

In God's Image

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Recognize that we are made to be in relationship with God
- Identify ways humans are different from the rest of the created world
- Examine Jesus' relationship with God the Father and apply it to our own lives
- Discuss the covenant, or sacred promise, made between God and humans
- Recognize God's faithfulness to humans even when we sin
- Discover how God's law guides us to live in his image and follow the covenant
- Understand that natural and revealed law guide us in faithful living

Parents, Consider This: *Relationships are complicated. We spend most of our lives as adolescents and adults trying to negotiate the intricacies of them. As your child expands his/her relationships and social responsibilities, he/she is beginning to grapple with the expectations of others, including the sometimes-conflicting expectations of family members and peers. We all want to believe in a God who is bigger and more in control than we are, yet we also seek a God who is an intimate, understanding, and very personal companion. One of the greatest things you can communicate to your child is that he or she is made in God's image and likeness. When she/he begins to see her/himself and others as precious children of God rather than objects to be used, your child will grow greatly in her/his sense of self-worth and in the ability to love generously.*

Children at This Age: *Your child may still understand God's law as a list of "dos and don'ts," rather than an invitation to relationship. Your son/daughter may be more open to God's law when he/she understands God's great love and how the law of God helps us each to be the person we were meant to be.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 51,
In God's Image

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked "All."

Say: Because God wanted to have a relationship with us based on our ability to choose, he made us different from the rest of creation. Let's listen to what the Bible says about how God created man in his image and likeness.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God's Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: The purpose of our life is to grow in total union with God so that we will experience that union for all of eternity.

Ask: Do you think most people think about that every day?

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does it mean to be created in God's image? (*Because God is perfectly good, we too are good. We were given the gift to be like God in that we have free will and a soul.*)
- How can we know the right way to live? (*With a soul, reason, and free will, human beings can set their priority and direction in life toward friendship with God.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 52,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Skip the activity if you had a good conversation on the *Have you ever thought...* questions. If you did not cover them in depth, spend a few minutes completing the chart together.

Turn to Page 53

Ask your child to complete the activity on commitments in the book. You can write your answers on a separate piece of paper, changing *school* to *work*. When you both are finished, encourage your child to share three or four of his/her commitments (the ones you are most curious about); then, invite your child to ask you about three or four of your commitments that she/he is most curious about.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 54–59. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 59,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 60

Direct your son/daughter to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *As adults we understand the need for rules and are often resentful when others do not live by them. It is sometimes difficult to broaden our understanding of rules as beyond the laws we necessarily must obey. Have you ever considered that the law is the minimum of what love requires? To boast that I am lawful is to simply say I have done the minimum. In the upcoming exercise, you are going to ask your child to go beyond minimalistic thinking and to imagine all that love would have us do if we lived the fullness of God's invitation to relationship in the Ten Commandments.*

Say: While the Commandments set the boundaries by telling us everything that is outside of them is sinful, it is important to understand all that they are asking us to be. Each of us will take a piece of paper and write down the Ten Commandments (see page 373), leaving a number of lines in-between each one. In those spaces, we will think about all that the Commandment is telling us to do and be. For example, "Do not kill," means that we are to respect all life. How do we do that individually and as a family?

Work independently on the activity and then share your answers.

Read the People of Faith box and discuss how Saint Marcella lived a life beyond the minimum of what God's law would ask.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Faith on Page 385.



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student & Family section of aliveinchrist.osv.com.

Revelation and Faith

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Discover how the message of Jesus' saving action was first communicated through the Apostles and then the Gospels
- Identify how the Church continues to proclaim the Good News of salvation
- Recognize that Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition together are sources of God's Divine Revelation
- Identify faith as a gift from God and a personal response to that gift
- Explore how the Church supports the faith of her members
- Understand that Sacred Tradition is safeguarded by the Church and interpreted by the Magisterium
- Discuss how faith made a difference in the lives of people in Sacred Scripture
- Examine how the three Theological Virtues help us to believe in God, trust in his plan, and love him as he loves us

Parents, Consider This: *Trust is the most basic and most necessary foundation for human development. Discerning who to trust was probably one of the most challenging and perhaps hurtful parts of your own journey to adulthood. Teaching your child that he/she can and should trust God and his plan is critical to his/her faith development. The New Testament Scriptures and the Sacred Tradition of the Church may seem so distant to your son or daughter that he/she questions the need to trust these as sources of God's Revelation any more than other things, such as personal feelings or other's beliefs. Sharing your own belief in God's Revelation in Scripture and the teaching of the Church helps your child trust them because she/he trusts you.*

