distribute the art supplies, and invite the children to be helpful by making greeting cards for people in the local nursing home. Brainstorm with the children a message they might want to write in the card. Write this on the board.
- After class, deliver the cards or mail them to a local nursing home.

Chapter

15

We Pray the Lord's Prayer




**Chapter
15**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 6:9–13

Lesson Goals

- to review the meaning of prayer as talking and listening to God
- to state that Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer to his followers
- to explain the basic meaning of each part of the Lord's Prayer

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

2759–2865

Key Words

will, Evil One

Music Suggestions

- "Our Father," by Jack Miffleton (OCP)
- "The Lord's Prayer (Song Only)," by Cat.Chat: The Catholic Audio Show for Kids (Cat.Chat Productions)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 15 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a short list of lines from songs or poems the children will know by heart
- two sets of papers with words from the Lord's Prayer
- two boxes to hold Lord's Prayer papers
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional

activities you choose

Background Reflection

We, as followers of Christ, are gifted with the perfect way to pray: the Lord's Prayer. Saint Thomas Aquinas considered it the most perfect of all prayers, and Saint Augustine wrote that you can find nothing in any other prayer that is not already found in the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is an integral part of every prayer celebration, from the Mass to saying our daily prayers with our families. It is part of the celebration of the sacraments, and it is one of the first prayers we learn as children. It is the thread that ties together most of the spiritual experiences we have as Catholics. It is also the prayer that we share with our brothers and sisters in Christ in other faith communities.

So slow down. Say the Lord's Prayer with the idea of perfection in mind, letting your soul expand and God's grace fill you. And impart to the children in your care the significance and meaning of this beautiful and perfect gift of our faith.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Prepare in advance a short list of songs or sayings the children will know by heart. These might be words to popular songs, commercial jingles, poems, nursery rhymes, or something like the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Explain to the class that you are going to play a little game. Tell them that you will say the first line of something and they are to complete it.
- Say something simple, such as "The itsy, bitsy spider." Choose a child or the whole group to respond ("went up the water spout").
- Repeat the activity several times with different first lines from songs or sayings the children will know by heart.
- Try the activity again using the Sign of the Cross, "In the name of the Father," and invite volunteers to respond. ("and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.")
- Conclude the activity by starting, "Our Father." See if the children can say the next part of the prayer ("who art in Heaven"). Assure them that it is okay if they don't yet know this prayer.
- Tell the children that this is a prayer called the Our Father. Explain that in today's reading from the Bible, they will learn more about this prayer and what it means to us.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 6:5–13 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1459). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1460. 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 1460–1461 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them.
- Ask the children if they've heard or said this prayer before, and invite them to share where they have might have encountered it. Encourage the children to recall that we say this prayer at Mass.
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: Father, name, kingdom, will, food, wrongs, forgive, Evil*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1461, 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 Lord's Prayer is a special prayer because Jesus taught it.
 - We call God "Father" just as Jesus did, because God made us and loves us.
 - We ask God for what we need and promise to forgive others.
 - We say the Lord's Prayer every time we go to Mass.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1461, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to pray the Lord's Prayer together. Explain that the words are slightly different from the Scripture passage, but assure them that it is the same prayer.
- Invite any children who know the prayer to say it from memory. Affirm all efforts.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1461.
- Invite several volunteers to share what they see in each box, describing how it might relate to the Scripture passage. (*Image 1 shows someone praying the Our Father. Image 2 shows the part of the prayer "on earth as it is in heaven." Image 3 shows the part of the prayer that asks God to give us the food we need. Image 4 shows someone forgiving another.*)
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

The Our Father Race

- Prepare in advance several pieces of paper each with a phrase from the Our Father. For example, the first piece of paper might say, "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name"; the next piece of paper might say, "thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," and so on.
- Divide the phrases in a way that matches the children's familiarity with this prayer. If they are more familiar, you can divide the prayer over more pieces of paper. If they are less familiar, use longer phrases on each piece of paper.
- Create two sets of these papers.
- Read through one set of the papers with the children. Then place each set of papers in its own box on one side of the room and mix the papers up so that the prayer is no longer in order in either box. Have a copy of *The Catholic Children's Bible* near the box, opened to pages 1460 and 1461.
- Arrange the children into two teams, and explain to them that each team will line up on the opposite side of the room as the boxes. Tell them that when you say "go," the first two players in each line will walk down to the box together and find the first part of the prayer, using the Bible for help if they need it.
- Tell them that when they find what they think is the correct part of the prayer, they should remove it from the box and hand it to you. Explain that you will check the paper. Note that if you say "correct", they should go back to the end of their group's line and the next two players can go and find the next part. Place their pieces of paper near their boxes so the next players can see the last part of the prayer that was found.
- Continue the relay until one team has completed the prayer successfully.

Process the Activity

- Congratulate both teams for working together. Pull the papers of the winning team and hold them up to the group, piece by piece, encouraging the children to read the prayer out loud together.
- Explain that this is a wonderful prayer that Jesus taught us and that we can learn it and then pray it at any time.

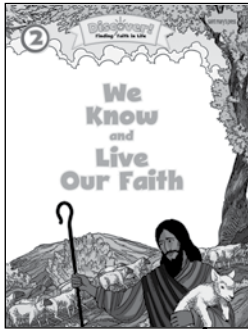
Additional Activity Options

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 168 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Ask the children what they think prayer is. Invite them to share their responses, and affirm correct answers. Emphasize that when we pray it is like having a conversation with a friend or parent. Explain that we must both talk and listen to have a good conversation. Affirm that when we pray, we do the same thing: talk and listen to God.
- Jesus taught his followers how to pray using the prayer that we call the Our Father. Tell the children that this prayer has a second name. They will also hear it called the Lord's Prayer, because it is from Jesus himself. Point out that when we pray the Lord's Prayer, we are saying the words of Jesus.
- Remind the children that we pray the Lord's Prayer every time we go to Mass. Explain that this prayer can be prayed at any time.
- Reread the Understand It! to the children so they can get a basic understanding of what is being prayed for in the Our Father. Then continue with some specific additional points about each part of the prayer:
 - **Our Father:** God is Father to everyone; through Baptism, we are God's children.
 - **Who art in Heaven:** Heaven is our home; we will be with God in Heaven.
 - **Hallowed by thy name:** God's name is holy; we treat God and everything that comes from God as holy.
 - **thy Kingdom come:** Jesus taught us about the Kingdom of God; God's Kingdom is love and justice, mercy and forgiveness.
 - **thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven:** Jesus showed us how to live in the way God wants us to live; we ask God to help us live the way he wants.
 - **Give us this day our daily bread:** God is good, and he gives us what we need; this also reminds us of the bread that becomes Jesus that we receive in the Eucharist.
 - **and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us:** We know we are sinners and we ask God to forgive us; we must also forgive other people.
 - **and lead us not into temptation:** We ask God to keep us from being tempted to sin; we ask God to help us know the difference between right and wrong.
 - **but deliver us from evil:** We ask God to keep us away from all that is evil; we ask God to keep us close to goodness.

- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What do we do in prayer? (*We talk and listen to God.*)
 - When do we pray the Lord's Prayer? (*at Mass and other times—accept reasonable responses.*)
 - Why is the Lord's Prayer important? (*Jesus taught us the Lord's Prayer.*)
 - What is one phrase in the Lord's Prayer and what does it mean? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of their activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: top row—4, 1; bottom row—3, 2*
- 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 Matthew the Evangelist, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Matthew, 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:

- "Does God Hear Our Prayer?" page 47
- "We Pray in Church," page 48
- "We Pray the Our Father in Church," page 48

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 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:
 - Prayer is talking and listening to God.
 - Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer to his followers.
 - Each part of the Lord's Prayer has a special meaning.
- Invite the children to locate the image of the girl praying in the first Tell It! box on page 1461 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.

**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 stand to say the Lord's Prayer together. Encourage them to look on page 1461 if they do not yet have this prayer memorized.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a piece of poster board
- markers
- a pair of scissors

It's a Puzzle (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to help you write the Lord's Prayer on a poster board. Each child can use a different colored marker and write one phrase of the prayer randomly on the poster board.
- Cut the poster board into puzzle pieces. There should be two or more pieces for each child.
- Scramble the pieces, and invite the children to assemble the puzzle together. Scramble the puzzle a second time and see how quickly the group can put it together. Make it a race, challenging the group each time to get faster and faster. Continue as time allows.
- End by singing the Lord's Prayer using one of the songs referenced in this lesson or another that the children might be more familiar with.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- a device to make a video

Sign the Lord's Prayer (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "Learn how to sign 'The Lord's Prayer'" (YouTube, 3:16).
- Encourage the children to watch closely and to try to learn the signs that are being shown in the video.
- Watch the video several times for practice and then see how much of it the group remembers by heart.
- Make a video of your class signing the Lord's Prayer.
- Return to this video in coming weeks to keep practicing this prayer. It can be a helpful way for children to remember the words as well as the signs. As the children improve, have your group teach the signs to another nearby group of children.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank paper

Five-Finger Prayer (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "FIVE FINGER PRAYER | Teach Kids to Pray" (YouTube, 2:08).
- Distribute the blank paper to the children and instruct them to trace their right hand. Encourage the children to help each other with the tracing.
- Direct the children to write their own five-finger prayer.
- You might want to use a version of a five-finger prayer for the closing prayer instead of the one suggested at the end of this lesson.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Unit 4

We Follow Jesus

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Jesus Died and Rose for Us 170

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Chapter

16

Jesus Died and Rose for Us




**Chapter
16**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Mark 16:1–6

Lesson Goals

- to state that Jesus died and rose for us
- to recall that we each have a personal relationship with Jesus
- to identify that Jesus is with us in good times and bad

Catechism Pillar

Believe

Catechism References

638–658

Key Words

anoint, tomb, alarmed, Resurrection, Alleluia

Music Suggestions

- “Alleluia,” by LifeWay Praise Kids (LifeWay Worship Music Group)
- “He is Risen (Luke 24:5b-6a),” by GroupMusic (Group Publishing)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 16 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- blank paper
- markers or crayons
- several pairs of scissors
- eight or more plastic eggs
- small treats for the children (optional)
- individual letters on small slips of paper, spelling *ALLELUIA*
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Imagine the moment when the women discovered that Jesus was no longer dead. This is the moment that changed the whole world and gave all people a new understanding of God’s promise of eternal life. No longer was death something to fear, but a passage to living forever in the shining glory of God’s great love.

This is the single moment in all of history that has given meaning to our lives as Christians. We follow Jesus’ teachings because in this moment it was revealed to the women, and to us, that he is the real deal. Jesus went through agony because of his great love for humanity so that he could fulfill this promise of eternal life. Because of this, every person is able to reap the benefits of his sacrifice.

We are truly and totally blessed by the Resurrection, our lives are changed, and we know the promise of eternal life is real. What an incredible cause for celebration and joy!



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children if they have ever lost something that was important to them.
- Invite them to share what it felt like to lose this object. Ask them if they were upset, scared, sad, worried, etc.
- Have them reveal if they found what they had lost and, if so, what that was like. Ask them how this feeling was different from when they thought they had lost the object.
- Explain to the children that the Bible passage for today's lesson is about friends of Jesus who had lost their best friend. Jesus had died, and his friends were sad, lonely, and scared. Tell the children that the story doesn't end here, however. Explain to them that something amazing happened.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Mark 16:1–8 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1566). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1568. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on page 1566.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1568–1569 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why did the holy women go to the tomb? (*to anoint Jesus' body*)
 - What did they find when they got to the tomb? (*the stone had already been rolled back; a young man, sitting at the right*)
 - Why were the women alarmed? (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
 - What did the young man tell the women? (*That Jesus was not in the tomb because he had been raised.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. anoint, 2. Alarmed, 3. tomb, 4. angel, 5. raised*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1569, 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:
 - Three days after Jesus died, three women went to the tomb where he was buried so they could anoint his body.
 - The women discovered that the stone had already been rolled back from the tomb.
 - An angel told the women that Jesus had been raised from the dead.
 - We call the event of Jesus rising from the dead on the third day after he died on the cross the **Resurrection**.
 - Because of Jesus' Resurrection, we know that we will be raised to new life after we die.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1569, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute the blank paper, drawing materials, and scissors, and instruct the class to follow the directions in the Live It! if you have time. Otherwise, encourage the children to complete this activity at home.
- Remind the children to display their egg art at home to remind them that Jesus is risen.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1569.
- Ask several volunteers to retell the story in their own words using the images. (*Image 1 shows the women buying spices. Image 2 shows the women going to the tomb. Image 3 shows the women finding a young man who was not Jesus. Image 4 shows the angel telling the women the Good News.*)
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity****Easter Egg Hunt**

- Prepare in advance materials for an Easter egg hunt. You will need a set of eight plastic eggs with the letters *A L L E L U I A* written on slips of paper, one letter in each egg. (If you choose, you may also include other plastic eggs with small treats for the children.)
- Explain that today they will be trying to discover a special Easter word, just as the women discovered that Jesus was no longer in the tomb. Tell them that they will find the letters to this word in eggs that have been hidden around the room. Give them general directions for where they can and cannot look.

- Explain that if they find an egg with a letter inside, they should bring it up to you, and you will write this letter on the board.
- Once all eight letters have been found, invite the children to look at the letters on the board and see if they can figure out what word they might spell.
- Give some time for the children to make guesses, and then start spelling the word, one letter at a time, until the full word is spelled out.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children to share if they know anything about the meaning of the word **Alleluia**. Explain that it means “Praise the Lord!” and that we say it to celebrate the fact that God is good and that Jesus was raised from the dead.

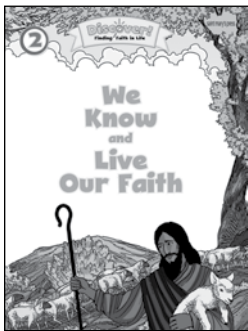
Additional Activity Options

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

- Remind the children that Jesus is God’s Son and that after Jesus died, God raised him up.
- Tell them that Jesus was willing to die and rise for us because we are so important to him.
- Explain that Jesus’ dying and rising gives us great hope. Tell the children that because of Jesus’ death and Resurrection, God will give *us* new life when we die; God will take us to be with him in Heaven where we will live forever if we have followed Jesus in our lives.
- Explain that *Heaven* means “life with God forever,” and that we think of Heaven as a most beautiful place, even though we really do not know what it looks like.
- Tell the group that Jesus promised that he would always be with us. Explain that because of his great love for us, Jesus wants us to know that he is with us always. Point out that when things are going well or even when we are having problems, we can always depend on Jesus being with us. Explain that we each have a personal relationship with Jesus.
- Explain to the children that we die and rise with Jesus in the hard and happy times we experience each day. Note that Jesus’ Resurrection teaches us that no matter how difficult our life may be at times, there is always reason to hope and believe that the situation will change.

- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What does the word *Alleluia* mean? (*Praise the Lord!*)
 - Why does Jesus' dying and rising give us great hope? (*We know that we will be raised to new life after we die; we know that Jesus is with us always.*)
 - How do we experience little deaths and resurrections in our own lives? (*in the hard and happy times of life; accept all reasonable responses*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it.
- 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 of Ávila, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Teresa of Ávila, 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:

- "God the Father Sent His Son to Us," page 12

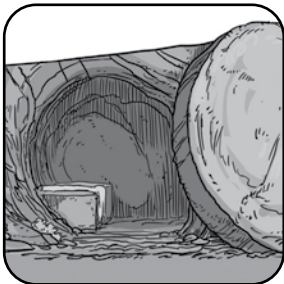
Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



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 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 died and rose for us.
 - We each have a personal relationship with Jesus.
 - Jesus is with us in good times and in bad.
- Invite the children to locate the image of the tomb on page 1568 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.



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.
- Explain to the class that they will respond to each prayer by saying, “Alleluia, praise to God!”
 - God, you have always loved us since the day you created us. (*Alleluia, praise to God!*)
 - Jesus, you loved us enough to suffer and die for us. (*Alleluia, praise to God!*)
 - We thank you, God, for raising Jesus from the dead. (*Alleluia, praise to God!*)
 - Jesus, we know you will always be with us. (*Alleluia, praise to God!*)
 - Alleluia, praise to God! (*Alleluia, praise to God!*)
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- sheets, towels, or other items for costumes

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- yellow paper cut into 3-x-1/2-inch strips, two per child
- green paper cut into 6-x-2-inch strips, two per child
- drinking straws, one for each child
- several pairs of scissors

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

A Resurrection Reenactment (15 minutes)

- Select five children to play the parts of the three women, the spice seller, and the young man at the tomb, and distribute the costume pieces.
- Read or invite a volunteer to read the Scripture story on page 1568, and encourage the children to act out the key parts of the story as it is read.
- Have the reader pause periodically so the children can act and respond.
- Invite another group of children to volunteer and repeat the process.
- Consider repeating for a third time, but this time don't have the story read. Instead challenge the children to create the story with dialogue and the speaking part for the young man. Assure them that they can make up some words for the people even though we don't know what they said.

An Easter Lily (15 minutes)

- Explain to the children that the white lily is thought to be a symbol of the Resurrection of Christ. Add that lilies look like trumpets, which are used to get people's attention before important announcements. Note that in their own way, Easter lilies announce that Jesus has risen from the dead!
- Distribute a piece of blank paper, two yellow paper strips, two green paper strips, and one straw to each child.
- Invite the children to trace one hand, fingers spread, on the blank paper and cut it out.
- Have them make a cone out of the bottom, palm part of the paper. Then, using a pencil or a finger, have them curl each paper finger (flower petal) in the same direction.
- Have them curl the yellow strips back like they did the finger petals. Then have them place the yellow strips inside the flower to look like the inside of the lily.
- Show the children how to cut one end of each green strip to round it out to look like a lily leaf.
- Help the children staple or tape the leaves and hand-lily onto the straw.

Questions for Jesus (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "The Resurrection of Jesus, Mark 16:1-7" (YouTube, 1:06).
- Direct the children to sit quietly and to imagine that they are with Mary Magdalene and her friends the day they go to the tomb. Invite them to explore what they would feel, how they would react, and what questions they would have.
- Then invite the children to imagine that they have come face to face with the Risen Jesus. Have them speak to Jesus and listen quietly while Jesus speaks to them in their heart.
- Remind the children that when they talk or listen to Jesus, they are praying. Invite them to take a few minutes more and have a conversation with Jesus in their heart.
- Direct the children to open their eyes and invite any who wish to share about their conversation to do so.

Chapter

17

We Are Strengthened in Confirmation




**Chapter
17**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Acts 2:1–6

Lesson Goals

- to explain the event of Pentecost as the time when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples
- to recall that the Holy Spirit strengthens us in the Sacrament of Confirmation
- to identify that we are called to be disciples and tell others about Jesus

Catechism Pillar

Celebrate

Catechism References

731–741, 767, 1285–1321, 2623

Key Words

Pentecost, tongues of fire, Holy Spirit, Sacrament of Confirmation

Music Suggestions

- “Holy Spirit Come,” by Michael Mangan (World Library Publications)
- “Send Out Your Spirit,” by Jesse Manibusan (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 17 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- red birthday party decorations
- snack and plates, cups, and napkins
- some simple birthday games
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

In this lesson’s Scripture passage, we find the disciples gathered in prayer after Jesus ascended to Heaven. Jesus had given them the task of telling everyone about him. They probably didn’t know where or how to begin, so they gathered to pray.

The Holy Spirit came to Mary and the disciples and filled them with the strength they needed to go out and preach to the world. And we know they did exactly that. They dedicated the rest of their lives to doing what Jesus called them to do. The courage and strength they needed to fulfill their mission was given to them by the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus promised.

When you are overwhelmed or lack courage to do what is needed, recall the early disciples and know that same Spirit is with you. When you are doing a good thing, the Holy Spirit will lead you and give you what you need to rise to the occasion. Just pray.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to share things people do to become stronger. *(Accept all reasonable responses, including eating well, exercising, etc.)*
- Ask the children to share some of the things people can do to become stronger as followers of Jesus. *(Accept all reasonable responses, including reading Scripture, praying, going to Mass, receiving the Eucharist, etc.)*
- Tell the group that today they will learn about a way that we are strengthened in our faith to follow Jesus and to tell others about God's love.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Acts 2:1–42 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1712–1713 and page 1716). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1714. 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 1714–1715 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What was unusual about the wind on Pentecost? *(It was very strong and filled the house where the disciples were gathered.)*
 - What are tongues of fire? *(flames of fire that spread out and touched each person)*
 - What was unusual about the way the disciples were speaking? *(People who spoke different languages were able to understand them.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. Pentecost, 2. wind, 3. fire, 4. Holy Spirit, 5. languages*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1715, 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 told his followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. Mary and the disciples had gathered together and were praying.
 - The Holy Spirit gave the disciples the courage they needed to go out and tell other people about Jesus.
 - The Holy Spirit comes to each person when he or she are baptized.
 - The word *Pentecost* means “fifty.” We celebrate Pentecost Sunday fifty days after Easter Sunday.
- Remind the children that the Holy Spirit is God—the third Person of the Holy Trinity. Ask the children to make the Sign of the Cross with you to recall the names of the three Persons in the Trinity.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1715, or have a volunteer read it.
- Explain to the children that this prayer was written by Saint Augustine, who loved and knew about Jesus. (Remind the children that they learned about Saint Augustine in chapter 10.) Today his words help us call on the Holy Spirit to help us grow closer to God. Read the prayer together.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1715.
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story using the images in the boxes. (*Image 1 shows Jesus’ followers praying together. Image 2 shows the noise that sounded like a strong wind. Image 3 shows tongues of fire over each of the disciples.*)
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

A Birthday Party

- Prepare to have a small birthday celebration, and include the color red as part of the decorations or supplies (paper plates, cups, balloons, etc.). Provide some kind of snack for the children, checking any allergies among the children first.
- Tell the children that we are going to have a birthday party, but you are not going to tell them yet whose birthday we are celebrating. While celebrating this birthday party with snacks and some games, ask the children to share why birthdays are important. Invite them to also share how they like to celebrate their own birthday.

Process the Activity

- Explain to the children that sometimes Pentecost is called “the birthday of the Church.” Tell them that this is because when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, they were given the courage to begin to teach many other people about the Good News of Jesus. Point out that the Holy Spirit helped the disciples spread the Good News, and the Church began to grow from that moment on.
- Explain that you used red for the birthday party because red is the color used to mark Pentecost Sunday. Tell them that the priest wears red vestments at Mass on Pentecost.
- Share with the children the date for Pentecost Sunday this year.
- Tell them that even though today is not Pentecost Sunday, it was fun to celebrate the birthday of the Church with them. Invite them to sing “Happy Birthday” to the Church.

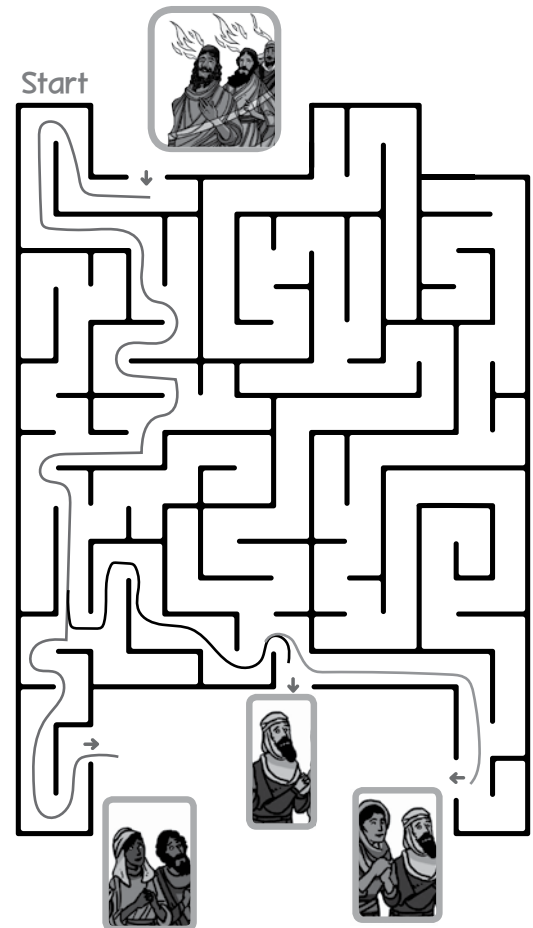
Additional Activity Options

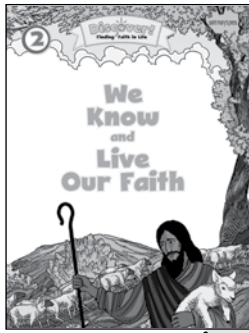
If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 185 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that when they were baptized, the Holy Spirit blessed them in a special way.
- Tell them that in the **Sacrament of Confirmation**, the Holy Spirit strengthens us as followers of Jesus. Explain that the gift of the Holy Spirit that we received in Baptism is deepened and strengthened in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

- Share that the Holy Spirit strengthens us in Confirmation in the same way the disciples were strengthened on Pentecost.
- Compare the gifts we receive in Confirmation to the wind. Explain that we cannot see the wind, but we can see what it does, such as moving grass, clouds, etc. Share that in the same way, we see the gifts of the Holy Spirit in actions, such as being more kind and helpful to others, being able to love God even more, etc.
- Explain to the children that because the Holy Spirit makes us stronger in our faith, we are called to be disciples and tell others about Jesus. Tell them that we are called to share God's love with others.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is the Sacrament of Confirmation? *(The Sacrament of Confirmation is the sacrament by which the Holy Spirit strengthens us as follows of Jesus.)*
 - How do we see the gifts we receive from the Holy Spirit in Confirmation? *(We see these gifts through actions.)*
 - What does the Holy Spirit strengthen us to do? *(The Holy Spirit strengthens us to be disciples and tell others about Jesus; we are called to share God's love with others.)*
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution at right:*
- 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 Arnold Janssen, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Arnold Janssen, 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:

- “We Belong to the Church” + activity, pages 18–19
- “Confirmation,” page 28

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 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:
 - Pentecost is the time when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples.
 - The Holy Spirit strengthens us in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - We are called to be disciples and tell others about Jesus.
- Remind the children that fire and flames are symbols of the Holy Spirit. Encourage them to find an image of fire on their folders. This can be found in two places.



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.
- Say the phrases of the Prayer of the Holy Spirit. Ask the children to repeat after you:
 - Come, Holy Spirit, / fill the hearts of your faithful.
 - And kindle in them / the fire of your love.
 - Send forth your spirit / and they shall be created.
 - And you will renew / the face of the earth.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a sample basket of fruit
- construction paper in several colors
- markers or crayons
- several pairs of scissors
- several bottles of glue

Fruits of the Holy Spirit (15 minutes)

- Explain to the class that we cannot see the Holy Spirit, but we can see the effects of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Tell them that the effects of the Holy Spirit working in our lives are called the *fruits of the Holy Spirit*.
- Tell them that the fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Write these words on the board.
- Distribute the construction paper, markers or crayons, scissors, and glue to the children.
- Show the children how to draw and cut out a large basket shape using construction paper. Then invite them to draw different types of fruits, cut them out, and label each piece of fruit with the name of one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- Have them glue the basket and fruits onto a large background paper so that it looks like a basket of fruit. Across the top of the finished project, instruct them to write “The Fruits of the Holy Spirit.”

Materials Needed

- red construction paper
- glue or tape
- crepe paper streamers of various colors
- precut 3-foot lengths of string, one for each child
- a hole punch

A Holy Spirit Wind Sock (15 minutes)

- Explain to the class that a symbol for the Holy Spirit is wind. Point out that we cannot see the wind, but we can see the results of the wind blowing, such as leaves moving on a tree, clouds moving across the sky, a door closing from the wind, paper blowing across the yard, a kite flying, and so on.
- Tell the children that this is also true for the Holy Spirit. Explain that we cannot see the Holy Spirit, but we can see the results of the Holy Spirit working in our lives and the lives of others through actions.
- Distribute the art supplies, and show the children how to make a Holy Spirit wind sock, using the following steps:
 - Roll a piece of red construction paper in a cylinder shape and tape it together.
 - Tape or glue crepe paper streamers to the bottom of the cylinder.
 - Attach a string to the top of the cylinder by punching two holes and tying one end of the string to each hole.
- Take the wind sock outside, if weather conditions are favorable, and watch it blow in the wind. Tell the children that this wind sock can remind them of the Holy Spirit’s presence in their life.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank index cards, one for each child

Asking the Holy Spirit for Help (15 minutes)

- Watch the video “The Holy Spirit Comes (Day of Pentecost)” (YouTube, 2:58).
- Ask the children to share how the Holy Spirit helped the disciples in the video.
- Remind the children that just as the Holy Spirit helped the disciples, we can also ask for help from the Holy Spirit.
- Distribute blank index cards to the children and invite them to write a letter to the Holy Spirit, asking for the help they need with something in their lives.
- If time allows, invite volunteers to share their letters with the class.

Chapter
18

We Are Disciples




**Chapter
18**

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 28:16–20

Lesson Goals

- to identify the work that the early disciples did
- to state that we bring others to Jesus by learning about him, talking about him, and living the way he taught
- to explain that Jesus promised to be with us and help us live as his disciples

Catechism Pillar

Live

Catechism References

849–856, 905, 2044–2046, 2471–2472

Key Words

disciple, doubted, authority

Music Suggestions

- “Go Make a Difference,” by Steve Angrisano (OCP)
- “Go (Matthew 28:19),” by Seeds Family Worship (Seeds Family Worship)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 18 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- sheets of stationery or blank index cards, one for each child
- a list of actions the children might do as listed in the core activity
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

In today’s Gospel reading from Saint Matthew, Jesus tells his followers to go out and make disciples of all peoples. We share in this mission and are called to spread the Good News to everyone we meet through our loving words and actions.

As parents and educators, we know that words without supporting actions often fall on deaf ears. We witness that, frequently, the best way to spread a message is to model it. A key part of making disciples of others is about showing them how happy we are that Jesus is part of our lives and treating everyone according to the message of the Gospel.

What is it that you do to preach the Gospel at all times? No matter what you choose to do, it’s important that each one of us does something. By preaching the Gospel through our words and actions in our own little corner of the world, the Gospel can continue to spread “to all peoples everywhere” (Matthew 28:19).

**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 all the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children if they have any heroes, role models, or other people whom they admire and want to be like.
- Encourage sharing while prompting them to think of parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, and others they know personally.
- Ask the children to explain why they would like to have the qualities of the people they named.
- Make a list on the board of the qualities the children would like to have, as modeled by those they know.
- Explain to the class that in the Scripture passage they are about to read, Jesus gives a special job to his disciples, which includes us. Tell them that this special job involves being a role model for other people, which is something we can do too.

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

- Invite the children to find Matthew 28:1–20 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (pages 1519 and 1522). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1520. 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 1520–1521 and describe what they see.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who did Jesus want the disciples to go to? (*all peoples, everywhere*)
 - Why did Jesus want the disciples to go to all peoples? (*to make them disciples of Jesus*)
 - What did Jesus want his followers to teach all peoples? (*to obey everything that Jesus commanded*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. disciples; 2. heaven, earth; 3. peoples; 4. Father, Son, Holy Spirit; 5. always*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1521, 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 work of Jesus' disciples long ago helps us know Jesus today.
 - Jesus wanted his disciples to help other people become his new disciples.
 - We are followers of Jesus, and he wants us to do the same thing. He wants us to teach others about him.
 - Jesus promised to be with us always to help us live as his disciples and lead others to him.
- Ask the children how they can teach others about Jesus and help them become Jesus' new disciples. (*by talking about Jesus and living the way he taught*)

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1521, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to share about someone who taught them about Jesus. Invite them to give examples.
- Distribute writing materials and invite the children to follow the directions in Live It! by writing a thank-you note to someone who taught them about Jesus.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1521.
- Invite several volunteers to retell the story in their own words. (*Image 1 shows the disciples going up the hill. Image 2 shows Jesus talking to his disciples. Image 3 shows Jesus telling his disciples what to do next. Image 4 shows Jesus promising to be with his disciples always.*)
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Stand Up for Jesus

- Explain to the children that we say we “stand up” for something when we believe in it strongly and are proud of what we believe. Tell them that the disciples stood up for Jesus with their words and actions, and this is how they were able to spread Jesus’ message and make new disciples.
- Tell the children that they are going to participate in an activity where they will practice standing up for Jesus. Explain that you will name a list of actions. Tell them that if the action is something that a disciple of Jesus would do, they should stand up. State that if the action you name is not something that a disciple of Jesus would do, the children should sit down.
- Practice one time by saying, “Pray,” at which the children should stand up. Then name something that is opposite, such as “Never say a prayer,” at which the children should sit down.
- Continue with the game using various actions. Some suggested actions are: read the Bible, help someone, bother other children on the playground, speak kind words, go to Mass, ignore someone, pick up something a friend dropped, not listen to your parent or teacher, donate clothes to a shelter, talk back, skip Mass, etc.
- Start the game slowly by adding space between the actions. As the children respond, start to name the actions in more rapid succession.

Process the Activity

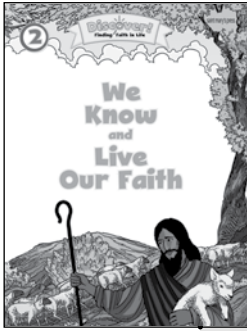
- Ask the children to share if they noticed a pattern to the actions they stood for. Ask if they noticed a pattern to the actions they sat down for.
- Remind the children that Jesus wants us to always stand up for him by learning and telling others about him and by living the way he taught.

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 193 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Help the children understand that the early disciples traveled to other lands teaching about Jesus, created communities of faith all over the world, wrote the Gospels and letters we find in the Bible today, and put up with difficult times and challenges—all in the name of teaching others about Jesus.
- Explain to the group that when someone is a disciple of Jesus, that means he or she speaks and acts as Jesus did. Tell them that by speaking kindly, helping others, and acting in a helpful way, we are doing what Jesus told the first disciples to do.
- Tell the group that when Jesus told his disciples to tell all peoples about him, he was also talking to us today. Jesus wants us to pass on the message of his love to the people we meet.
- Help them understand that as disciples ourselves, we also need to continue to learn about Jesus. Explain that the more we know about him, the more we understand his message of loving others and the more we can teach others.
- Remind the children that even though this seems like a big task for us, Jesus promised to be with us always. Assure the group that we are not alone; Jesus will help us to share his message. Recall that although Jesus is not physically with us, he is with us through the Holy Spirit and in the Eucharist.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What are some things you can do as a disciple of Jesus? *(Accept reasonable responses.)*
 - Why is it important to continue learning about Jesus? *(This helps us understand better his message of loving others; it will help us teach others about Jesus.)*
 - How is Jesus with us today as we continue to spread his message to others? *(Jesus is present to us through the Holy Spirit and in the Eucharist.)*
- 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 Father James Walsh, Father Thomas Price, and Mother Mary Joseph Rogers, and encourage the children to say, “Founders of Maryknoll, 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:

- “We Belong to the Church” (paragraph 1), page 18

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 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 early disciples did many things to spread the message of Jesus.
 - We bring others to Jesus by learning about him, talking about him, and living the way he taught.
 - Jesus promised to be with us and help us live as his disciples.
- Remind the children to deliver or mail the letter they wrote in Live It!
- Invite the children to locate the image of Jesus on the left side of page 1520 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.

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.
- Together with the children, sing a song of discipleship, such as one of the music suggestions for this lesson or another appropriate song.
- Conclude by blessing the children, asking God to lead them to show their goodness and love to the people they meet during the week.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.



Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- markers or crayons

Pass It On! (15 minutes)

- Explain that in the Scripture reading from Matthew, Jesus told his disciples that they were to pass on the Good News about him to people everywhere.
- Tell the children that they will play a game called Pass It On. Explain that in this game, they can be like the first disciples who went out to tell others how to be followers of Jesus.
- Arrange the children in a circle, and explain that you will whisper a special message to just one child. Then that child will quietly whisper the message to the next child, who will then pass it on to the next child.
- Tell them that when the message gets around the circle to the last child, that person will say the message out loud, and the group will see if it matches what the first child heard. (*The message is: GO TO ALL PEOPLE AND MAKE THEM MY DISCIPLES.*)
- Distribute blank paper and markers or crayons, and instruct the children to make a sign with the quote from the game on it. Have them decorate the sign and plan to display it in their homes where they can see it and be reminded that they also can tell others about Jesus.

Materials Needed

- an image of someone using a megaphone to talk to a crowd
- colored art paper with predrawn megaphone shapes, one for each child
- markers or crayons
- several pairs of scissors

Spread the News (15 minutes)

- Prepare paper megaphone shapes for the children.
- Explain to the children that when we talk to others about Jesus and live the way he taught, we are doing what Jesus asked of us.
- Brainstorm with the group words or phrases that they might use to tell others about Jesus and write these on the board (*e.g., love, forgiveness, helpfulness, prayer, Holy Communion, Son of God*).
- Show the children an image of someone talking into a megaphone. Explain that by using a megaphone, it's possible to be heard by a large group of people.
- Distribute the art paper, markers or crayons, and scissors. Instruct the children to cut out the megaphone shape and write words on their megaphone that they would use to tell others about Jesus.
- Allow the children to share their creations with the class if time permits.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

The Great Commission (15 minutes)

- Show the children the video "Matthew 28: Jesus' Great Commission" (YouTube, 1:46).
- Explain to the children that we have a special name for Jesus' telling the disciples to teach all people about him. Tell them that this is called "The Great Commission" because it was a special task Jesus gave to the disciples.
- Remind the children that today there are many people who continue to do this task: priests, sisters, members of the parish, the Pope, and good people around us who try to show others what Jesus did and why it was important. Remind the children that they too are some of the people who carry on Jesus' message by how they act and what they say.
- Ask the children to quietly think of something that they can do during the next week to help share Jesus' message and be like the disciples.

Chapter
19

**We Love
Those
in Need**




 Chapter
19

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 25:34, 37–40

Lesson Goals

- to indicate that Jesus is a king who identifies with the least important people
- to explain that we should serve those in need as followers of Jesus
- to state that people often have needs that cannot be seen

Catechism Pillar

Live: Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching Focus

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

Catechism References

786, 2447

Key Words

righteous, Works of Mercy

Music Suggestions

- “Love is What We Need,” by Steve Angrisano (Spirit & Song)
- “Open My Eyes,” by Jesse Manibusan (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the chapter 19 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- masking tape
- a trash can
- blank paper
- blindfolds, one for each pair of children
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

If you’ve ever had the opportunity to hear a person describe a service event or a mission trip they have been part of, you probably heard them say that they got so much more out of the experience than they put into it. Oftentimes, serving others is energizing and fulfilling, and these feelings overshadow the time or effort involved. Why might this be? Perhaps it is because when we reach out to people with a kind and generous heart, we reach out to Jesus.

As teachers and catechists, we have the important task of sharing this message with the children in our care. We must think about how we might impress upon them the joy of serving others, and we must consider opportunities of direct service that they can participate in. Then the children might better know the joy that comes from helping others.



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 all the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children if they’ve ever seen an invisible person. The children will probably be confused and explain that if someone is invisible, it’s not possible to see them.
- Explain that sometimes the people around us are like invisible people—we see them, but we don’t really know what they are dealing with in life or that they might be hurt or sad. Tell them that sometimes we look *past* people rather than *at* them. We may even ignore them entirely! Give the example of someone begging for a handout or someone dressed with ragged clothing or someone acting strangely. Explain that in some ways, these are also invisible people.
- Remind the children not to talk to people they do not know unless a parent or guardian is with them. Give them this prayer to pray when they see people in need: “Jesus, take care of that person in need. Send him (or her) help.” Assure the children that loving prayer for others is very powerful, even when we cannot see the results.
- Invite the children to brainstorm other “invisible” people that they might be aware of.
- Tell them that in today’s reading from the Gospel of Matthew, they will read about something Jesus told us about the people who we often treat as if they were invisible.