Children at This Age: *Younger adolescents in general tend to think in extreme terms—either you have faith or you don't. The concept that faith and doubt can coexist in the same person is a reality your child may not yet understand. Because of this mindset, she/he may tend to form judgments about other people's belief systems—for example, "if you don't see things my way, you are wrong." Helping your child relate and connect the basic beliefs of Scripture and doctrine to her/his own life increases the appreciation and understanding of it. It might also help your child to become less judgmental.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 63,
Revelation and Faith

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that the Lord, who is always present with us, will increase our faith and guide us as we learn how to best share his love with others.

Say: Let’s listen to God’s Word and learn about the connection between faith and works.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Faith is a gift from God but it is also our choice to accept God’s invitation to share in his life.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does it mean to truly live our faith? (*We need to worship and give thanks to God through prayer and the Sacraments, and we need to give glory to God by the way we live our lives, serving others.*)
- How does faith make a difference in our lives? (*Everything we think and do is the consequence of our relationship with God. At Mass we hear the words: “In him, with him, and through him.” There is nothing for us outside of God.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 64,
Getting Started

Ask your child to read aloud the first paragraph.

Have him/her write one person's name in each section of the chart, and you do the same. (Old Testament figures might include Abraham, Moses, David, Ruth, or Noah. New Testament figures might include Peter, Mary Magdalene, John the Baptist, Elizabeth, or Thomas.)

Discuss how that person demonstrated his or her faith.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 65

Read aloud the instruction for the activity. Ask your child to list five examples on the lines in the book. You write down five examples on a separate piece of paper. When both of you are finished, compare your lists. Ask your child to add any of your ideas that were different from his/hers to the list in the book.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 66–71. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 71,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 72

Read aloud the Our Catholic Life text to your child. Invite her/him to use the family tablet or a smart phone to research catholiccharitiesusa.org. Look at the site together and get an idea of the scope of the Church's witness through service around the world.

Focus on the People of Faith story. Ask your child to silently read about Saint Thomas.

Parents, Consider This: *When we are experiencing a lot of stress and/or tension in our lives, someone usually points out to us that our life is out of balance. Whether it is a life coach, a therapist, or a good friend, most likely they all will offer the same advice: The key to a peaceful life is balance. Balance must exist as well between our prayer life and a life of action. Prayer and action are two sides of the same coin. Prayer without loving service contradicts Jesus' command to love God and our neighbor. Works of charity that do not spring from a prayerful heart can become a means of earning the praise of others or stem from your own need to be seen as generous or good. Balance your family life by making prayer and service common practices in your home.*

Discuss how Thomas' faith directed his actions. Share with each other what you think leads some people to be willing to die for their faith.

Have your child read aloud the directions for the Interview activity. Each of you think of one Saint (make sure they are different), and write three questions to that Saint. Share your questions with one another.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Faith on Page 385.



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The Church Is Holy

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Recognize holiness as intentionally living in God's presence and with his love each day
- Identify angels as spiritual beings that praise God and serve him
- Explain why we are called to share the goodness of God with others
- Relate Jesus' holiness to the holiness of the Church
- Relate holiness to prayer and loving actions
- Identify that we must intentionally choose to grow in holiness throughout our lives

Parents, Consider This: *Have you ever longed to do something that you just couldn't imagine was possible? Maybe it was losing weight or changing your profession or even developing a talent that you have or wished you had. People who study motivation would tell us that not being able to imagine it is exactly the problem. We cannot become what we cannot imagine. Not putting effort into becoming holy may in fact be rooted in our inability to imagine ourselves as holy people. Fuel your child's imagination by helping her/him to be aware of the "holy" choices people make every day. Point it out in film or on TV shows you watch, in your family members, friends, and acquaintances. Remind your daughter/son regularly that you believe she/he is capable of holiness.*

Children at This Age: *Younger adolescents often think about God, but not in a deep theological way. As your child grows, you can lead him/her through prayer and conversation into deeper ways of appreciating that faith matters every day, no matter what his/her age. You can help your child better appreciate the holiness of God while learning about the lives of saintly people in the world today. Taking every opportunity to point out "saintly" behavior in the people in your child's life helps her/him to understand the truth that a holy life is possible and NECESSARY in the world today.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 75,
The Church Is Holy

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that God is most holy, and we are called to be holy.

Say: God wants us to put our trust in him and know that he made us and we belong to him. Let’s learn more about seeking holiness and God’s Kingdom.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: God wants us to live each day as holy people.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How can anyone completely trust in God? *(It takes a lifetime of trying based on past experiences to recognize that God is with us in every moment even when we can’t tell right at that moment.)*
- What does it really mean to be holy? *(to live each day doing God’s will and giving him praise and thanks)*

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 76,
Getting Started

Ask your child to read aloud the first paragraph.

Direct him/her to read and do the activity. When your son/daughter is finished, encourage him/her to discuss the ideas he/she wrote in the chart. Help your child think of a holy person beyond someone who devotes his/her life to prayer.

Turn to Page 77

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Have your child complete the word search in the Solve box.

Check if she/he found all the words. (*seek God, give alms, don't fear, prepare, love, pray*)

Read the last question and share your answer with your child. What is one way you have witnessed or experienced holiness?

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 78–83. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 83,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 84

Have your child silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *Do you count your blessings every day? It's an old saying that speaks to a deep truth. Not only is it necessary to acknowledge our blessings but also to understand that every blessing is a gift from God. We are out of practice in our culture in connecting those two thoughts. People recommend gratitude journals as a source of peace. But naming things we are grateful for is not enough. Gratitude has to be directed toward someone. Have you noticed that although we used to say "God bless you" when someone sneezed, today, more often than not, we hear "Bless you." Naming the source of blessing will help your child not only understand how blessed he/she is, but will also reinforce that God is the source of all blessings.*

Talk about the blessings your family already says or hears—“Bless us O Lord,” “God bless you,” and the blessings the priest offers us at the end of Mass—and ask your child to think about what it means to bless yourself with the Sign of the Cross. Does your daughter/son see athletes doing this? Ask her/him: Why do you think they are doing this? What does it mean?

Ask your child to read the People of Faith box; then discuss how Blessed Miguel might have been a blessing to the people of Mexico.

Skip the Identify activity on the page and instead work together to write a blessing for your family that you would say as you begin a journey in your car, or a blessing your child might say before she/he takes a test, or a blessing for both of you when you have to face a difficulty. Print it several times and place a copy in the car, on the refrigerator, and/or make a copy small enough to keep in a wallet.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Faith on Page 385.



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The Trinity Made Known

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Retell the story of the Transfiguration and what it revealed to the disciples about Jesus
- Explain what the Transfiguration revealed about the Trinity
- Relate the role of the Old Testament prophets to Jesus
- Identify that the Church helps us see and appreciate the glory of God
- Explain the significance of Pentecost
- Explore the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church today
- Recognize that grace is the free, loving gift of God's own life
- Explore how our prayer reflects the way we understand and know God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Parents, Consider This: *The Holy Trinity is such a foundational and basic tenant of our faith, we can sometimes take the awesomeness of it for granted. We might even dismiss the Trinity as a teaching of our faith that is just too incomprehensible to hold front and center in our lives or to integrate fully into our prayer life. Yet it remains true that God has created a way to be with us so we are never alone. Sometimes, it is only when we are moved by the amazing experience of holding a new baby or when we witness a spectacular glory of nature that we stop and praise God the Father who is Creator of all. Sometimes, it is only in the depth of pain that we thank God for sending Jesus, and recognize that God understands our every high and low human experience. It isn't often that we stop and just say in praise, "You are an amazing God. You give us the presence of your Holy Spirit to be with us every step of the way on our journey of life. Thank you." Maybe we tend to take this for granted because we can barely take in the depth of God's love for each of us. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity not only reveal themselves individually in our lives, but also reveal each other by how they interact. It's important that you take the time to pause, ponder, and pray for the ability to communicate this marvelous plan of God as you share this chapter with your child. An analogy—such as a flame with its qualities of both heat and light, each a distinct part of one entity—might be a helpful way to share this mystery we cannot fully explain.*

Children at This Age: *Not yet fully aware of or confident in their own identity, young people at this age often define themselves by their various relationships. They may perceive these different identities and struggle to integrate them into the person they understand themselves to be. They may feel they are one person at home, another at school, yet another in social settings. The real question they are often asking themselves is, "Who am I really?" Children this age are also developing the understanding that the rights and feelings of others are equal to their own. The spiritual development you are supporting in your child by working on this chapter together will assist him/her in that development. Create opportunities to help your son/daughter to engage with other groups in ways that increase his/her ability to understand others and have empathy for them. Give your child opportunities to live his/her faith by serving another in need. Serving together is a great way to deepen your parent/child bond and your faith.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 91,
The Trinity Made Known

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that the Holy Spirit guides us in knowing who God is.