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 and describe what they see. Ask them to predict who the characters pictured might be and what they are doing.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who are the righteous? (*good people*)
 - What did the righteous people ask the King? (*When did we feed you, give you a drink, welcome you, clothe you, or visit you?*)
 - What did the King answer the people? (*Whenever you did this for one of the least important people, you did it for me.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: feed, drink, welcome, least important, me*

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:
 - When we are kind to people in need, it is like being kind to Jesus.
 - Because Jesus has a special kind of love for those who are poor, we show our love by sharing what we have with those in need.
 - Many people around us have needs. We can visit the elderly, help others in school, be kind to those who are different than we are. When we do this, we reach out to Jesus.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1511, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to share their response to the question, and write a list of their ideas on the board.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1511.
- Invite several volunteers to share what is being shown in each box and how it relates to the Scripture passage. (*Image 1 shows the King telling the people on his right to come to the Kingdom. Image 2 shows a good person giving a drink to someone. Image 3 shows a good person visiting a sick person. Image 4 shows the King telling the people that when they cared for the least important, they cared for him.*)
- Affirm the children for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

A Helping Hand

- Prepare for the activity by placing a trash can on a desk or chair. Then make a line with masking tape on the floor about two or three feet away from the wastebasket.
- Invite the children to form pairs and to stand with their partner.
- Give each pair a piece of blank paper and a cloth or other material to be a blindfold. Have them select who will be the leader and who will be the one blindfolded.
- Invite the pairs to crumple their piece of paper and, on the count of three, to toss it into the air. Then tell the pairs to blindfold the selected partner.
- Explain to them that the goal is for the person who is not blindfolded to help the person who is blindfolded to pick up a piece of paper, to come to the line marked on the floor, and to shoot the piece of paper into the trash can. The “seeing” partner cannot touch the piece of paper.
- Tell them that they can help their partner by leading them by the hand and by talking to them. Explain that the blindfolded partner gets to try to make the basket three times.
- Caution them to steer their partners away from the other pairs so that everyone remains safe. Tell them that they may also need to wait in line until other pairs have finished trying to make the basket.
- Begin the game and cheer on the different pairs on.

Process the Activity

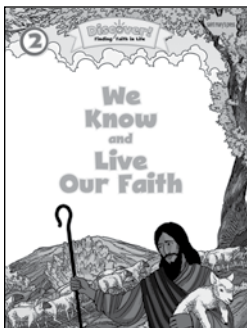
- Invite the children to share their reactions to the activity. Ask them what it was like to depend on others and to help others when they were not able to help themselves.
- Explain that many people who have different kinds of problems who must depend on other people, just like they did in the activity.
- Ask the children what kinds of problems and needs people might have that would put them in a position to need help. Write their thoughts on the board.

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 201 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Remind the children that there was a king in the Scripture passage. Explain that Jesus is the King who tells the people that they are welcome in the Kingdom of his Father, because when they were kind and helpful to others by taking care of their needs, they were caring for Jesus.
- Tell the group that Jesus tells us that whatever we do for the neediest people, we are doing that action for him. Emphasize that this is how we live out our promise to be followers of Jesus.
- Explain to the children that the actions mentioned in this Scripture passage are called the **Works of Mercy**. Tell them that the Works of Mercy are actions we do for others who have needs. Direct the children to find the Works of Mercy on page 1989 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Point out the Corporal Works of Mercy as the ones mentioned in today's Scripture passage.
- Together brainstorm ways the children can live out the Works of Mercy. Write a list of the children's ideas on the board. Help the children understand that there are many different ways to live out the Works of Mercy and that some of these ways are not necessarily direct (for example, children may not visit the imprisoned, but they can pray for those in prison).
- Help the children understand that we can't always see the needs that people have, so we should always treat people with kindness and care.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How can we use the Works of Mercy to show our love for Jesus? *(Accept reasonable responses.)*
 - Who does Jesus say he is like? *(He is like the least important people; accept reasonable responses.)*
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: From top picture to bottom: Visit the sick, Clothe the naked, Feed the hungry, Bury the dead*
- 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 Benedict Joseph Labre, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Benedict Joseph Labre, 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:

- "Everyone Has Equal Dignity" + activity, pages 45–46

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 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 a king who identifies with the least important people.
 - We should serve those in need as followers of Jesus.
 - People often have needs that cannot be seen.
- Invite the children to locate the image of the person with a crutch on the bottom of page 1510 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders, and tell them it is facing a different direction. It can be found in one place.



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 line you say by praying, "Jesus, we help you."
 - When we feed those who are hungry . . .
 - When we give drinks to those who are thirsty . . .
 - When we pass on our clothes to those who need them . . .
 - When we visit a sick or elderly person . . .
 - When we welcome others . . .
 - When we pray for people who have died . . .
 - With every action we do for another person . . .
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- names of saints and holy people with facts about their lives

A Saintly Life (15 minutes)

- Prepare for this activity by printing out names and a few simple facts of saints and holy people who are known for their acts of charity. These might include, but should not be limited to, Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Saint Damien of Molokai, and Saint Mother Teresa of Kolkata (Calcutta). You could also include members of your parish community who help those in need.
- Print the information about these saints on separate pieces of paper. Alternatively, you could have the children read some of the “People of Faith” profiles on page 4 of a few of the activity booklets.
- Invite volunteers to read the facts about the saint or holy person to the rest of the class.
- Ask the class to share how this person followed the reading from Matthew in today’s lesson.

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible*

Works of Mercy Charades (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to form small groups of three or four.
- Have each group turn to page 1989 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* to see the list of Corporal Works of Mercy.
- Give the small groups 5 minutes to create a charade of one of the Corporal Works of Mercy. Tell them that they cannot use any words or sounds.
- Invite the groups to perform their charades, having the large group name the Corporal Work of Mercy they think is being acted out.
- Affirm the small groups for their charades.

Materials Needed

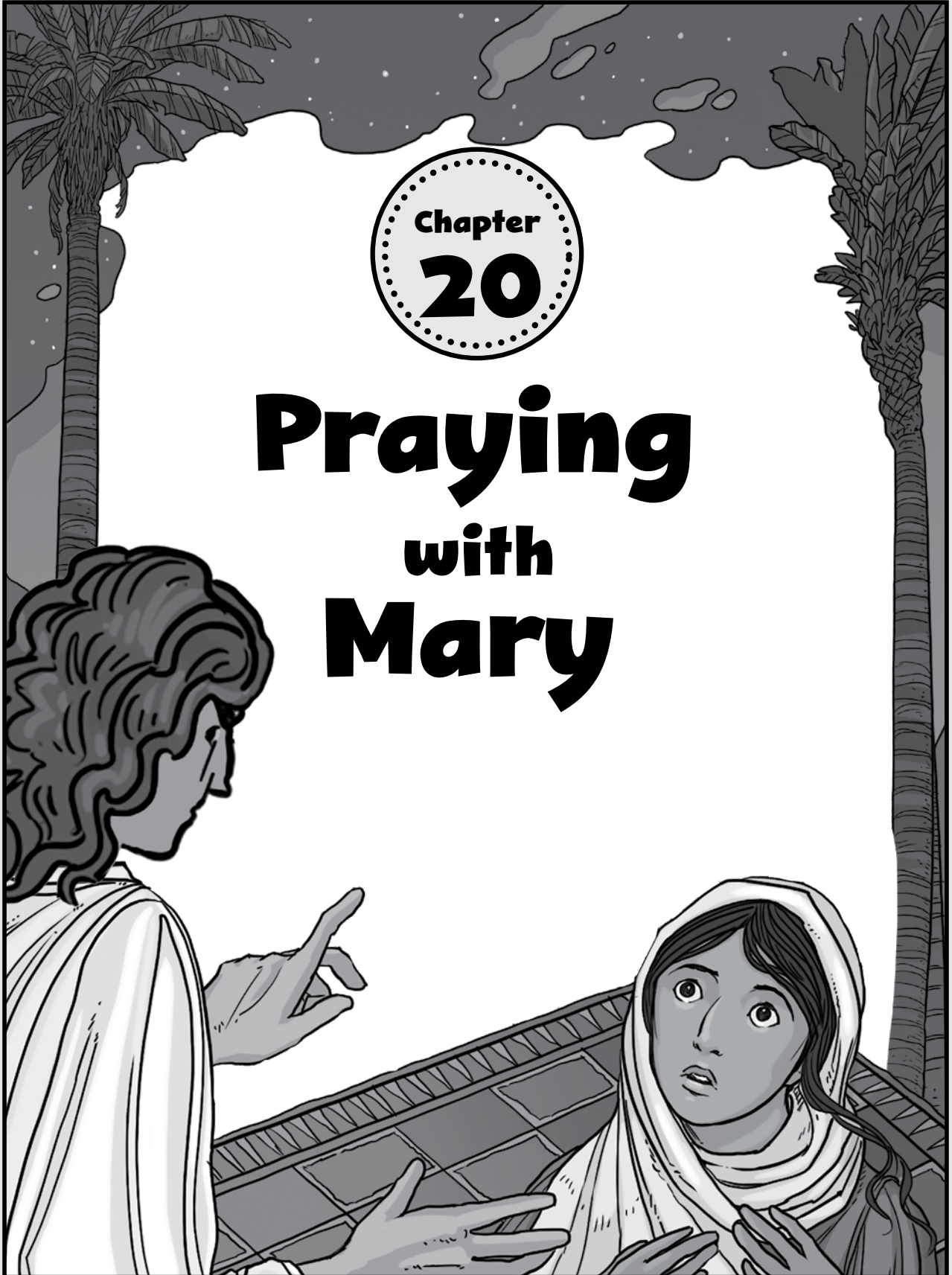
- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank index cards, one for each child

How Can I Help? (15 minutes)

- Watch the video “Corporal Works of Mercy slideshow to the song Whatsoever You Do” (YouTube, 3:47)
- Ask the children to name different things they could do to help the people in the pictures or people like them.
- Distribute the index cards, and ask the children to each write one action they will do in the time before your next session that will be living out one of the Works of Mercy.
- Remind the children that when they do their action, they are doing it for Jesus.
- Instruct them to take the card home to remind them to do the action.

Chapter
20

Praying with Mary




 Chapter
20

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Luke 1:30–33, 38

Lesson Goals

- to identify that prayer can help us be open to God's plan
- to state that Mary is an example of complete trust in God
- to recall that we can always call on Mary to help us trust in God

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

965, 967–969, 973–975

Key Words

gracious, ancestor, descendants

Music Suggestions

- "Mary Did You Know," by Pentatonix (RCA records)
- "I Say Yes, My Lord," by Donna Pena (GIA Publications, Inc.)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 20 activity booklet
- The *Discover!* folder
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for planting seeds: cups or small pots, soil, water, flower seeds
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

We can imagine that Mary had an immense capacity for love and that she was a person who prayed often. In fact, it seems that she might have prayed so often that being aware of God's presence was as much a part of her as breathing. When Mary was presented with the angel's news about God's plan for her, she was able to trust God completely.

Isn't this what we want? to have such a constant and steady awareness of God's presence in our lives? to know that everything around us is truly from God? to be free enough to say yes without hesitation when God presents his plan to us? to be so aware of God within us and beside us, just as Mary was?

We can ask Mary to lead us to her Son. She is uniquely able to show each of us how to let God into our lives. She can and will show us how to be close to God, so that knowing his presence becomes as automatic as breathing.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the 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 all the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to share some of the qualities that people think of when they think of mothers. List these on the board as the children respond.
- Encourage the children to share reasons why mothers are seen as special and important. You may want to acknowledge that some mothers may struggle and not always be the best they can be. Some children may not have a relationship with their mother or have a strained or negative experience with their mother.
- Ask the children what they know about Jesus’ mother and what she did for Jesus.
- Tell the group that they will be reading about Jesus’ mother in this lesson and will see how she responded when God chose her to be the mother of Jesus.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Luke 1:26–38 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1572). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1574. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on page 1572.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1574–1575 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who sent the angel to Mary? (*God*)
 - What was the message the angel told Mary? (*that God has been gracious to her, and she would give birth to Jesus*)
 - What was Mary’s answer to the angel? (*that she is the Lord’s servant; yes*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: afraid, gracious, Jesus, great, Son, servant, happen*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1575, 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 angel told Mary that God chose her to be the mother of Jesus, and that Jesus would be a great king.
 - Even though Mary did not know how this would happen, she trusted God and said “Yes!”
 - Because Mary said yes to God, Jesus was able to save us all.
 - Good things happen whenever we say yes to God, like Mary did.
- Emphasize that even though Mary was afraid of such a great responsibility, she still trusted God totally. Tell the children that Mary is a model for us by showing us how to trust God completely.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1575, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to pray the prayer to Mary together.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1575.
- Invite volunteers to share what is shown in each box and how it relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows an angel talking to Mary. Image 2 shows an angel telling Mary that God wanted her to be the mother of Jesus. Image 3 shows an angel telling Mary that her Son would be a great king. Image 4 shows Mary answering the angel.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Seeds of Faith

- Invite the children to share what they know about planting and growing seeds.
- Present the class with materials for planting seeds: cups or small pots, soil, water, flower seeds.
- Call the children’s attention to the details of the seeds: size, color, etc. If the seeds are from a packet, show them the picture on the packet and tell them a little about the kind of flower the seeds are from.
- Show the group how to prepare the soil and plant the seeds. Help them complete each step as necessary.

- Invite the children to talk about what their next steps will be to care for the seeds they have planted. Remind the children about the importance of the right amount of sun and water for the seeds. Have the group clean the area.
- Tell the children that they will take home the seeds they have planted. Remind them to care for them there.

Process the Activity

- Remind the children that when they have a seed to care for, they can't ignore it. Explain that it must be watered and exposed to sunlight.
- Compare the seed to their relationship with God. Tell them that knowing about God and loving God need attention.
- Explain that their faith and their love for God started out when they were baptized. Tell them that their faith was small like a seed. Help them understand that because they are learning about God and praying, the seed of their faith is growing daily.
- Invite the children to share their thoughts on how they can care for their relationship with God. *(Encourage responses such as going to church, praying, and reading the Bible.)*

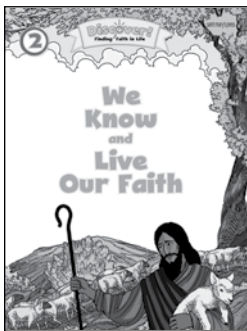
Additional Activity Options

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 209 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that when God chose her to be the mother of Jesus, Mary knew she could trust God and told the angel that she would do what God asked her to do. Tell them that Mary said yes to God because she knew that God had a special plan for her.
- Explain to the children that God also has a special plan for them. Tell them that they probably don't know yet what that plan is, but if they continue to talk to God every day in prayer, they will understand, more and more, what God's plan is for them.
- Point out that Mary showed us, by her example, what it is like to trust God completely. Tell the children that we can always ask Mary to help us understand what God's plan is for us and to help us grow in our faith and trust in God.

- Tell the children that the Hail Mary is a prayer that we say often. Explain that in this prayer we ask Mary to pray for us. Direct the children to locate the Hail Mary on page 1991 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Say the prayer together.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1996 and have a volunteer or volunteers read the paragraph about the Rosary. Emphasize that this is another special kind of prayer devoted to Mary.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How can we discover what God has planned for us? (*Pray; accept reasonable responses.*)
 - What does Mary's yes to God model for us? (*complete faith and trust in God*)
 - What are two prayers we pray that are devoted to Mary? (*the Hail Mary and the Rosary*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 3, 1, 4, 6, 2, 5*
- 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 article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Mary Is the Mother of God," page 16

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 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:
 - Prayer can help us be open to God's plan.
 - Mary is an example of complete trust in God.
 - We can always call on Mary to help us trust in God.
- Remind the children to take their planted seeds home and care for them.
- Invite the children to locate the image of of Mary and the angel on the bottom of page 1574 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.

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.
- Together pray the Hail Mary.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a rosary to use as an example
- a rosary for each child, if possible

The Rosary (15 minutes)

- Show the rosary to the class. Ask if any of the children have prayed the Rosary before. Invite them to share what they know about this prayer.
- Direct the children to turn to page 1996 and 1997 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.
- Invite the children to read through the description of the Rosary.
- Distribute, if possible, actual rosaries to the children, or use the rosary you showed to start the activity.
- Explain the diagram on page 1996 to the children. Have them start at the cross. Ask a volunteer to read aloud the short paragraph or descriptive line. Ask the children to point to the diagram at that spot and then point to the actual rosary at that spot.
- Direct the children's attention to the next page and explain that when we pray the Rosary, we remember different events in the life of Mary and Jesus.
- Briefly discuss some of the events listed on this page.
- Conclude the activity by praying a decade of the Rosary together.

Materials Needed

- a statue of Mary
- short strings of yarn, one for each child

The Queen of Heaven (15 minutes)

- Show the children the statue of Mary you have brought to class. Explain that "Queen of Heaven" is one of the special titles we call Mary.
- Tell them that crowning Mary as Queen of Heaven is a tradition that has been part of our faith for many years. Share that when we crown Mary, we honor her because she is Jesus' mother and she showed us how to trust God.
- Give each child a short string of colored yarn and instruct the children to tie it in a ring shape so that it can fit on the head of the statue of Mary.
- Invite each child to place their yarn "crown" on the head of the Mary statue while you sing a song about Mary or pray the Hail Mary.

Materials Needed

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

Images of Mary (15 minutes)

- Watch the video "Why We Should Love the Virgin Mary: Pope Francis Minute" (YouTube, 2:36).
- Explain to the children that Mary has been the inspiration for artists for hundreds of years.
- Show the class some pictures of Mary you have either downloaded or found in books, Christmas cards, or holy cards. Talk together about what the pictures show about Mary.
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials, and ask the children to draw their idea of what Mary might have looked like. Encourage them to include symbols of Mary and Jesus in their art.
- Invite the children to show their art to the class and explain any features they have included.

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

Liturgical Season Lessons

All Saints' Day

Celebrating the Saints 212

Advent

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Ordinary Time

Learning about Jesus 272

Mary

Mary Is Our Mother 282

All Saints' Day



Celebrating the Saints





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 5:6–9

Lesson Goals

- to identify that holiness is happiness according to the teachings of Jesus
- to state that on All Saints' Day we celebrate all the holy people in Heaven, even the ones that the Church has not officially canonized
- to state that our goal in life is to follow Jesus and to become saints, that is, holy people who love God, ourselves, and others

Catechism References

946–948, 954–962, 1023–1029

Key Words

merciful, pure in heart, Beatitudes, canonized, Communion of Saints

Music Suggestions

- “When the Saints Go Marching In,” by Kidsongs (Kidsongs Video Music)
- “We Are One,” by Drew Lane and Friends (Butterfly Music)

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
- paper dolls, one for each child
- yellow construction paper “haloes”
- construction paper in many colors
- several bottles of glue
- several pairs of scissors
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

When we celebrate the saints' lives, as we do on All Saints' Day, we remember that the saints chose to live holy lives that often ignored the normal ways of the world. The example of the saints brings to reality all that Jesus teaches in the Beatitudes when he asks us to follow what God requires, show mercy, be pure in heart, and work for peace.

A daily life full of comfort and convenience can tempt us to think that things will go smoothly for us as long as we do the right thing. Yet the lives of the saints clearly show that a happy, holy life is not necessarily free of challenges. But in God, all our struggles become part of something better, higher, and more important. Our challenges and crosses no longer have the power to take away our joy.

In today's lesson, the children will learn how the Beatitudes can help us join the saints on a joyful journey to happiness with God in Heaven. The saints show us how this joyful way of life can become real in our world. In the lives of the saints, the words of Jesus become flesh. Let us also work and pray toward bringing Jesus' words to life in our lives.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to think of someone they know who lives (or lived) the way that God asks us to live—someone they think is holy.
- Ask them to share the names of the people they are thinking of and the qualities that make that person holy. Write some of the qualities of holiness on the board.
- Tell the group that in this lesson they will hear about some ways we can live a happy and holy life so that we will be happy with God in Heaven forever after our life on Earth.



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 and describe what they see. Invite them to imagine how it would feel to be present among these crowds when Jesus taught.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What does Jesus say will make us happy? (*We will be happy if our greatest desire, or want, is to do what God wants us to do.*)
 - What will happen if we are merciful to others? (*God will have mercy for us.*)

- What will happen if we are pure in heart? (*We will see God.*)
- What will happen if we work for peace? (*God will call us his children.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. For additional fun, time the children and see who can finish correctly first. *Answers: 1. merciful/merciful, 2. pure/see, 3. peace/children*

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. Jesus gave us the secret to happiness.
 - Jesus promised that if we live in the ways he shows us, we will be led to God's Kingdom.
 - We can be happy by showing mercy (or forgiveness), being pure in heart (avoiding all sin), and working for peace.
 - When we follow Jesus' example, we will be truly happy.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1457, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute blank paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils to the children. Direct them to complete the activity according to the text.
- Encourage the children to take their pictures home and display them where they will see them often, as reminders to live out Jesus' teachings on happiness.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1457.
- Invite volunteers to share what is being shown in the images and how they relate to the Scripture passage. (*Image 1 shows a young boy being merciful. Image 2 shows a boy who is praying to be pure in heart. Image 3 shows a boy working for peace.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Making Saints

- Prepare ahead of time by creating some small paper dolls either by cutting individual outlines out of paper or by making a paper doll chain and then separating the individual dolls. (YouTube videos can guide you to making paper doll chains.) Make one paper doll for each child.
- Cut out circles of yellow construction paper to serve as haloes for the dolls, one for each child.
- Make two of the paper dolls into specific saints as a sample for the children by gluing haloes to the back of the dolls' heads. Use other pieces of construction paper for clothing, hats, and accessories. Draw in details as needed.
- Invite the children to name any saints that they are familiar with. Ask the children to share anything they might know about these saints. Write the saints' names on the board. For help, you might wish to have the children look at some of the "People of Faith" profiles on page 4 of a few of the activity booklets.
- Explain to the children that they will make a figure of their favorite saint.
- Distribute a cutout paper doll and a yellow halo to each child. Show the children the samples you created, and explain which saints you chose and how you depicted them.
- Distribute the glue, colored construction paper, scissors, and markers or crayons. Instruct the children to glue the halo on the back of their saint's head. Then have them cut out pieces of colored paper for clothing, hats, and accessories and glue them on their saints as well. Encourage the children to draw in details with crayons or markers.

Process the Activity

- Invite the children to share the saints they made and to share any information they might know about that saint.
- Explain to the children that no two saints are the same. Tell them that God has made each of us different from one another in so many ways.
- Emphasize that God calls us all to be saints.
- Tell the children that God calls us to be holy in our own unique way, by being ourselves and using our gifts and talents to the best of our abilities. Share that the path to holiness can be different for different people.

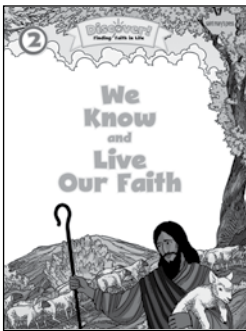
Additional Activity Options

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 221 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Tell the children that Jesus' teachings in this lesson are called the **Beatitudes**. Explain that the word *Beatitudes* means "blessed" or "happy," so this Scripture passage is teaching us how to live a holy, happy life. Jesus wants his followers to be happy, now and in Heaven, and he taught us the way.
- Point out that Jesus gave us eight Beatitudes. Tell the children that today's lesson focuses on just four Beatitudes but that they can find all eight if they read the full Scripture passage. Note that the Beatitudes are also listed in the Catholic Practices section of *The Catholic Children's Bible*, on page 1988.
- Emphasize that today's Scripture mentions showing mercy, forgiving hurts, and working for peace as three of the Beatitudes. Explain that these are three ways to show kindness and that kindness helps everyone to be happy.
- Tell the children that sometimes we have to learn to be happy. We have to practice smiling, using kind language and voices, and acting in helpful ways. We have to practice asking for and accepting forgiveness, and sometimes we even have to practice staying out of fights.
- Share that the saints in Heaven followed this way, and now they are happy forever. Tell the children that the saints can help us to follow Jesus and to be happy, too. Explain that the saints will pray for us, if we ask.
- Tell the children that on All Saints' Day we celebrate all the holy people in Heaven: those who loved God, themselves, and others on Earth. Remind the group that holy people in the Church are called saints. Explain that the saints include not only people whom the Church has **canonized**, which means "officially recognized as saints." Tell them that the saints include everyone in Heaven with God.
- Tell the children that we often call the Church the **Communion of Saints**. Explain that this is the union of all baptized people here on Earth, in Purgatory, and in Heaven. Explain that the children are part of the Communion of Saints as baptized members of the Church.
- Remind the children that all of us are called to follow Jesus and become saints, or holy people who love God, ourselves, and others.

- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What are the Beatitudes? *(They are teachings of Jesus about ways to live a happy life.)*
 - What are some ways we can live the Beatitudes that we studied in this lesson? *(We can practice kindness. We can try smiling at others, using kind language and kind tones of voice, and acting in helpful ways. We can offer and accept apologies. We can stay out of fights.)*
 - Whom do we celebrate on All Saints' Day? *(We celebrate all the holy people, or saints, in Heaven, whether we know them by name or not.)*
 - What does being canonized mean? *(It means that the Church has officially recognized someone as a saint.)*
 - What is the Communion of Saints? *(This is the group of all the baptized people, followers of Jesus, here on Earth, in Purgatory, and in Heaven.)*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Encourage the children to say, "All Saints, 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 Church Prays," page 54

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 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:
 - Holiness is happiness according to the teachings of Jesus.
 - On All Saints' Day, we celebrate all the holy people in Heaven, even the ones that the Church has not officially canonized.
 - Our goal in life is to follow Jesus and to become saints, that is, holy people who love God, ourselves, and others.

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.
- Invite the children to read the prayer on page 4 of the activity booklet together.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross. Then play one of the music suggestions for this lesson or another appropriate song.

Prayer Service

We Honor the Saints

Explain to the children that the prayer you will pray with them is called a litany. Tell them that a litany is a prayer made up of a list of similar prayers that all have the same response.

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

Leader: Holy Mary, Queen of All Saints, Mother of God and example for all Christians,

All: Pray for us.

Leader: Saint Joseph, who protected and cared for Mary and Jesus,

All: Pray for us.

Leader: Saint Francis, who cared for all of God's creatures,

All: Pray for us.

Leader: Saint John Baptist de La Salle, lover of children and patron of all teachers,

All: Pray for us.

Leader: Saint Mary Magdalene, who heard the Risen Christ call her name,

All: Pray for us.

Leader: Saint Mother Teresa of Kolkata, who opened the world's eyes to the needs of those who are poor,

All: Pray for us.

Leader: All holy men, women, and children, and all people who have followed in the way of Jesus, and now live with God in the glory of Heaven,

All: Pray for us.

Close by singing one of the music suggestions or another appropriate All Saints' Day song of your choice. Then end with a Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- holy cards depicting saints, several for each pair of children

Guess the Saint Game (15 minutes)

- Ask the children to pair up for this game. Give each pair a handful of holy cards depicting different saints, with the names of the saints written on the back. Instruct the pairs not to look at their cards yet.
- Tell the children that they will check how many canonized saints they already know. Direct each pair to lay out their cards face up between the partners and to look only at the pictures.
- Explain that each partner should try to guess the saint on one card before turning it over to read the back. Instruct them to keep the saints they knew face up, and the saints they did not know face down. Explain that it is not a competition between the partners—simply a chance for the pair to work together to see how much they know. Allow a short time for the pairs to play.
- Ask volunteers to tell how many saints their pair named without reading the back of the card. Affirm everyone's efforts, and encourage them to continue learning more about the saints. Collect the cards for use at a later time or distribute them to the children to take home.

Materials Needed

- pictures of saints
- sheets of yellow construction paper, one for each child
- several pairs of scissors
- masking tape
- two blindfolds

Pin the Halo on the Saint (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by creating a bulletin board or wall filled with pictures of saints.
- Distribute yellow construction paper and scissors. Have each child make a halo by cutting a ring out of the construction paper.
- Tell the children they will play "pin the halo on the saint." Invite two children to come up at a time. Give them a piece of tape for their haloes and then blindfold them.
- Have the blindfolded children turn in circles, walk toward the saints bulletin board or wall, and try to tape their halo to the board.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance.

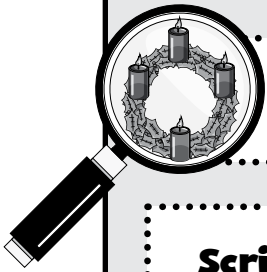
Materials Needed

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

Video Time: Celebrate All Saints (15 minutes)

- Show the video "All Saints Day for Kids" (YouTube, 1:26) to the group.
- Distribute blank paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Ask the children to draw or write one action they can take to remember and honor the saints this week.
- Encourage them to take home their papers as a reminder to carry out their ideas.





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Luke 1:30–33, 38

Lesson Goals

- to identify the Angel Gabriel as a messenger from God to Mary
- to explain that Mary agreed to become the Mother of God’s Son, Jesus
- to state that we can prepare for Christmas during Advent by saying “yes” to God

Catechism References

484–495, 522–524, 721–726

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white and full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

Key Words

gracious, ancestor, descendants

Music Suggestions

- “I Wanna Say Yes,” by Cat.Chat (Cat.Chat)
- “O Come, O Come Emmanuel,” by Bethel Music Kids (Bethel Music)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Advent activity booklet
- folded slips of paper that say “I (heart) you,” one per child
- a sample paper Advent wreath
- paper plates, one for each child
- 2- to 3-inch construction paper candles (3 purple and 1 rose for each child)
- yellow construction paper flames (4 for each child)
- green construction paper leaves, enough for each child to make a wreath
- several bottles of glue
- an Advent wreath with candles (real or battery-powered)
- matches or safety lighter (*optional*)
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Advent is a time of preparing for the coming of Jesus. The word *Advent* comes from a Latin root meaning “to arrive” or “to come toward.” When we prepare for something, we walk toward it. We think ahead and make plans. We gather courage and hope, and we look forward to the joy the big event will bring.

All year long, we celebrate and try to follow Mary’s example in saying “yes” to God as we walk toward him throughout our lives. During Advent, we prepare to welcome him in a more intense, immediate way. Let us pray that, like Mary, we will be ready to accept with peace whatever God asks of us.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Prepare in advance by writing "I [heart] you!" and your signature on slips of paper, and then fold them tightly. Prepare one folded note for each child.
- Invite the children to close their eyes and hold out their cupped hands. Place one note in each child's hands.
- Tell the children they can open their eyes and examine what you put in their hands.
- Ask them these reflection questions, and invite volunteers to respond:
 - How did you feel when I asked you to close your eyes and hold out your hands?
 - What did you think might happen?
 - Was it hard to trust me? Why or why not?
 - What happened when you trusted me?
- Tell the children that today's Scripture shares the exciting news that Mary, the mother of Jesus, received from the angel Gabriel. Explain that Mary didn't know what exactly to expect but she trusted that God wanted only good things for her.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Luke 1:26–38 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1572). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1574. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on page 1572.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1574–1575 and describe what they see. Invite them to imagine how Mary might have felt to be visited by an angel.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Explain that the angel Gabriel was God’s messenger to Mary. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did the angel say to Mary? (*He said that God had been gracious to Mary. He said that Mary would become pregnant and give birth to a son.*)
 - What did the angel say about Jesus? (*He said that Jesus would be great and would be called the Son of God.*)
 - How did Mary respond? (*She agreed to what the angel said. She said that she was God’s servant.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. great, 2. afraid, 3. ancestor, 4. gracious, 5. birth, 6. happen, 7. descendants, 8. servant*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1575, 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:
 - Mary was only a teenager when Gabriel told her that God chose her to be the mother of his son.
 - The angel said that Jesus would be a great king, and his Kingdom would last forever.
 - Mary did not understand how God’s plan could even happen. But Mary could say yes to God because she knew that he was good and loving. She put her life into God’s hands.
 - Because Mary trusted God, Jesus came to Earth to save all human beings.
 - When we trust God, we can also expect good things.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1575, or have a volunteer read it.
- Have the group pray the prayer together after taking a few deep breaths to quiet themselves. Begin prayer with the Sign of the Cross.
- Invite the children to end the prayer with “Amen,” and close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1575.
- Invite volunteers to share what is happening in each box and how it relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows Gabriel coming to Mary. Image 2 shows Gabriel telling Mary about the infant Jesus. Image 3 shows Gabriel describing how Jesus will be a king. Image 4 shows Mary saying to Gabriel, “I am the Lord’s servant.”*)

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity (Craft)****Advent Wreath**

- Make a sample wreath ahead of time, according to the instructions below, to show to the children.
- Lay out the materials on a table before class, so the children can access these when needed.
- Explain that the children will be making Advent wreaths.
- Invite them to come up to the materials table and take 1 paper plate, 3 purple paper candles, 1 rose paper candle, 4 yellow paper flames, and several green paper leaves. Have the children sit in groups to share the bottles of glue.
- Show the children the craft you prepared in advance. Instruct them to glue the green paper leaves around their paper plates to make their wreaths. Show them how to glue the candle shapes around their wreaths.
- Have the children glue the flames to the number of candles corresponding to the week of Advent you are currently observing. Have them take extra flames to complete their wreaths at home.

Process the Activity

- Tell the children that we use Advent wreaths in homes and churches to track our preparation for Jesus’ coming at Christmas.
- Share the following points with the children:
 - Traditionally, the purple candle for the first week represents peace.
 - The purple candle for the second week represents hope.
 - The rose candle for the third week represents joy.
 - The purple candle for the fourth week represents love.
- We seek to grow in each of these qualities as we move through the season of Advent.

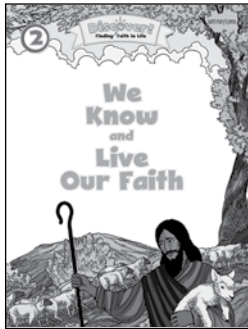
Additional Activity Options

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 231 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that Advent is the season when we prepare to celebrate the coming of Jesus. Tell them that our Church switches from the color green (the color of Ordinary Time) to the color purple (the color of Advent), which symbolizes preparation. Encourage the children to notice the color shift in vestments, banners, etc. in your parish.
- Tell the children that Jesus comes to us in three ways:
 - Jesus first came into the world when Mary gave birth to him.
 - He will come into the world again at the end of time.
 - Every year at Christmas, Jesus comes into our hearts and our lives.
- Tell the children that during Advent, we practice saying yes to God as Mary did when she agreed to be the mother of God’s Son, Jesus. Explain that we can do this by acting the way Jesus wants us to act. Tell them that we can listen to our parents, be kind to our siblings, pay attention in class, follow instructions during sports practice, and so on.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What do we prepare for during Advent? (*We prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas.*)

- What are three ways Jesus comes into the world? (*Jesus first entered the world at the first Christmas. He will come again at the end of time. He comes into our hearts and lives every Christmas.*)
 - What color do we use during Advent, and what does that color mean? (*We use the color purple for preparation.*)
 - What are some ways we can practice saying yes to God in Advent? (*Affirm all reasonable answers.*)
- 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 Guadalupe, and encourage the children to say, “Our Lady of Guadalupe, 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:

- “Who Is Jesus?” page 13
- “Mary Is the Mother of God,” page 16

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 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 angel Gabriel was a messenger from God to Mary.
 - Mary agreed to become the mother of God’s Son, Jesus.
 - We can prepare for Christmas during Advent by saying yes to God.

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.
- Invite the children to respond “Come, Lord Jesus,” after you read each line in this prayer:
 - Jesus, you are the light of the world.
 - We prepare with hope and joy for your coming this Christmas.
 - Please light our way through this Advent and throughout our lives.
- Say, “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

Come, Lord Jesus

Set up a prayer table with an Advent wreath and candles ahead of time. Invite the children to join you around the Advent wreath. Count out how many candles on your Advent wreath should be lit, based on which week of Advent you teach this lesson. Light the candles (real or battery-powered) as indicated, and say the word that corresponds with what each candle symbolizes (peace for the first candle, hope for the second, joy for the third, and love for the fourth).

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

Leader: Loving God, heavenly Father, you sent your angel to Mary.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: The angel Gabriel gave her the Good News that she would give birth to your Son, our Savior.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: We celebrate this Good News during Advent, and we look forward to celebrating Jesus' birth this Christmas.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: We light [this candle/these candles] as a sign of peace [hope, joy, and love].

(Light the appropriate number of Advent candles. Say the corresponding words as you light each candle.)

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: Jesus is the light of the world. May he light our way in Advent and throughout our lives.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

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

Close by singing one of the music suggestions or another appropriate Advent song of your choice.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- blank paper
- several pairs of scissors
- markers or crayons
- a board or poster to write on

Advent Actions (15 minutes)

- Tell the children that Advent is a time of preparation for Christmastime, and tell them that we can say yes like Mary did to all that God wants for us.
- Distribute the blank paper and scissors, and invite each child to cut their paper into four strips.
- Have them think of and share some Advent actions they can do to prepare for Jesus' coming at Christmastime. Brainstorm some ideas with the children and write these on the board.
- Distribute the markers or crayons, and tell the children that they should write one action on each slip of paper. Then invite them to decorate the strip of paper or draw a picture of them doing the action.
- Give them time to complete their strips of Advent actions, helping them continue to think of ideas as needed. Encourage them to take their strips home and to focus on one for each week of Advent.

Materials Needed

- song sheets or hymnals with Advent lyrics
- audio equipment or small instrument to play accompaniment (*optional*)

Sing Along: Advent Songs (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by creating song sheets for the children, or gather hymnals and make note of the hymn numbers.
- Invite the children to sit in a large circle on the floor. Tell them that they will learn two Advent songs they can sing at home throughout the season.
- Distribute the song sheets or hymnals. Sing the songs with the children, slowly and without accompaniment at first, then a second time. Play accompanying music this second time, if desired.
- Remind the children that these songs can help us wait patiently and prepare for Jesus to come to us at Christmas.

Materials Needed

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

Exploring the Advent Wreath (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Advent Candle Song" (YouTube, 3:26) to the group.
- Invite the children to describe their family Advent wreaths, the parish Advent wreath, and other Advent wreaths they have seen. Affirm the details the children recall.
- Invite the children to draw their own Advent wreaths. Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials. Allow time for drawing. Consider playing the video on repeat as background music while the children work.

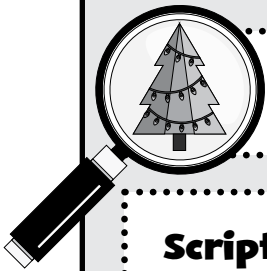


Christmas



**Celebrating
the Birth
of Jesus**





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Luke 2:1–7

Lesson Goals

- to identify that Christmas is the season when we celebrate the birth of Jesus
- to explain that Jesus was born in poor circumstances
- to compare the poverty of Jesus with the poverty of people in need today

Catechism References

456–460

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white and full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

Key Words

manger, poverty

Music Suggestions

- “I’ve Got the Joy, Joy, Joy,” by Listener Kids (feat. Jonny Macintosh) (Listener Records)
- “Away in a Manger,” by the Countdown Kids (Suite 102)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Christmas activity booklet
- a Nativity set
- map of Middle East (optional)
- egg cartons cut in half, one for each child
- round-headed clothespins, one for each child
- scissors, one pair for each child
- strips of cloth
- shredded yellow paper
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

The Church has always been attentive to the struggles of those who are most vulnerable, most in need of help and support. Our attention to others’ needs is deeply rooted in the circumstances of Jesus’ birth, life, and death. In Jesus, God came among us as a vulnerable newborn child. In Jesus, God paid close attention to those who were ill, in pain, trapped by material or spiritual poverty, and pushed to the margins of society. In Jesus, God offered people healing, dignity, life, and hope. In Jesus, God suffered misunderstanding from society, betrayal by friends, and even death at the hands of unjust authority.

Christmas calls us to transform our moral life in light of Jesus’ choice to be born among those in need and to share their vulnerability. How well do we practice compassion toward those bringing new life into the world, despite poverty and pain? What concrete actions can we take to better support a culture of life in our communities? How can we shift our daily habits to live simply so that all may simply live?



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Christmas 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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Set up a Nativity set before class, but do not arrange the pieces in their usual order. Ensure the Nativity set has enough room around it for the children to gather.
- Invite the children to join you around the Nativity set. Ask the children to share what the Nativity scene shows us.
- Ask volunteers to place the pieces in their correct arrangement, one by one.
- Point out that the Christmas story is one that many of us already know so well that we can tell when the Nativity pieces are in the wrong places.
- Share with children that the Christmas story can tell us more about what Jesus' life was like—and what life was like for many people in his time.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Luke 2:1–7 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1576).
- Explain to the children that at the time of Jesus' birth, the whole area where the Jewish People lived was part of the Roman Empire. Consider showing the children a map to locate Bethlehem.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why did Mary and Joseph have to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem? (*Everyone in the Roman Empire had to go to their hometowns for the census, or counting of people. Bethlehem was Joseph's hometown.*)
 - Why did Joseph bring Mary with him to Bethlehem? (*They were engaged to be married and she was pregnant.*)

- What happened while they were traveling? (*The time came for Mary to give birth to Jesus.*)
- What did Mary do when Jesus was born? (*She wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger.*)
- Why did she do this? (*There was no room for them to stay in the inn.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. Judea, 2. Augustus, 3. Everyone, 4. marriage, 5. laid; The king Joseph and Jesus were related to was David.*

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:
 - Luke begins his Christmas story by telling about the census, because the census was the reason why Jesus was born in Bethlehem and not Nazareth.
 - It is important to know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, because many ancient stories said that a savior would be born in Bethlehem.
 - Jesus was fully human, like us. He was affected by human events just like we are.
 - Jesus was also really God. He came to share God's life with all people.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Sort the children into small groups. Invite them to talk together to come up with ideas for helping in each of the situations named. Make suggestions if necessary.
- Close with a brief class prayer for all people in need. Begin by saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.