Say: We give praise and glory to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In today’s Scripture passage, Jesus both rejoices in the Holy Spirit and gives praise to God the Father.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Jesus helped the disciples understand that he is the beloved Son of God. He revealed the Blessed Trinity to us.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How does Jesus reveal God the Father to us? *(In taking human form, Jesus was able to communicate to us in ways we might better understand God as Father to us.)*
- What does God’s being the Holy Trinity teach us about him? *(While full understanding of the Trinity is beyond explanation, it gives us a glimpse of the completeness and relational nature of God and the depth of God’s love for us.)*

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 92,
Getting Started

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Read aloud the paragraph.

Tell your child to read the directions and complete the chart on page 92. Write down a couple answers of your own. (Responses may include the following places or situations: at church, when praying, when helping others.) When you both finish, share two things you know about ways that we encounter Jesus. Ask your child to share two of his/her answers.

Turn to Page 93

Have your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the Describe activity in the book. You can complete this activity on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with each other some of the relationships that you identified in each category. How did a relationship you have experienced in the past move from acquaintance to primary?

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 94–99. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 99,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 100

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *Although we call upon all three Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity during Mass, at other times, we may pray in a way that calls upon one specific Person of the Trinity. Consider how you, and perhaps your child, can have an enriched sense of prayer through dialogue with each Person in the Trinity. Remind your son/daughter that we can call upon God the Father when we are in need or when we seek comfort and protection. We can call upon the God the Son as one who understands our human condition and its frailties and challenges as well as what holds meaning to us, such as love of family and friendship. The Holy Spirit can be called upon often and in every situation to guide and comfort us. The Holy Spirit is a source of strength beyond what we can summon within our own self. Truly, we are blessed that our Trinitarian God is watching out for us and is with us every step of our human journey.*

Ask: When did you last pray to a specific Person of the Trinity? (*Share some examples of how and when you have done this.*)

Say: Now let's read about Saint Lucy, an early martyr for the faith and one of the seven women mentioned by name during Mass.

Read aloud People of Faith.

Say: Saint Lucy died filled with the Holy Spirit and praising the one true God. She has inspired Christians for many centuries and continues to inspire us even today. Because her heart was set on God, she can teach us how to love God above all things.

Point out the Identify activity. Explain that you are both going to do this activity and then talk about it. Your child can write his/her answers in the book. You can write yours on a separate piece of paper. Once you have both written down some answers, share what you feel you most need from God and what you believe God is calling you to do in your life at this time. Invite your child to share his/her answers as well.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Hope on Page 387.



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We Are Christ's People

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *In Chapter 5 of **Alive in Christ**, you and your daughter/son will consider how each of us, as a Church member, has a vital role to play in spreading the Gospel. The foundation of this mission is our personal relationship with God. In prayer, participating in worship, and in serving others, we move deeper into our understanding of the gift of our life and the offering it can be to God and the Church. Allow the time you spend together working on this chapter to be a renewal of your baptismal vows. Spend some time in prayer, thinking about your child's Baptism and the promises you made for him/her. Remember, your child is not just the Church of tomorrow. He/she is a very real part of the Church today. Guide your son/daughter to see how he/she can be a vital part of the mission of the Church in a unique way. And above all, know your child is watching you and learning from you what the Christian life is and how it is a witness today to your family, your community, and the world.*

Children at This Age: *Adolescents of this age sometimes struggle with conflicting desires to explore the world and stay within the safe confines of the familiar and comfortable. They need to have their boundaries expanded, but at an incremental and non-threatening pace. Responsible adults, especially parents, have to maintain a delicate balance with eighth-graders to set appropriate boundaries and yet respect them when they show that they can make appropriate individual choices. It may be helpful at this time to include your son/daughter in more of the decisions that affect his/her life. When young people interact with just one core group, like a small group of friends, it can lead to a narrow sense of what is important and limited ways of coping with tough times. Encourage your child to branch out to include new experiences and groups of friends.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Explain how the Church can help our faith to grow
- Recall that God invites everyone to be part of his family, the Church
- Discuss the relationship between Christ and his Church
- Recognize that the Church exists to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ
- Discover that God uses each member's gifts and talents in the Church
- Discuss the relationship between the family, the domestic Church, and the People of God
- Explore how Jesus served as Priest, Prophet, and King
- Explain that through Baptism we are united with Christ and his mission

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 103,
We Are Christ's People

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked "All."