Tell It!

- Invite several volunteers to retell the Scripture story from memory. Affirm them for the points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

A Manger for Jesus

- Lay out the craft supplies ahead of class on a craft table so that children can come up to get supplies at the appropriate time.
- Explain to the children that they will be making a manger to take home as a reminder of Jesus' birth in the stable. Remind the children that a **manger** is a raised box filled with grain and hay for animals to eat—not a fancy crib or bassinette.
- Call the children to line up at the craft table. Instruct each child to take an egg carton, a pair of scissors, a slotted clothespin, a marker, a scrap of cloth, and small handful of shredded yellow paper.
- Instruct the children to draw a sleeping or smiling face on the ball end of their clothespin, which will become the Baby Jesus figure in the manger. Show the children how to wrap their baby figures in the cloth scraps.
- Have the children fill their egg carton with a small amount of shredded paper for straw, and then have the children place their baby figures on top of the straw.

Process the Activity

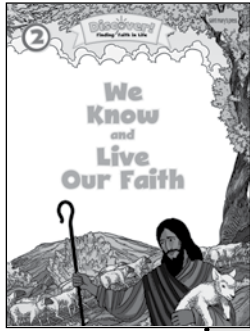
- Ask the children to recall why the newborn Jesus slept in a manger filled with straw. Affirm answers that include that the Holy Family was traveling, poor, and could not find shelter when Jesus was born.
- Remind the children that even though Jesus and his family had very little, Jesus' birth was a joyful moment. Tell them that Mary and Joseph, like many new parents, did the best they could with what they had to welcome the newborn Savior.

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 240–241 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that Christmas is the season when we celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- Tell the children that when Jesus was born, his parents and everyone in the Roman Empire were traveling. Explain that Joseph and Mary couldn't find a place to stay except a place with a manger.
- Tell the group that Jesus' parents had very few things as they were poor. Point out that despite this, Mary and Joseph used what they had to take care of Jesus.
- Remind the children that small babies have very simple needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, warmth, and a safe place to sleep. Recall that Mary wrapped Jesus in the cloths she had brought with her, fed him, held him, found him a safe and warm place, and laid him in the manger to sleep.
- Remind the children that many people today also have very little, especially those who have had to flee their homes due to violence or natural disasters. Tell the children this is called living in **poverty**. Explain that *poverty* means not having enough to meet the everyday needs of life, like food, clothing, and shelter.
- Point out to the children that if we have more than we need, we have a responsibility to help the many people who do not have enough. Tell them that Christmas is a good time to help others and share the many good things we have, as we remember that Jesus was born into poverty. Remind the children that we should also help people who are poor and vulnerable throughout the year.
- Invite the group to brainstorm ways to help people in need during the Christmas season. Remind the children that Christmas lasts longer than just one day. Explain that it is an entire season, from December 25 to the Sunday of the Baptism of Christ, which is usually around the second week of January.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Did Mary and Joseph and Jesus have many things or much money? *(No. They could not even find an inn where they could stay when Jesus was born.)*
 - Are there people in the same situation today? *(Yes, many people live in need today, especially those who have also had to leave their homes behind.)*
 - What can we do for those who do not have what they need? *(We can share the things we have, especially if we have more than enough.)*
 - Why is Christmastime a good time to do this? *(Affirm all reasonable answers. Guide the conversation toward helping the children understand that we can honor Jesus by helping those who live in poverty, as he did on Earth.)*
- 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 article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- “Who Is Jesus?” page 13

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 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:
 - Christmas is the season when we celebrate the birth of Jesus.
 - Jesus was born in poor circumstances.
 - We can compare the poverty of Jesus with the poverty of people in need today.

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 came into this world as a tiny, helpless child. Your family was poor but was full of faith and courage and hope. Show us how to be happy, faithful, courageous, and hopeful. Help us to be strong even when we feel tiny and helpless. We ask this through your Holy Name.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Joy to the World!

Help the children practice the response ahead of time. Show them how to perform the ritual action of bowing their heads each time they say the response.

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

Leader: Dear Jesus, you came into this world as a tiny child, helpless and in need of care.

All: *(bowing)* Jesus, you came to show us love.

Leader: Dear Jesus, you came into this world in a family that had very little to call its own, yet was full of faith and courage and hope.

All: *(bowing)* Jesus, you came to show us love.

Leader: Dear Jesus, you came into this world to show us that we can be happy even when we have very little.

All: *(bowing)* Jesus, you came to show us love.

Leader: Dear Jesus, you came into this world to show us that although we may be small, we can still be strong.

All: *(bowing)* Jesus, you came to show us love.

Leader: We thank you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Close by singing one of the music suggestions or another appropriate Christmas song of your choice.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- at least six large card-board boxes with open tops
- several rolls of wrapping paper and clear packing tape
- several pairs of scissors
- several sheets of poster board
- markers
- extra art supplies (glitter glue, stickers, etc.)

Materials Needed

- song sheets with all three verses of "Silent Night" in large print, one for each child
- audiovisual equipment and recording of "Silent Night" (*optional*)
- a small musical instrument (*optional*)

Set Up a Giving Drive (15 minutes)

- Consider tying this activity into an existing Advent or Christmas drive in your parish or school. Alternately, help organize a drive within the religious education program to support a charity that serves families in need or women in crisis pregnancies to fit with the themes of Christmas. Prepare text in advance to publicize the drive.
- Tell the children that they will prepare to collect donations for those who are in need.
- Arrange the children into teams of five or six. Choose one of the teams to use wrapping paper to cover the outside of the donation boxes and to place the boxes in different locations around the parish.
- Distribute the poster board, markers, and extra art supplies to the remaining teams. Provide the teams with the publicity text. Have each team copy their text onto their poster and then decorate the poster.
- Direct the poster teams to hang their posters near the donation boxes around the parish.

Learn a Christmas Carol (15 minutes)

- Gather the children in a circle on the floor. Tell them that you are going to teach them all the verses of a classic Christmas carol, "Silent Night."
- Distribute the song sheets with the lyrics.
- Sing or play the melody for the children. (*Optional: Bring in a small musical instrument to accompany the group, or play a recording of the song on classroom AV equipment.*)
- Lead the children in singing through all three verses of the song.
- Discuss the images of the song: Mary and Jesus resting together, the infant Jesus falling asleep, the shepherds praying around the manger, and the angels shining with glory and singing "Hallelujah." Ask the children what other images from the Christmas story they would include if they wrote another verse of the song.

Materials Needed

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

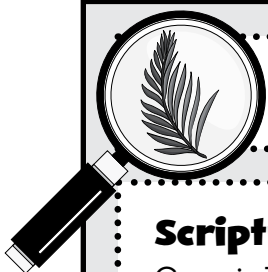
Appreciate Art in Storytelling (15 minutes)

- Show the video “The Christmas story according to St. Luke” (YouTube, 2:53) to the group. Ask the children, before the video begins, to pay close attention to the pictures and images they will see.
- Invite the children to reflect on the pictures and images in the video. Then ask the children to respond to the following questions:
 - How were these pictures like other images of Mary, Joseph, and the newborn Jesus that you have seen? How were they different?
 - Did any pictures help you understand any parts of the story better? Which, and why?
- Have the children create their own image of the Nativity. Distribute the blank paper and the drawing materials.
- Ask the children to include at least one detail that they think would help other people understand the story of Christmas better.



Preparing for Easter





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Genesis 7:1–5

Lesson Goals

- to state that Lent is a season of preparation for Easter
- to explain that during Lent we remember that we went through the waters of Baptism and were saved by God
- to state that in Lent we recall that Jesus saves us through his death and Resurrection

Catechism References

1094–1095, 1217–1220, 1438

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white and full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

Key Words

unclean animal, reproduce, Passion, Resurrection, Holy Week, penance

Music Suggestions

- “I Need You Now (Live),” by Matt Redman (sixstepsrecords/Sparrow Records)
- “Be with Me, Lord,” by Tom Booth (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Lent activity booklet
- pencils and paper
- a sample paper-plate ark
- paper plates, two for each child
- sets of markers, including all colors of the rainbow plus at least brown or gray, one set for each small group
- a ruler and a pair of scissors for each small group
- a hole punch
- paper fasteners (brads), one for each child
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

At times it seems that Baptism can take a backseat to other aspects of our faith. For many of us, Baptism happened so long ago that we remember it only slightly, or only through photographs and family stories.

For all Catholics, Baptism deserves closer attention. It is the root of our life in God. It is central to our faith. Only by passing through the waters of Baptism can we enter into the fullness of the love and grace God offers us. Only by understanding what happens in the sacrament can we truly understand what we receive in the other sacraments. Baptism marks Christians distinctly and definitively.

As we travel through the season of Lent, accompanying those preparing to receive Baptism and readying ourselves for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter, let us learn more about Baptism and about how everything in the Christian life flows from this initial, indispensable gift.

**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 all the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

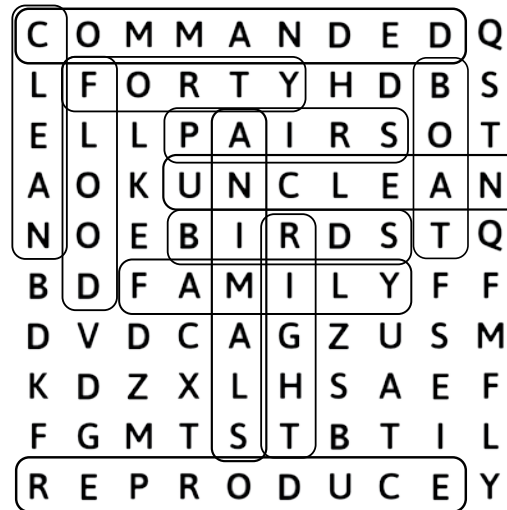
Engage Activity

- Gather the children in a large circle in a central part of the room. Invite them to think about a time when they chose to do the right thing, even though it made them look or feel different from other people.
- Invite responses from volunteers. Assure the children that it can be challenging to do the right thing sometimes, especially if we’re concerned about what others might think about us.
- Tell the children that in today’s story, they will learn about one man who was not afraid to look different from everyone around him. Explain that his courage saved many people and animals from a natural disaster.

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

- Invite the children to find Genesis 6:9–9:17 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (pages 32–33 and 36). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 34. 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 34–35 and describe what they see. Invite them to imagine what it would be like to build such a big boat, or ark, as the one Noah built.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did God ask Noah to do? (*He asked him to go into the boat with his whole family, plus pairs of animals.*)
 - Why did God ask Noah to do this? (*God wanted to be sure there would be enough of each animal after the Flood to reproduce on the Earth.*)

- What was God planning to do? (God was going to send enough rain to cause a flood that would wipe out all living beings on the Earth, except those Noah had rescued.)
- What did Noah do? (Noah did everything that God commanded.)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



Lent

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 35, 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 imitate others to be like the people around us. It takes courage to be different from others.
 - Noah had the courage to be different from others. When others were sinning, he and his family served God. So God saved Noah and his family from the Flood.
 - Others may have made fun of Noah for building the ark, but the boat kept Noah, his family, and the animals safe.
 - If we do what God wants us to do, even when it makes us different from others, God will bless us for it.
- Explain to the children that the story of Noah and the Flood reminds us of our Baptism. Remind them that we are saved from Original Sin through the waters of Baptism. Point out that Noah, his family, and the animals were saved as they passed through the waters of the Great Flood.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 35, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to take out a pencil and paper, and instruct them to write down two things:
 - Write down one idea for how you can listen to God this week.
 - Write down one idea for how you can serve God this week.
- Encourage the children to take their paper home and reread it later. Explain that this plan is just for their own reminder, not for anyone else to see.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 35.
- Invite volunteers to retell the Scripture story in their own words, using the images shown. (*Image 1 shows Noah listening to God. Image 2 shows Noah leading animals into the ark. Image 3 shows the ark floating on the floodwaters as rain falls.*)

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity (Craft)****Paper-Plate Ark**

- Prepare a sample paper-plate ark in advance that you can use to demonstrate the steps to the children.
- Tell the children that they will make a paper-plate ark to remind them of the ark Noah built to survive the Flood.
- Arrange the children into small groups to share art supplies. Distribute two paper plates and a metal brad to each child, and give each group a ruler, a pair of scissors, and a set of markers.
- Show the children how to use a ruler and a marker to draw a straight line across both of their paper plates. Have them set one plate aside. Instruct them to draw a rectangle topped by a triangle—a house shape—above the line on the second plate.
- Show the children how to use the scissors to cut around the house and line on the second plate. They will end up with the house shape (what they drew) on top of a boat shape (the rest of the paper plate). Explain that this is their ark. Allow them to color their arks as they choose. They may wish to add some animals to their arks.
- Instruct the children to color a rainbow around half of their first (uncut) paper plate. Tell them to color the rainbow only up to the line dividing the plate.

- Go around the groups and punch a hole in the center of each child's two plates.
- Show the children how to attach the paper plates together—ark plate on top of the rainbow plate—with brads through the center hole of both plates, so that the rainbow can rotate around behind the ark.

Process the Activity

- Remind the children that the story of Noah is a story of passing through waters to be saved by God—just like the story of our own Baptism.
- Explain to the children that we prepare for Easter by remembering our Baptism and baptismal promises. Tell them that this season of preparation for Easter is called Lent.
- Tell the children that at the end of Noah's story, we read that God sent the rainbow as a sign of his promise to never again destroy the Earth with a flood.

Additional Activity Options

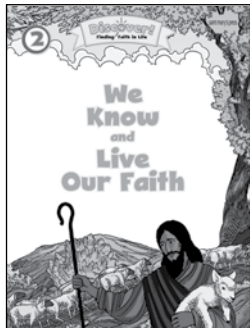
If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 251 in its place.

Lent

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that during Lent the whole Church recalls the **Passion** and death of Jesus and prepares to celebrate his **Resurrection** at Easter. Jesus' *Passion* refers to his suffering to save us: from his betrayal after the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, until his death for us on the cross. Jesus' *Resurrection* is his rising from the dead to new life on Easter. Recall that by his death and Resurrection, Jesus saved us from sin.
- Tell the group that the Church uses the color purple during Lent to symbolize our preparation, just as purple symbolizes preparation during Advent. Explain that during Lent, purple also stands for sorrow. Point out that we feel sad about the reality of sin and about Jesus' suffering.
- Share that Lent ends at the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday during **Holy Week**. Tell the children that Holy Week is the week when we remember Jesus' suffering and death. Explain that it begins with Palm Sunday and ends with Easter Sunday, when we celebrate the Resurrection.
- Recall that Easter reminds us of Baptism. Explain that we prepare for Easter in the season of Lent by remembering our baptismal promises to follow Christ. Remind the children that in Baptism we pass through water, as Noah did, to enter into new life with God. Share that Baptism gives us courage to act in the ways God shows us are right, just as Noah followed God and was saved.

- Tell the children that because we love and honor Jesus, we want to become better Christians and make good choices. Explain that Lent is a time to focus on following Jesus with special practices:
 - During Lent, we give to the Church and to those in need. We practice saying no to some things we want so that we can say yes to the best and most important things.
 - During Lent, we practice acts of **penance**—that is, prayers or good actions that show we are sorry for sin. Penance helps us to prepare for the Easter celebration.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is the season of Lent? (*Lent is a time when the whole Church recalls the Passion and death of Jesus and prepares to celebrate his Resurrection at Easter.*)
 - What are Jesus’ Passion and Resurrection? (*Jesus’ Passion refers to his suffering for us. His Resurrection refers to his act of rising from the dead.*)
 - What color do we see in Church during Lent, and why? (*We see the color purple, which symbolizes preparation and sadness.*)
 - How is Baptism like the story of Noah? (*Both involve passing through water to be saved by God.*)
 - What is an act of penance? (*An act of penance is a good action that shows we are sorry for sin. Penance helps us prepare for Easter.*)
- 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 Brigid of Ireland, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Brigid, 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:

- “God the Father Sent His Son to Us,” page 12

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 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:
 - Lent is a season of preparation for Easter.
 - During Lent, we remember that we went through the waters of Baptism and were saved by God.
 - In Lent, we recall that Jesus saves us through his death and Resurrection.

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:
 - Loving God, you brought Noah, his family, and the animals safely through the Flood on the Ark. Help us use the season of Lent to recall how we were saved through the waters of Baptism and to focus on how we might be better Christians. We look forward to celebrating the Resurrection of Christ on Easter.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

God's Love Saves Us

Tell the children that they will fold their hands and bow their heads each time they repeat the response, "Be with us as we prepare our hearts." Practice this so the children are familiar with the action and response.

Lent

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

Leader: Loving God, you brought Noah safely through the forty days of the Flood. Help us prepare our hearts during these forty days of Lent and remember that we too are saved through the waters of Baptism.

All: *(with hands folded and bowing)*
Be with us as we prepare our hearts.

Leader: Loving God, we recall the incredible sacrifice of Jesus. Help us focus on ways that we can give up something or do good works to help us grow in faithfulness.

All: *(with hands folded and bowing)*
Be with us as we prepare our hearts.

Leader: Loving God, during this Lenten season, help us recall that we can always come to you in prayer. Be with us as we come to you in prayer this season.

All: *(with hands folded and bowing)*
Be with us as we prepare our hearts.

Leader: Loving God, thank you for the gift of Baptism and the promises we made to be followers of Christ. Increase our faith and help us to draw closer to you as we prepare for the joy of Easter. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Close by playing one of the music suggestions or another appropriate Lenten song of your choice.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- four large containers of water
- four trays of items, such as a stone, a foam ball, a feather, a block of wood, a rubber band, a metal clip, and so on

Sink or Float (15 minutes)

- Prepare four stations ahead of time with the same materials at each station: a large container of water (preferably with high sides) and a tray of items.
- Arrange the children into four small groups and have them gather around the stations.
- Invite the groups to look at their tray of items. Tell them to discuss among themselves which items will sink or float. Invite each child in each group to place at least one item into the group's water tub to find out whether it will float.
- Gather the children back into the large group. Invite them to think about how difficult it must be to build a huge, heavy object that floats, especially when loaded with animals and people. Lead them to understand that Noah's project was not an easy one.