Explain that all we do and all we say is done in the name of Christ Jesus.

Say: We are called to be God's People. We are Christ's Church because he promised to be with us always. Let's listen to God's Word and hear how Jesus describes who he is.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God's Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: All the Church's members have an important role in spreading God's message.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How is Jesus the cornerstone of the Church? (This question invites us to think of Jesus as the foundation of the Church. Imagine all the values Jesus held and how he still unites all Christians today.)
- What does it mean to belong to the Church? (This is a personal question. Belonging to the Church may mean different things to different people; some of the important benefits are common prayer and ritual, a community of friends, and a common mission and values.)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God's Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 104,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Have your child read the directions and complete the web on page 104. When he/she is finished, share about a group to which you belong and what that group means to you? Ask your child to share a couple of the groups to which he/she belongs and what they mean to him/her.

Turn to Page 105

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Instruct your child to read aloud the directions for this page. Work together to complete the activity in the book. While you are working, talk about the people or groups who support you or give you a sense of belonging. Did you both come up with any of the same people or groups?

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 106–111. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 111,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read the introductory paragraph and ask your child to read the bullet points. Help your child recognize some of the ways that she/he can share in Christ’s mission as priest, prophet, and king. (caring for siblings, standing up for another person, willingly engaging in acts of service)

Turn to Page 112

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *The Our Catholic Life section of this chapter invites personal reflection on how we participate in the mission of Jesus as priest, prophet and king. Though we may be familiar with these terms and hear them at every Baptism, they may not be something we have taken to heart. Your child is asked to consider how his/her actions establish Christ’s love and compassion in the Church and in the world. It may seem overwhelming to your child, and to you, to think of this much responsibility! It may help to talk with your family about how we can be “priest” by dedicating our simple acts of service and care as an offering to God. That does not change the “what” about our lives but it may change the “why.” It can make the tasks and duties of our life an opportunity to love and praise God. To be a prophet is perhaps even more daunting. Yet you have probably heard the saying attributed to Saint Francis, “Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words when necessary.” While not necessarily a direct quote from Francis, the Franciscan Rule of 1221 invited the brothers to preach by their deeds. Good advice for all of us. Most likely, each of us could think of someone in our lives who lived (or lives) the Gospel, not by what they said, but more by how they lived a life of love. Our role as king may seem the biggest stretch of all. Not many of us feel like kings, but we are all leaders in some way. At various times in our lives, someone may be watching us and learning from us. The question is—are you living as a witness to Christianity? This Sunday as you worship with your family, ask God to show you how you and your family can serve and lead others, as priest, prophet, and king.*

Point out the People of Faith box. Ask your child to read aloud the text on Saint Angela Merici.

Say: Saint Angela Merici is a great example of someone who served and led others by acting as priest, prophet, and king. She improved the social conditions of her time by educating young women, first in her home, and later through the many schools opened by the Ursulines.

Review the Identify activity with your child. Both of you should think about what topic you would base your imagined interview on, and then write your headline and opening sentence. Share what you came up with.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Hope on Page 387.



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student & Family section of aliveinchrist.osv.com.

Temple of the Holy Spirit

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Explain Paul's description of the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit
- Relate the health of the body to the health of the soul
- Examine how Baptism and Confirmation strengthen us to be Christ's witnesses
- Explore how the seven Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit help us to live as disciples
- Describe the Mystical Body of Christ as an image of Church, which unites all believers
- Explain how the Holy Spirit animates the Mystical Body of Christ

Parents, Consider This: *What does being Catholic mean to you? What has helped you come to appreciate the gift of faith and the gift of the Church? Reflecting on this and sharing your thoughts with your son/daughter is one way to help him/her learn more about what faith is. Think of touch points that might connect with your child's life, like finding strength in a troubling time, being inspired by a hero of faith, or experiencing the amazing blessing being a parent to him/her has been. Sharing these stories in loving ways can help move your child's concept of faith from the abstract to the real. At this time in your daughter/son's development, becoming independent can take on a high priority. This drive can be so strong that she/he can engage in high risk behaviors that lead her/him down the wrong path. In this chapter of **Alive in Christ**, you and your child will be considering the union of body and soul and the how the help of the Holy Spirit can strengthen us to make choices that lead us to become the people God made us to be. Staying close to the Church and understanding we are the Body of Christ can save your child from choices that could be harmful, physically or spiritually. Speak from your heart as you share this important message with your child.*