Materials Needed

- none

Alphabet Ark Memory Game (15 minutes)

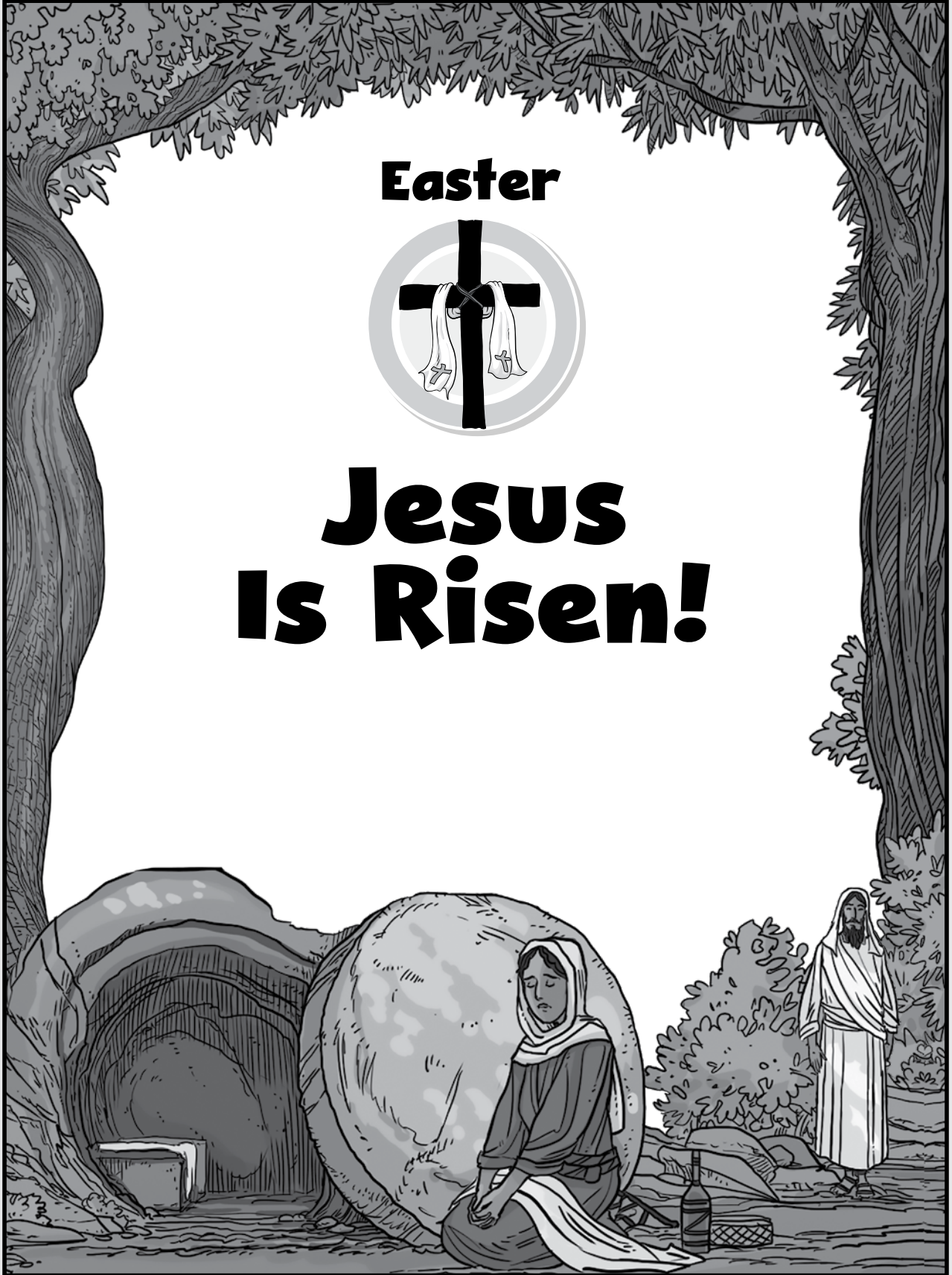
- Clear a large area in the middle of the classroom.
- Gather the children in a large circle on the floor. Share the following instructions:
 - The child who is at the starting place will say, "Noah took an [animal] on the ark," filling in the blank with an animal name beginning with A.
 - The next child will do the same thing, repeating the A animal and adding a B animal.
 - The next child must repeat the A and B animals and add a C animal, and so on.
 - The game will continue until someone forgets an animal in the series. Then it will start over again at A with the next person in the circle, until time is up.
- Pick a child at random to start the game. Affirm the group's efforts to play a good game and remember one another's contributions.

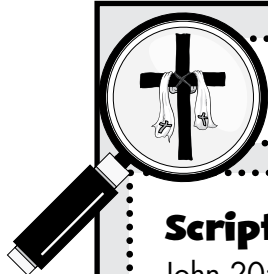
Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank paper

Making Lenten Plans (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Ash Wednesday and Lent in 60 seconds - with LEGO!" (YouTube, 1:15) to the group.
- Ask the children to name some features of Lent that the video explains. Affirm all correct responses.
- Distribute the blank paper. Invite the children to write or draw their own plan for fasting, giving to others, and saying special prayers during Lent.
- Ask the children to take home their plans and complete them later, if they need more time. Encourage them to check and follow their plans each day.





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

John 20:11–14, 16

Lesson Goals

- to state that during the Easter season we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead
- to explain that Jesus' friend Mary Magdalene was filled with joy when she recognized that Jesus was resurrected
- to identify that we too are friends of Jesus who celebrate his Resurrection

Catechism References

638–658

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white and full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

Key Words

tomb, Lord, grieving

Music Suggestions

- “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today,” by GroupMusic (Group Publishing)
- “Alive Alive,” by Cedarment Kids (Benson Records, Inc.)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the Easter activity booklet
- pencils and paper
- several cups for dying eggs
- food coloring
- vinegar and water
- hard-boiled eggs, one for each child, plus extras
- white or translucent wax crayons (not washable), one for each child
- cups of dye in several colors
- several spoons or pairs of tongs
- newspapers
- several aprons
- several empty egg cartons
- paper cups in spring colors, one for each child
- green paper Easter grass
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

In the Gospel of John, we read that on the morning of his Resurrection from the dead, Jesus first trusted the news to just one person, Mary Magdalene, outside his tomb. He did not appear to Peter or to John, the “beloved” disciple, until later.

Imagine how the Twelve Apostles—those chosen by Jesus—must have felt upon hearing about the first appearance of the Risen Christ from someone else. Some of them, such as Thomas, found it difficult to believe without seeing the Risen Jesus in person. But Jesus knew who his friends were, and he knew the best way to appear and speak to each of them.

We too are friends of Jesus who celebrate his Resurrection on Easter. At times, he seems to speak to others in ways that he does not speak to us. But if we are ready, we can hear him call us at the time and in the way that we are most able to hear and heed his voice.

**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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Tell the children that names have power. Remind them that we name our babies and our pets. Point out that we have special names for our parents and grandparents, and sometimes they have special names for us.
- Ask the children to think about different situations that require people to say someone's name.
 - How do your parents say your name when they kiss you goodnight?
 - How do your parents say your name when they scold you?
 - Has anyone mispronounced or not remembered your name? How did it make you feel?
 - Does anyone have a special, loving nickname for you that only she or he uses? How does it make you feel?
 - Were you named after anyone special? Perhaps family or friends of your parents, or a particular saint?
- Tell the children that in today's story they will hear about the morning of Jesus' Resurrection, when one of his closest followers didn't recognize him until he said her name.

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

- Invite the children to find John 20:11–29 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1701 and 1704). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1702. 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 1702–1703 and describe what they see.

- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why was Mary Magdalene crying at the beginning of the story? *(She believed Jesus' body was missing from the tomb, and she didn't know where it had been moved.)*
 - What did the angels ask Mary? *(They asked her why she was crying.)*
 - Whom did Mary see after the angels spoke to her? *(She saw Jesus, but she did not know at first that it was Jesus.)*
 - How did Jesus help her recognize him? *(He said her name.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. tomb, 2. angels, 3. Lord, 4. Jesus, 5. Mary*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1703, 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 are sad when loved ones die, because we will not see them on Earth again.
 - Mary felt even worse when she could not find Jesus' body. She thought someone had stolen his body.
 - Mary did not recognize Jesus at first. Maybe she had been crying too hard to see, or perhaps Jesus looked different.
 - After Jesus spoke to her and said her name, Mary was filled with joy and ran to tell the other disciples that she had seen him alive.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1703, or have a volunteer read it.
- Have the children take out a pencil and paper to write their imaginary diary entries as Mary Magdalene. Allow a few minutes for the children to write.
- Invite volunteers to share their entries, time permitting.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1703.
- Invite the group to retell the story using the images in the boxes. *(Image 1 shows Mary looking in the tomb. Image 2 shows the two angels dressed in white. Image 3 shows Jesus standing by Mary. Image 4 shows Jesus saying Mary's name.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Coloring Easter Eggs

- Prepare in advance the materials you need to color Easter eggs. Boil enough eggs for each child to have one plus a few extras in case of accidents. Gather white or clear wax crayons (not washable), spoons or tongs, newspapers, aprons, and empty egg cartons. Gather paper cups in spring colors, one per child, and enough green paper “Easter grass” to fill them. Also have supplies available for cleanup after the activity.
- Prepare egg dyes by filling clear plastic cups with one part vinegar to four parts water, and add a few drops of food coloring to each. Consider making two cups for each color so more children can dye eggs at the same time.
- Lay out the supplies on a craft table ahead of time, covering the table with newspaper first to protect it from spills.
- Tell the children that they will make Easter eggs decorated with their own names to celebrate how Jesus knows each of us by name and calls us to new life.
- Give each child an egg and a white or translucent wax crayon. Instruct the children to write their names on their eggs with the crayon.
- Invite small groups of children to the table to dye their eggs. Be sure they put on an apron, and then help them dip their eggs into the dye color they choose. Place the wet eggs in the empty egg carton to dry.
- Have each make a nest by filling a paper cup with green paper grass. Invite them to place their dyed eggs in their cup nests once the eggs are dry.
- Distribute the egg nests to the children at the end of class, making sure everyone receives the egg with their name on it.

Process the Activity

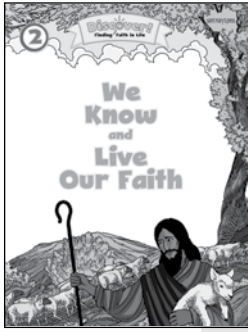
- Point out that the children should be able to see their names on their dyed eggs. Remind the children that Jesus calls each of us by name to follow him in this life and be happy with him forever in the next.
- Encourage the children to display their eggs with their family’s Easter decorations to celebrate how Jesus is calling them to new life. Remind the children to refrigerate their eggs at home until they are put into Easter baskets. Explain that after Easter is over, an adult may want to chop the eggs into salads or make them into egg salad sandwiches.

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 260–261 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Tell the children that during the Easter season, we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection from the dead. Explain that because Jesus rose from the dead, we know that we will also rise to new life one day.
- Share with them that Easter Sunday is one day, but Easter is a whole season that lasts fifty days and ends on Pentecost Sunday.
- Point out to the group that in the church building and in their homes, they will likely see many symbols of Easter. Include some of the following points:
 - Eggs stand for new life.
 - A cross draped in a white cloth also shows that Jesus is alive and no longer suffering.
 - An Easter lily is shaped like a trumpet, which makes a triumphant sound that reminds us of Jesus' victory over sin and death.
 - All flowers stand for new life in spring as do baby animals, such as bunnies and chicks.
- Explain why Mary Magdalene was filled with joy when Jesus helped her recognize him. Recall that Mary Magdalene was **grieving**, or feeling very sad, when she went to visit Jesus' tomb. Remind the children that she felt even more sad when she thought his body had been stolen.
- Point out that she did not recognize Jesus at first, but then he spoke to her. Note that saying her name was important because this showed that Jesus knew who she was and cared about her personally.
- Explain to the children that it is powerful when someone says our name. It shows us that someone knows us and cares about us.
- Tell them that Jesus knew Mary Magdalene was sad and wanted her to have joy again. Remind them that she was filled with joy when she recognized Jesus and saw that he had risen from the dead.
- Explain to the children that Jesus also knows each of our names, and we know his. Tell them that we can use Jesus' holy name in prayer to show that we love him and care about him. Remind the children that Jesus knows and cares about us too and we are friends of Jesus who celebrate his Resurrection.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What do we celebrate during Easter? (*We celebrate Jesus' Resurrection from the dead.*)
 - How do we know we will one day share in Jesus' Resurrection? (*We are part of Jesus' Body, the Church, so we know that we will also rise to new life.*)
 - What are some symbols of Easter? (*Symbols of Easter include eggs, flowers, and the cross with a white cloth.*)
 - Why was Mary Magdalene grieving? (*She thought that Jesus was dead and that someone had moved his body.*)
 - Why is it important that Jesus says Mary Magdalene's name? (*Jesus helps her recognize him when he says her name. Jesus is showing that he cares about her and wants her to have joy again after the sorrow she has felt.*)
- 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 Mary Magdalene, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Mary Magdalene, 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:

- “We Share in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ” and “The Sunday Eucharist,” page 29

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 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:
 - During the Easter season, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead.
 - Jesus’ friend Mary Magdalene was filled with joy when she recognized that Jesus was resurrected.
 - We too are friends of Jesus who celebrate his Resurrection.

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:
 - Loving Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, please bless us with joy this Easter season. Help us walk your path so we may live with you in Heaven forever. We ask this in Jesus’ holy name.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Rejoice, He Is Risen!

Remind the children that "Alleluia!" is an expression of joy, especially joy about the Resurrection. Point out that we do not sing the Alleluia in Lent, but we return to singing it with enthusiasm at Easter. Practice the "Alleluia!" response with the children ahead of time. Explain that the children will sit during each line you read and will stand at every "Alleluia!"

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

Leader: Loving God, heavenly Father, you sent us your Son, Jesus, to save us from sin and death.

All: *(stand up)* Alleluia! *(sit down)*

Leader: Loving Jesus, son of the Father, you died and rose again to save us.

All: *(stand up)* Alleluia! *(sit down)*

Leader: Loving God, Holy Spirit, you fill our hearts with the joy of Jesus' Resurrection.

All: *(stand up)* Alleluia! *(sit down)*

Leader: Loving God, Holy Trinity, please bless us with joy this Easter season, and help us walk your path so we may live with you in Heaven forever. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Close by singing one of the music suggestions or another Easter hymn the children are familiar with.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- slips of paper listing household objects, one for each pair of children
- blank paper
- markers or colored pencils
- a timer with an audible buzzer or bell

Trust Drawing (15 minutes)

- Prepare in advance by printing slips of paper with the names of common household objects, one slip for each pair of children.
- Arrange the children in pairs. Tell the children that for this activity to work, they must trust their partners.
- Tell the pairs that one partner will be the illustrator and the other partner will be the narrator. Explain that the narrator will know what the pair is supposed to draw and will give clues to the illustrator, who will have to guess what to draw based on the clues.
- Seat the pairs on the floor so the partners face away from each other. Distribute the blank paper and markers or colored pencils to each illustrator.
- Give each narrator a slip of paper with the name of a common household object. Instruct the narrators to try to tell their illustrator partners how to draw the object *without* saying what the object is.
- Tell the pairs to begin. Set the timer and allow 5 minutes for them to work. Tell them to stop when the timer goes off.
- Invite the pairs to look at their drawings to see what kind of picture they have made. Then invite them to share their results with the group. Acknowledge how challenging this task was, and congratulate them for their efforts.
- Point out how challenging it can be to understand what someone has seen without having seen it ourselves. Ask them to consider how the Apostles must have found it difficult to imagine Mary Magdalene's news of the Risen Christ when they had not seen him themselves.

Easter

Materials Needed

- none

Storytelling through Role-Play (15 minutes)

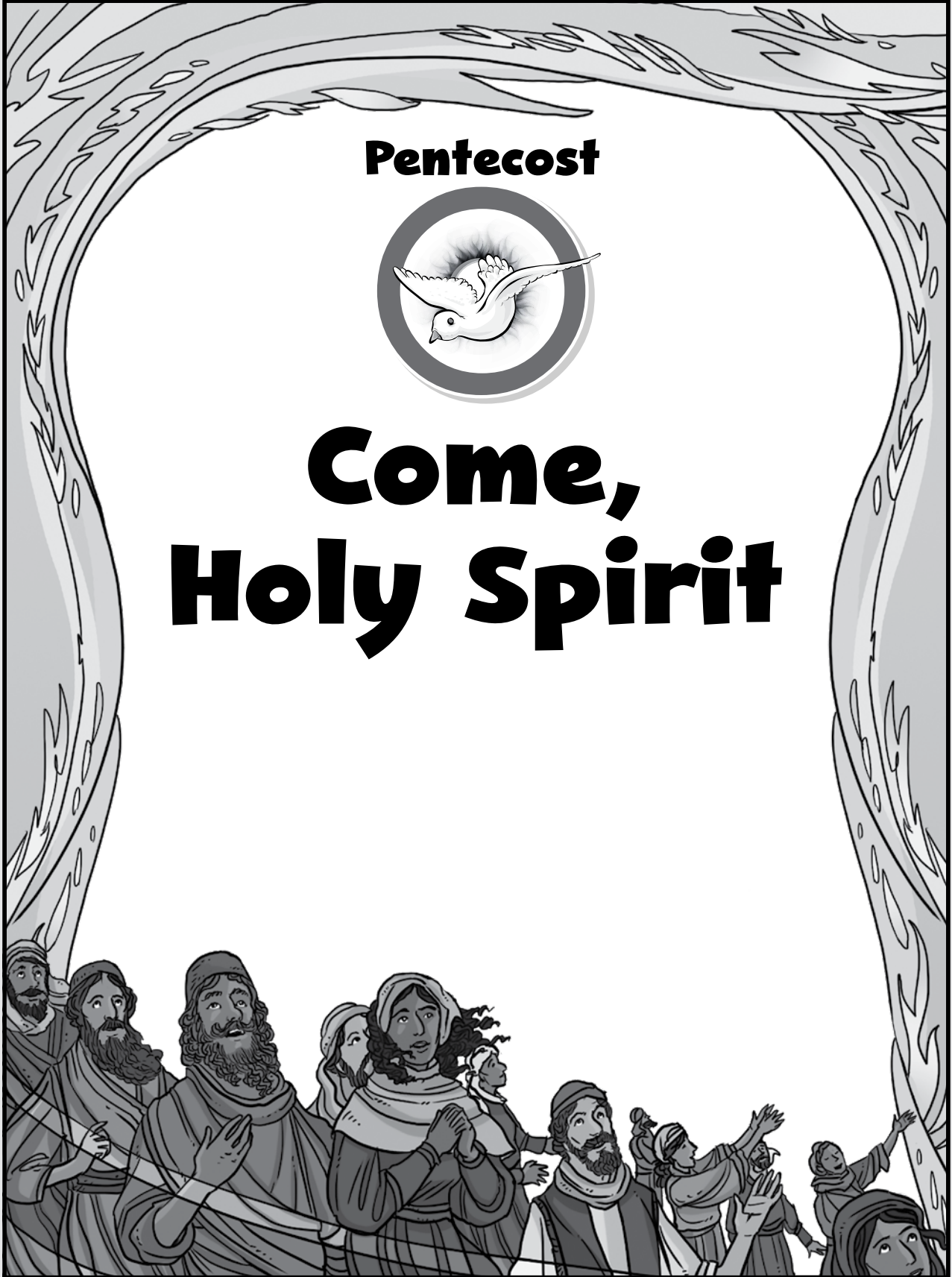
- Tell the children that they will imagine a longer conversation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene on Easter morning.
- Have the children form pairs. Direct the pairs to choose which partner will play Jesus and which will play Mary. Ask them to pretend that they are standing in front of the empty tomb, and invite them to imagine out loud what they might say to each other in their respective roles. Allow time for the children to develop their conversations.
- Invite volunteers to share with the whole class some of the things their pair talked about.

Materials Needed

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

Compare and Contrast (15 minutes)

- Show the video “The Very Best Morning Easter Story” (YouTube, 2:50) to the group.
- Tell the children that this video is based on Matthew’s account of the Resurrection (Matthew 28:1–10). Ask the children to think about the Featured Story they read in this lesson, from the Gospel of John, and Matthew’s version, which the video depicts. Invite them to respond to the following questions and lead them to the answers:
 - What parts of the story are the same? *(Jesus’ friends go to his tomb on the third day and find his body missing. An angel appears to them, and then Jesus appears to them. Jesus tells them to tell his other followers that they have seen him.)*
 - What parts of the story seem different? *(The drawings in the video show two women at Jesus’ tomb, not just Mary Magdalene. The angel is the one who first tells them that Jesus has risen.)*
 - What does the video leave out that the Featured Story from John mentions? *(The video doesn’t show Jesus saying Mary’s name.)*
 - If you retold this story, what details would you make sure to include? *(Affirm all reasonable answers.)*
- Invite the children to draw their own illustration of the scene at the tomb when Mary Magdalene speaks to Jesus. Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials. Invite the children to complete their drawings at home if they cannot finish in the time available.



Pentecost



**Come,
Holy Spirit**





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Acts of the Apostles 2:1–6

Lesson Goals

- to state that the feast of Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the disciples
- to identify that the Holy Spirit helps the Church to spread the Good News of Jesus
- to explain that the Holy Spirit was given to us at our Baptism and will strengthen us in Confirmation

Catechism References

731–747, 797–801

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white and full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

Key Words

Pentecost, tongues of fire, Holy Spirit

Music Suggestions

- “Holy Spirit Come,” by Spring Harvest (Elevation Kids)
- “Fruit of the Spirit,” by Go Fish (GFK Records/Go Fish Resources)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Pentecost activity booklet
- a sample fire streamer
- wooden paint stirring sticks, one for each child
- crêpe paper streamers in red, orange, and yellow, about 2 feet long, several for each child
- tape
- a wall calendar
- a board or poster to write on
- a candle (real or battery-powered) or a battery-powered candle
- matches or a safety lighter (*optional*)
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Pentecost must have been a moment of profound transformation for the first disciples. They had heard Jesus say that the Holy Spirit would come to them, but how could they have known what this would mean? One moment, they were lost in uncertainty. The next, they found themselves on fire with courage, peace, and joy. What would this experience be like—so sudden, but so total?

Pentecost continues to offer us deep meaning, because we continue to need the fresh inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to the first disciples that he would not leave them alone, but rather would send the Holy Spirit to them. He makes the same promise to us. This feast challenges us to deepen our trust in that promise, especially if we cannot fully understand now what it may mean for our future.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to stand with you in the center of the room. Have them stand close together in a circle, holding hands.
- Invite the children to close their eyes and imagine that they are the disciples of Jesus, gathered together right after Jesus has returned to Heaven. Explain to them the situation:
 - Jesus has asked you to leave this room and go out to tell the whole world about him.
 - But you are afraid. The same people who condemned Jesus and nailed him on the cross might come for you next.
 - You have gathered in this room, waiting and praying to see what will happen.
- Ask the children to imagine how they might feel in this moment. Invite responses and affirm all reasonable answers (such as afraid, confused, worried, nervous).
- Tell the children that in today's story they will hear about how the disciples felt differently after the Holy Spirit came to them at Pentecost.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Acts 2:1–42 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1712–1713, 1716). Point out the green leaf at beginning and the end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1714. 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 1714–1715 and 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 were the believers doing on the day of Pentecost? *(They were gathered together in one place.)*
 - What did they hear and see? What did it mean? *(They heard a noise like a strong wind blowing and saw tongues of fire. Both were signs of the coming of the Holy Spirit.)*
 - What did the Holy Spirit do? *(The Holy Spirit filled)*
 - What did the disciples do as a result? *(They began to talk in other languages.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it.

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1715, 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 had told the disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit, which Jesus would send them after he returned to Heaven.
 - The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, which was already the name of a Jewish feast day. This is where we get the name of the Christian Feast of Pentecost.
 - The signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit were wind and fire.
 - After the Holy Spirit came upon them, the disciples could speak in many different languages and had the courage to tell more people about Jesus.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1715, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the group to pray the prayer with you. Use a rhythm pattern or the melody of a song, if you like, to help the children enjoy saying the poem and increase their ability to remember it.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1715.
- Invite volunteers to share what they see in the boxes and how it relates to the Scripture story. *(Image 1 shows the disciples praying. Image 2 shows the strong wind. Image 3 shows the tongues of fire.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Make a Fire Streamer

- Prepare a sample fire streamer prior to the activity to show the children what to do. Prepare a craft table ahead of time by laying out the supplies: paint stirring sticks, crêpe paper streamers (in red, orange, and yellow), and tape.
- Tell the children that they will make a fire streamer to help them visualize the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.
- Arrange the children into small groups. Invite each group to come to the craft table to make their streamers. Have the children take one paint stirring stick and several crêpe paper streamers. Show the children how to tape the end of their streamers to the end of their sticks.
- Allow the children some time to play and dance with their streamers. Remind them gently to be respectful of others' personal space. Tell them that these streamers are meant to represent the Holy Spirit.
- Invite the children to sit in a circle when they are finished making their streamers. Have the children dance their streamers above their heads, mirroring the way the Holy Spirit came to rest on each disciple as a flame.

Process the Activity

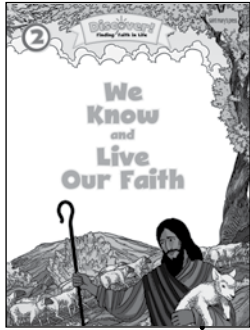
- Ask the children to think about fire:
 - What are some good kinds of fire? (*Examples can include fireplaces, firepits, campfires, the candles at church.*)
 - How does fire make us feel? (*Ideally, fire makes us feel warm and gives us light. We gather around fireplaces and campfires for warmth and togetherness.*)
 - Why do we have to be careful with fire? (*Fire is very powerful, so we have to use it correctly.*)
- Invite the children to think about why the Holy Spirit is like a fire or flame. Lead the children to recognize that the Holy Spirit also brings us together and shows us the light, but that the Holy Spirit is also very powerful.
- Point out that in church we use red (the color of fire) on the Feast of Pentecost to symbolize the power and love of the Holy Spirit.

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 270–271 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Use the wall calendar to help the children count the days from Easter to Pentecost. Start with Easter as day 1, and you should land on Pentecost Sunday as day 50.
- Explain the following points about the origin of Pentecost:
 - The word *Pentecost* comes from a Greek word meaning “fiftieth.”
 - Pentecost was originally a Jewish holiday (also known as Shavuot, pronounced SHAH-voo-OTE). The Jewish holiday is celebrated fifty days after the Jewish Feast of Passover.
 - The Christian holiday falls fifty days after Easter.
- Remind the children that at Pentecost, Christians remember the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples and Mary. Recall that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Blessed Trinity.
- Explain that sometimes the children will hear Pentecost called the birthday of the Church. Tell them that this is because the Holy Spirit helped Jesus’ followers begin the Church on Pentecost. Explain that the Holy Spirit helps the Church today to spread the Good News of Jesus.
- Point out that the Holy Spirit is the connection of love between the Father and the Son. Explain that the Holy Spirit connects each of us in love with the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit also connects us to each other in Jesus’ Body, the Church.
- Tell the children that they received the Holy Spirit and became members of the Church at their Baptism. Tell them that the Holy Spirit strengthens us in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Where do we get the word *Pentecost*? (*It was first the name of a Jewish holiday, fifty days after Passover. The Christian Pentecost that we celebrate falls fifty days after Easter. The word comes from a Greek word meaning “fiftieth.”*)
 - What do we celebrate at Pentecost? (*We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples and Mary.*)
 - Who is the Holy Spirit? (*The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Blessed Trinity: the connection of love between the Father and the Son, between God and us, and among all people in the Church.*)
 - Why is Pentecost called the birthday of the Church? (*The Holy Spirit helped Jesus’ followers begin the Church on Pentecost.*)
- 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, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Peter, 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:

- “Three Persons in One God” + activity, pages 10–11
- “We Belong to the Church” + activity, pages 18–19

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 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 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 Feast of Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the disciples.
 - The Holy Spirit helps the Church to spread the Good News of Jesus.
 - The Holy Spirit was given to us at our Baptism and will strengthen us in Confirmation.

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.
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet to pray the prayer together as a class.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Come, Holy Spirit!

Light a candle (real or battery-powered) on the classroom prayer table to represent the presence of the Holy Spirit. Ask the children to lay their fire streamers on the desks or tables in front of them. Direct them to respond, "Come, Holy Spirit!" and then twirl their fire streamers three times after each petition. Practice with the streamers by asking the children to twirl them while you say "1, 2, 3, down" to clarify expectations. At "down," the children will lay the streamers down until the next petition.

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

Leader: Loving God, Holy Trinity, you live in us as the Holy Spirit.

All: Come, Holy Spirit! *(Twirl fire streamers three times.)*

Leader: Fill our hearts with the fire of your love.

All: Come, Holy Spirit! *(Twirl fire streamers three times.)*

Leader: Renew our hearts with the fire of your love.

All: Come, Holy Spirit! *(Twirl fire streamers three times.)*

Leader: Come and change the world, in us and through us.

All: Come, Holy Spirit! *(Twirl fire streamers three times.)*

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

Close by singing one of the music suggestions or another appropriate song for Pentecost.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- an electric fan
- a pinwheel

Who Has Seen the Wind? (15 minutes)

- Plug an electric fan into an outlet somewhere in the classroom.
- Turn on the fan at activity time and hold up a pinwheel. Show the children how the air that blows through the fan moves the pinwheel. Point out that they cannot see the air, but they can see the movement created by the wind.
- Ask the children to suggest other examples of wind and wind-powered devices (such as kites, windmills, flags, tree branches, and wind turbines). Point out that wind is powerful enough to generate energy, even though we cannot see it.
- Make the connection that, like the wind, the Holy Spirit gives us power that we cannot see but that is real all the same.
- Encourage the children to ask their parents to find the directions to make a pinwheel online and to make one to help them remember the Holy Spirit is with them. If you have extra time, you might consider doing this as a group.

Materials Needed

- a candle (real or battery-powered)
- matches or a safety lighter (optional)

Properties of Fire (15 minutes)

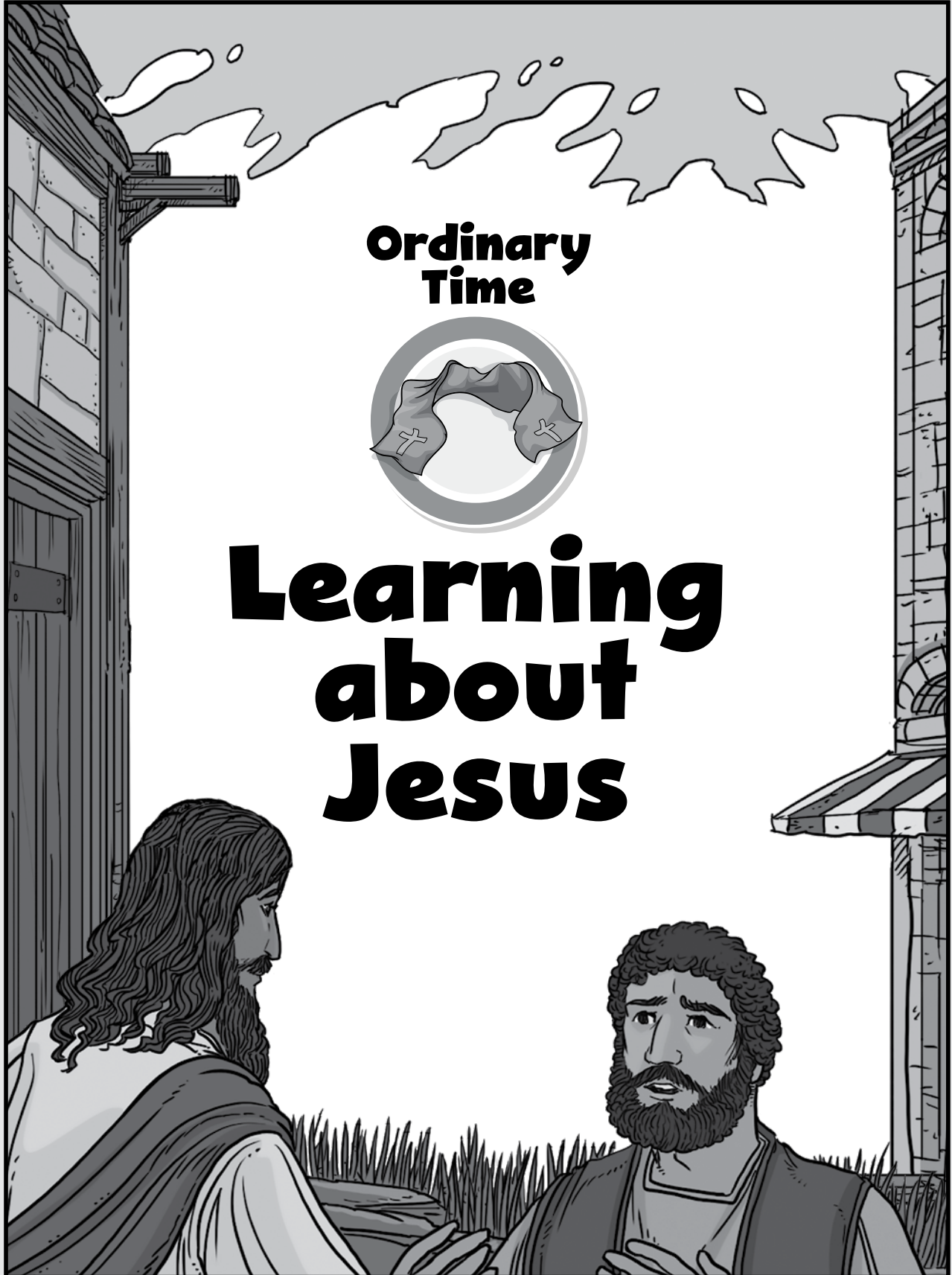
- Light a candle (real or battery-powered) at the prayer table where the children can gather to see it.
- Ask the children to observe the candle for a minute without speaking. Tell them that you will soon talk about what they see, but not yet. Ask them to watch the candle quietly.
- Invite the children to describe the candle "flame" ("bright," "hot," "shiny," "beautiful," or any words related to color and shape).
- Ask the children how they think the Holy Spirit might be like the flame of a candle. Affirm all reasonable answers.
- Share that fire has often been a symbol of the Holy Spirit because it is beautiful, powerful, and lights our way through life. Explain that fire or flame also recalls moments in Scripture when God made himself known by using fire as a sign of his presence.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- a board or poster to write to write on

Stories of the Holy Spirit (15 minutes)

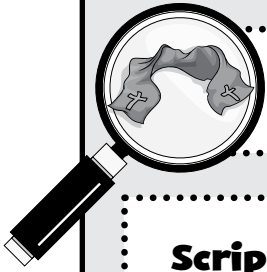
- Show the video “Kid Bible Story: Pentecost” (YouTube, 1:57) to the group.
- Invite the children to share what they learned from the video.
- Affirm that we receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptized, and we are further strengthened with the Holy Spirit at the Sacrament of Confirmation. Share with the children when they will likely be preparing for and celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Remind the children that the Holy Spirit gave the disciples courage to tell others about Jesus and that we too are called to spread the Good News about Jesus to others.
- Invite the children to brainstorm ways they can tell others about Jesus. Encourage them to think of simple ways they can do this through their words but also through actions. Make a list of their ideas on the board.
- Tell the children to choose one way and see if they can do it over the next week. Remind them that they can always ask the Holy Spirit for strength and courage.



**Ordinary
Time**



**Learning
about
Jesus**



Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Matthew 18:21–22

Lesson Goals

- to identify Ordinary Time as the time of year when we learn more about the life of Jesus and his teachings
- to identify that forgiveness is one of the most important teachings of Jesus
- to state that Jesus expects us to forgive an endless amount of times

Catechism References

543–550, 2840–2845

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white and full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

Key Word

boundaries

Music Suggestions

- “Forgive One Another,” by Integrity Kids (Integrity Music)
- “Peter Learns to Forgive (Forgive),” by The Wonder Kids (Wonder Workshop)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Ordinary Time activity booklet
- construction paper
- crayons
- foam or cardboard door hangers, one for each child
- markers or paint markers
- a board or poster to write on
- background music (*optional*)
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

During Ordinary Time in the Church year, we learn more about the life and teachings of Jesus. One teaching we hear is the message of forgiving others. However, to forgive someone, especially when we have been wronged, can be a challenge. And to forgive someone over and over can feel close to impossible.

As we grow in our understanding of Jesus’ life and teaching, we recognize that repeated forgiveness is an act of strength rather than weakness. Forgiveness requires us to be generous, understanding, and at peace with ourselves. We don’t have to accept mistreatment or abuse, but Jesus asks us to forgive people infinitely and endlessly as God forgives.

Children are sometimes quicker to forgive than adults. Help them to see that they are living as Jesus taught when they offer forgiveness to those who come to them with sorrowful hearts. Forgiveness is a mercy within our power to grant. Who needs our mercy? From whom do we need to ask mercy? Now it’s our turn.



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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to share what they already know about Jesus' teachings, especially anything Jesus taught us to do or to be (such as being kind and humble, loving one another, forgiving, and making peace). Invite responses and record reasonable responses on the board.
- Let the children know that in today's lesson we will look at one of Jesus' most important teachings: his teaching about forgiving others.
- Acknowledge that forgiving someone can be hard. Tell the children that Jesus asks us to forgive because he knows it will help us to be happy and free. Share in your own words why forgiveness is important in your life, as you feel comfortable.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Matthew 18:21–35 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1491). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1492. 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 1492–1493 and 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 question does Peter ask Jesus? (*He asks how many times he must forgive someone who sins against him.*)
 - What answer does Jesus give Peter? (*Jesus says that we must forgive "seventy times seven" times.*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. Help them to use the lowercase letters given below the lines to find the uppercase letters they correspond to. *Answer: Forgive one another.*

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 1493, 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:
 - In the Bible, the number seven means perfection.
 - It is hard to forgive someone who hurts us. Peter probably thought he was being generous by suggesting we should forgive seven times. We should never stop offering forgiveness.
 - By saying that Peter (and all the rest of us) should forgive “seventy times seven” times, Jesus is saying that we should forgive perfectly—that is, over and over again.
 - God also forgives us over and over. Jesus is asking us to forgive the way God forgives.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1493, or have a volunteer read it.
- Distribute construction paper and crayons to the children. Direct them to make cards following the directions in the Live It! in the Bible. Allow a few minutes for the children to work.
- Encourage the children to take their cards home and use them when they want to ask someone’s forgiveness.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1493.
- Invite volunteers to share what is happening in each box and how it relates to the Scripture story. *(Image 1 shows Jesus walking and talking with Peter. Image 2 shows Peter asking how many times he has to forgive. Image 3 shows Jesus responding to Peter.)*



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Making a Forgiveness Reminder

- Tell the children that they will make a door hanger that they can use at home to remind them of the need to forgive always.
- Distribute to each child a blank foam or cardboard door hanger and art supplies.

- Write on the board several words and phrases that the children can choose to write on their door hangers, such as “forgive,” “I forgive you,” and “70 x 7.”
- Allow the children time to make their door hanger reminders. Consider playing music with themes of reconciliation or forgiveness in the background as they work on their craft.

Process the Activity

- Ask the children to think about their experiences forgiving others and being forgiven. Invite volunteers to answer the following questions:
 - What makes it easy to forgive someone?
 - What makes it hard to forgive someone?
- Explain that sometimes a reminder can help us forgive when we don’t really feel like forgiving. Encourage the children to take their door hangers home and display them in a place where they will remind everyone in their family to forgive one another.

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 280–281 in its place.

Note: The handout can be found on page 291 or accessed online at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

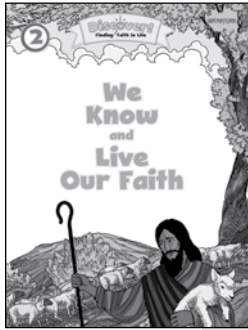
Core Teaching

- Use the black and white Church year calendar on page 291 or the full-color version online as a visual aid to show the children when Ordinary Time falls during the Church year. Make the following points about Ordinary Time:
 - Ordinary Time is a Church season that lasts about half of the year, from Pentecost Sunday to the First Sunday in Advent.
 - A smaller section of Ordinary Time also falls between the Christmas season and the beginning of Lent.
 - Ordinary Time is a season when we learn more about Jesus’ life and his teachings. We can think of it as a “growing time,” just as spring and summer are times of growth in nature.
- Tell the children that Ordinary Time is when we learn more about Jesus, including his teachings on forgiveness found in today’s Scripture passage. Share the following points about forgiveness with the children:
 - Forgiveness is one of Jesus’ most important teachings.
 - In addition to today’s reading, we also learn about forgiveness in the Our Father, which Jesus taught us. In the Our Father we ask God to forgive us, as we forgive others.

Ordinary Time



- When we forgive, we are not saying that a wrong action was right. We are just letting go of our angry feelings and showing others that we can start again with them. We can forgive someone before they even ask us, or even if they never ask us.
- When we forgive others, we admit that we all make mistakes. We can forgive others because we know that sometimes we need to be forgiven too.
- When Jesus says that he wants us to forgive others endlessly, he is really saying that he wants us to forgive others in the same way God forgives us—endlessly. We receive God’s forgiveness when we ask for it. We especially receive God’s forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.
- Help the children understand that forgiveness does not mean we have to put up with being hurt or bullied by others. Explain that forgiveness does not mean we can’t protect ourselves. Share that we do not have to allow the same wrong action to keep happening.
- Tell the children that if we need help to stop someone who is hurting us, we can always ask our parents, teachers, or other trusted adults. Explain that we can also set **boundaries**, or limits. Point out that we can tell someone that they are not allowed to treat us in a hurtful way, and if they do not stop, then we can walk away from the situation or ask someone for help.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is Ordinary Time? *(It is the Church season that lasts from Pentecost to Advent, and from the Christmas season to Lent.)*
 - What do we learn about in Ordinary Time? *(We learn about Jesus’ life and teachings. We practice following Jesus.)*
 - What is one important way we practice following Jesus that we learned about in today’s Scripture passage? *(We forgive others.)*
 - What do we do when we forgive someone? *(We let go of our angry feelings about their wrong action.)*
 - What do we *not* do when we forgive someone? *(We do not say that their wrong action was right. We do not allow them to continue hurting us.)*
 - How can we act if someone is acting badly towards us? *(We can set a boundary. We can tell the person to stop. We can ask our parents, teachers, or trusted adults for help.)*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read the “People of Faith” section to the group. Add any other information you know about Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, and encourage the children to say, “Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, 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 the Father Sent His Son to Us,” page 12
- “Jesus Became Human to Make Us More Like God,” page 14
- “We Pray the Our Father in Church,” page 48

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 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 time of year when we learn more about the life and teachings of Jesus.
 - Forgiveness is one of the most important teachings of Jesus.
 - Jesus expects us to forgive an endless amount of times.

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 by asking them to respond, “Jesus, help us to forgive,” after each statement or petition:
 - Jesus, you show us the way in every part of our lives.
 - You forgave your closest friends when they betrayed you.
 - You forgave the soldiers who hurt you.
 - Help us to follow your example.
 - Help us to forgive others.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen.”
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

Becoming People of Forgiveness

Teach the children to hold their open hands over their hearts during the leader's parts of the prayer, and then show them how to slowly extend their arms wider and wider as they respond, "Jesus, help us to forgive." At the end of this prayer, their arms should be opened wide to symbolize endless forgiving.

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

Leader: Dear Jesus, you show us the way in every part of our lives. You teach us with your words. You teach us with your life.

All: Jesus, help us to forgive.

Leader: Dear Jesus, you forgave all those who hurt you. You forgave your closest friends when they betrayed you.

All: Jesus, help us to forgive.

Leader: Dear Jesus, you prayed to God as the soldiers were placing you on the cross. You asked your Father to forgive them, because they did not know what they were doing.

All: Jesus, help us to forgive.

Leader: Dear Jesus, help us to follow your example. We hope in your promises, and we trust that following you will lead us to happiness.

All: Jesus, help us to forgive.

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

Close with one of the music suggestions or another appropriate song about forgiveness.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- none

Forgiveness in Action (15 minutes)

- Explain to the children that the more practice we have at asking for forgiveness and offering forgiveness to others, the easier it will become.
- Arrange the children into small groups of three or four, and tell them that they will work together to create a scenario in which a person or people ask for forgiveness and another person or people offer forgiveness.
- Brainstorm with the children some possible scenarios to encourage their creativity.
- Ask each small group to perform their scenarios for the class. Talk about each scenario with the group, pointing out the moments of forgiveness.

Materials Needed

- a clear glass of diluted lemon juice, marked *A*
- a clear glass of sugar water, marked *B*
- plastic spoons, two for each child

Anger and Forgiveness Sensory Activity (15 minutes)

- Prepare ahead of time by setting up an activity table to one side of the room with the needed materials: two glasses of liquid, one with diluted lemon juice, and the other with sugar water. Label the first glass *A* and the second glass *B*. (Adjust the activity as needed for any food allergies or sensitivities among the children.)
- Tell the children that they will take part in a taste test. Instruct them that the results should surprise the whole group, so they should not say anything about the two samples until everyone has had a chance to taste them.
- Arrange the children into small groups. Have each group come up to the table. Give each child two spoons. Then give the instructions for the test:
 - Dip one clean spoon into glass *A* and taste only a tiny amount.
 - Dip the other clean spoon into glass *B* and taste only a tiny amount.
 - Remember what each liquid tasted like, but keep it to yourself for now.
- Ask the children to describe the taste of sample *A* ("sour" or "bitter"). Ask them to describe the taste of sample *B* ("sweet"). Then ask them which sample is a better symbol for anger, and why. (Most will respond "the sour/bitter sample" or "sample *A*.")
- Ask the children which sample is a better symbol for forgiveness. (Most will respond "the sweet sample" or "sample *B*.")
- Remind the children that holding on to anger is often more unpleasant for the angry person than for the person who has done wrong. Point out that letting go of anger and allowing forgiveness into our hearts can be sweet.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

Exploring Forgiveness in Scripture (15 minutes)

- Show the video “Gospel Reading and Reflection for Kids—Matthew 18:21–35—September 17, 2017” (YouTube, 2:48) to the group.
- Make sure the children understand the full parable by inviting volunteers to retell it briefly after the video.
- Ask the children to respond to the parable by asking questions such as the following:
 - How would you feel if you were the servant who was forgiven?
 - How would you feel if you were the master who forgave the debt?
 - How would you feel if you were one of the other servants?
- Explain that the master in the story forgives the servant completely, as soon as he asks, the way God forgives us. Point out that the servant then turns around and does not forgive the other servants, which shows that he does not understand the value of forgiveness.
- Emphasize that we are called to show God’s forgiveness to all those who ask for our forgiveness.

Mary



Mary Is Our Mother





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

John 2:1–11

Lesson Goals

- to name the role of Mary as our helper and intercessor
- to state that Jesus performed the miracle of turning water into wine at the request of his mother, Mary
- to identify that we honor Mary with various titles

Catechism References

487–511, 721–726, 1335, 1613, 2617–2622

Key Words

devotions, intercede, immaculate

Music Suggestions

- “Immaculate One,” by Cat.Chat (Cat.Chat Productions)
- “Immaculate Mary,” by ILP Childrens’ Choir (International Liturgy Publications)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Mary activity booklet
- blank paper and pencils
- a sample prayer pocket
- red construction paper, two sheets for each child
- several pairs of scissors
- several bottles of glue
- a board or poster to write on
- image of Mary
- flowers
- rosary
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

Although the New Testament records very little about Mary, Christian tradition has always recognized that Mary’s role in Christian life did not end with the Nativity. Rather, her importance continued throughout Jesus’ life on Earth and beyond. In today’s reading from John’s Gospel, for example, we see how she encouraged Jesus to perform the first miracle of his public ministry at the wedding in Cana.

From the Acts of the Apostles, we know that Mary supported Jesus’ followers through the growth of the early Church after Jesus’ Resurrection and Ascension. Presumably, Jesus’ disciples continued to ask for Mary’s help and prayers even after Mary was assumed into Heaven.

Since the earliest days of the Church, Christians have prayed to Mary to ask for all kinds of help and intercession. We too can turn to Mary and ask for her prayers that we might grow in faith and become closer to her Son, Jesus.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Mary 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 all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Ask the children to imagine they are guests at a birthday party where the cake has run out, and there is not enough cake for everyone to have a piece. Ask them the following questions:
 - How do you think the people throwing the party feel because they don't have enough for everyone?
 - How do you think the birthday child feels?
 - How would you feel if you received a piece of cake and others didn't?
 - How would you feel if you didn't receive a piece of cake but others did?
- Invite volunteers to respond, and affirm all reasonable answers.
- Explain to the children that in today's Scripture, Jesus and Mary attend a wedding where the wine has run out and there is not enough for all of the guests.
- Tell them that first they will discover what Mary did about this situation, and then they will find out what Jesus did because Mary asked him to.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find John 2:1–11 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 1650–1651).
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who were some guests at the wedding in Cana? (*Jesus, his mother Mary, and Jesus' disciples were guests.*)
 - What did Mary do when the wine ran out? (*She told Jesus that they were out of wine.*)

- How did Jesus respond? *(He told Mary that she must not tell him what to do. He said that his time had not yet come.)*
- How did Mary respond? *(She went to the servants at the wedding and told them that they should do whatever Jesus told them to do.)*
- What instructions did Jesus give to the servants, and what did he do next? *(He told them to fill six jars with water. Then he turned the water into wine.)*
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 1. wedding, Cana; 2. mother, wine; 3. servants, water; 4. water, wine; 5. best*

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:
 - Jesus and Mary had probably known the couple for a long time because, at that time, communities were small so everyone was like family.
 - Mary didn't want the couple to be embarrassed about running out of wine for the wedding, so she asked Jesus to help.
 - Jesus resisted at first, but he turned water into wine because he loved his mother and cared about his neighbors.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 1 of the activity booklet, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to take out paper and a pencil, and invite them to write a prayer asking for Mary's help. Allow them time to think and write.
- Encourage the children to take their prayers home, post them, and pray them often.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the Scripture story on pages 1650–1651 once again.
- Have the group close their Bibles, and invite volunteers to retell the story in their own words. Affirm the children for points they remember, and help them with any key points they may have left out.



Discover! (25 minutes)

Mary

Core Learning Activity (Craft)

Marian Prayer Pocket

- Prepare ahead of time by laying out the craft supplies on a table to one side of the classroom: red construction paper, scissors, and glue sticks. Create a sample prayer pocket to show the children.
- Tell the children that they will make a prayer pocket to hold prayers that they will entrust to Mary. Explain that they will make this prayer pocket in the shape of a heart to remember how much Mary loves them and wants the best for them.
- Show the children the sample craft you completed ahead of time, so that they can see how to complete these main steps of the craft:
 - Lay one sheet of construction paper on top of the other, and cut out a large heart shape.
 - Glue the two hearts together, but leave the top of the heart unglued so that pieces of paper can be inserted into the heart pocket.
- Invite the children to decorate the outside of their prayer pockets with designs and to write the words, "Holy Mary, pray for us."

Process the Activity

- Encourage the children to take their prayer pockets home and use them to hold prayer intentions that they write on paper and insert into the pocket.
- Suggest that the children ask their families and friends what they would like prayers for. Tell the children that they can write these prayers down, pray for their families and friends, and then place the papers in their prayer pocket to ask Mary to pray for them also.

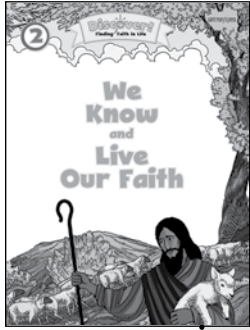
Additional Activity Options

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 290 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain that turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana was the first miracle Jesus ever performed. Remind the children that Mary asked Jesus to help because she cared about the wedding couple, their parents, and their guests. Tell them that she did not want the party to end because the wine had run out.
- Recall that Mary brought the problem to Jesus, and Jesus did as Mary asked because he loved her and wanted to make her happy.

- Explain to the group that this first miracle at Cana, when Jesus changed ordinary water into wine, was a sign of the miracle of the Eucharist, when ordinary wine is changed into the Blood of Christ.
- Remind the children that a miracle also takes place at every Mass, when the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Emphasize that the bread and wine still look and taste the same as before, but Jesus is really present.
- Explain that even now, Mary brings our needs to Jesus in Heaven and asks him to help us. Tell the group that we have special **devotions**, or expressions of religious love, to Mary because she was Jesus' mother. Explain that we ask Mary to take our requests to Jesus, just as she brought her request to Jesus at the wedding of Cana.
- Explain to the group that the word **intercede** means to pray for someone in need. Tell the children that Mary intercedes for us, she prays for us and our needs. Emphasize that Mary is our helper and intercessor.
- Point out that Mary has many different titles. Explain that some of her titles refer to places associated with a special devotion to Mary; other titles refer to things that Mary is or has done. Ask the children if they know any of the different titles for Mary.
- Write some of these titles of Mary on the board to help the children remember them: Mother of the Church, Mother of God, Seat of Wisdom, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of the Rosary, Immaculate Conception (explain that the word **immaculate** means "pure, free from sin"), Queen of Heaven, and Queen of Peace. Tell the children that these are just some of the many titles we use to honor Mary.
- Ask the children questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Why did Mary ask Jesus to help the family at Cana? (*She cared how they felt. She did not want them to be sad, embarrassed, or disappointed.*)
 - Why did Jesus decide to help the family at Cana? (*He loved Mary and wanted to make her happy.*)
 - How is the miracle at Cana like the miracle that happens in the Eucharist? (*At Cana, ordinary water changed into wine. In the Eucharist, ordinary wine is changed into the Blood of Christ.*)
 - What happens when we ask for Mary's prayers? (*She brings our needs to Jesus.*)
 - What is devotion? (*Devotion is a special kind of religious love.*)
 - What are some of Mary's titles? (*Mary's titles include the following: Mother of the Church, Mother of God, Seat of Wisdom, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of the Rosary, Immaculate Conception, Queen of Heaven, and Queen of Peace.*)
- 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 Lourdes, and encourage the children to say, "Our Lady of Lourdes, 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:

- “Mary Is the Mother of God” + activity, pages 16–17

Read aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, the selection 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 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 our helper and intercessor.
 - Jesus performed the miracle of turning water into wine at the request of his mother, Mary.
 - We honor Mary with various titles.

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 are the Queen of Peace because you show us the way to God. Help us see and follow the path to God so that we can be happy in Heaven forever.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

We Turn to Mary

Prepare the prayer space by including an image of Mary, some flowers, and a rosary. Gather the children around the prayer space for this prayer. Ask the children to hold hands as they face the image of Mary. Explain that when they respond "Holy Mary," they will raise their arms together and step forward. When they continue, "Pray for us," they will put their arms down and step back.

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

Leader: Jesus, our Savior, you love us and care for us. You did what your mother asked when you lived on Earth together. You gave us your mother to be our mother. So we ask for Mary's prayers as we journey toward you.

All: Holy Mary, pray for us.

Leader: Mary, Mother of the Church, we know you are a loving mother to us, always ready to listen and help all of God's people.

All: Holy Mary, pray for us.

Leader: Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, thank you for giving us Jesus. Please be with us whenever we receive Jesus in Holy Communion.

All: Holy Mary, pray for us.

Leader: Mary, Help of Christians, you have always been known for your warmth toward anyone in need. Please help us whenever we need it.

All: Holy Mary, pray for us.

Leader: Mary, Immaculate Conception, you were chosen by God to bring Jesus to the world and you said yes. Help us to do whatever God asks of us.

All: Holy Mary, pray for us.

Leader: Mary, Queen of Peace, help us to see and follow the path to God so that we can be happy in Heaven forever.

All: Holy Mary, pray for us.

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

All: Amen.

Close by singing one of the music suggestions or another appropriate song or hymn.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- modeling clay, enough for each child to form a small jar

Materials Needed

- several large buckets of water
- smaller containers, all of equal size, one for each team
- scoops or ladles, one for each team
- a timer
- several towels

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- a song or hymn about Mary
- *The Catholic Children's Bible* (optional)

A Jar of Prayers (15 minutes)

- Give each child some modeling clay and encourage them to make a small jar to remind them of the jars in which Jesus turned water into wine.
- Remind them that because of Mary's request, Jesus performed his first miracle.
- Explain that these small jars can become a reminder to them that Mary is always there, willing to pray to Jesus for them.
- Encourage the children to place their jars somewhere in their home where they will see them each day. Tell the children they can even write their needs on small pieces of paper and drop them in their jars as they ask Mary to pray for them.

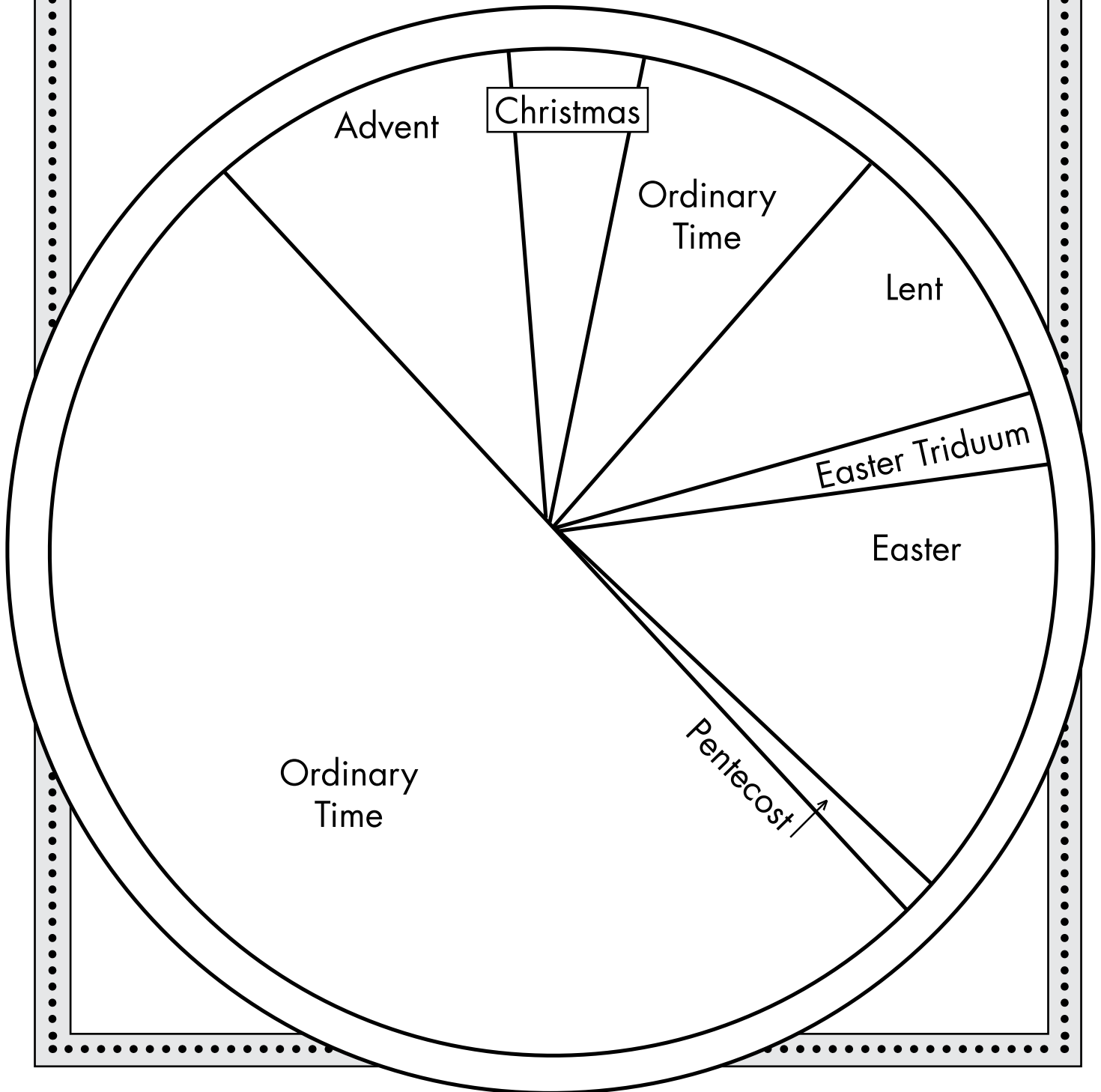
Fill the Jars Team Race (15 minutes)

- Prepare ahead of time by finding an outdoor space for this activity to avoid slips and falls. Fill several large buckets or other containers with water. Mark a starting line and place the bucket there. Gather several smaller containers of equal size and place them at a distance from the starting line.
- Arrange the children into small teams for the race. Give each team a scoop or ladle, and have them stand behind the starting line with the bucket of water.
- Explain that the teams must fill their water jars (the smaller containers) using the scoop or ladle. Explain that the jars cannot be moved. Tell the group that every team that fills its jar before the timer rings wins. Explain that the only rule is that every team member must participate in some way.
- Give the teams a few minutes to discuss the best and fastest way to fill their jars with everyone participating.
- Set the timer for 7 minutes, and tell the teams to start. Cheer the children on, and give hints and support as necessary. Declare the winning teams, and congratulate all teams for their efforts.
- Distribute towels for the children to dry off.
- Point out that Jesus began his miracle at the wedding in Cana by asking the servants to fill the jars with water, just as the children did in this activity.

The Wedding Feast (15 minutes)

- Show the video "MIRACLE AT CANA" (YouTube, 3:16) to the group.
- Invite the children to share what they noticed and how the video was similar to or different from the Scripture story they read.
- Play one of the music suggestions or another Marian hymn the children might be familiar with. Encourage the children to come up with hand motions for the chorus or other repeating lines in the song or hymn.
- End by praying the Hail Mary together. If the children do not have this memorized yet, have them turn to page 1991 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* to read along.

Church Year Calendar



Acknowledgments

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The excerpts on pages 30 and 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_exhexh_20100930_verbum-domini_en.html. Copyright © 2010 LEV.

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Endnote cited in excerpt from "The Word of the Lord"

1. *Propositio 29*.