Children at This Age: *Eighth graders understand and express most things through the lens of their own experience. That is why it is very important to share experiences that expand your son/daughter's faith, such as opportunities to pray, to serve, and to go on retreats with others who can be a positive influence. Young adolescents sense the Spirit through emotion and imagination more than through intellect. Their comprehension of faith will be built on the foundation of believing it in their heart. You need to reach both the head and the heart of your child to help him/her grow in an understanding of faith and live it.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 115,
Temple of the Holy Spirit

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Pray the first three lines of the leader role. Invite your child to pray the Psalm verse. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that we cannot hide from the presence of God. He is always present through the Holy Spirit.

Say: As the Church, we are temples of the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit lives within each of us.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: The Holy Spirit unites the Church, guiding her and giving her life.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How is the Holy Spirit leading you? *(In prayer and contemplation, we may hear the stirring of the Spirit leading us in the decisions and choices of our life.)*
- How do the Gifts of the Holy Spirit help you live a faith-filled life? *(These gifts strengthen us and guide us to live as strong and caring Christians.)*

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 116,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Ask your child to read the directions and complete the first part of the chart on page 116. Work together to determine which things are physical needs and which are spiritual. Discuss how our body and soul make us who we are.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 117 **Read** the instructions for the Identify activity together. Be sure to point out that the gifts God gives us are often simple and seem quite ordinary, such as the gift of listening or the gift of patience. All of God's gifts, small and ordinary or big and extraordinary, can help us meet the needs of others.

Have your child write his/her answers in the book. You can complete the activity on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with each other the gifts you think God has given you. Discuss how you have or can use your gifts to help others.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 118–123. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 123,
In Summary *When you return,* review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read aloud the key concept and each of the bullet points. Ask your child to write one thing she/he wants to remember from the points being made.

Turn to Page 124 **Direct** your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *With body, mind, and soul, we serve and lead as part of the Body of Christ. It can be so easy to take a healthy body and mind for granted, to think our strength, energy, and time are endless. In the same way, we can take the Body of Christ for granted. We can assume there will always be a Church at which to worship, good leaders to guide us, and that the good work that the Church has always done in schools, parishes, and hospitals will continue. But just as we have to dedicate time and resources to our own health, we have to do the same to be a strong part of the Body of Christ. It is good now and then to assess how well we are caring for ourselves and pay attention to ways we can improve self-care. Sometimes we find it easier to care for those in our family than to nurture and rest our own body and mind. And while the care, prayer, and generosity we give to our immediate family is important, we must remember we are part of a bigger family as well. Remind your child that part of our work as Catholics is keeping the Body of Christ healthy by praying for her work in our communities and around the world; offering our time, talents, and treasure (financial resources) to continue that work; and celebrating God's gifts to us.*

Ask: What are some things you can do to stay healthy? What is one way you can help keep the Body of Christ healthy?

Say: We talked earlier about the gifts God has given you. Now let's read about Blessed Cyprian Michael Iwene Tansi and how he shared his gifts by preaching, teaching, and praying.

Invite your child to read aloud the People of Faith story.

Say: We read about keeping the Body of Christ healthy in the Our Catholic Life text. Let's take that a little further by working on the Identify activity. I'll ask a question about various ways to keep the Church healthy, and we'll work together to come up with some action steps that we could take for each one.

- How can we pray for the work of the Church?
- How can we continue the work of the Church by offering gifts of time, talent, and treasure?
- How can we support the priest, deacons, and those consecrated to religious life?

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Hope on Page 387.



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Encountering Christ

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Explain why Jesus was criticized for associating with sinners and the sick
- Explore the Scriptures to see how Jesus interacted with the people he met
- Recognize that as the Apostles' friendship with Jesus deepened, so did their understanding of who he was and what he taught
- Identify how the early Christians changed after Jesus' Ascension and then Pentecost

Parents, Consider This: *As we mature, we begin to understand relationships differently. Learning how to be and make good friends is a road that is filled with joy and disappointment. This is a critical time for your child as she/he begins to walk this road. Friends are very important to young people of this age. They form strong bonds within their peer groups, and learn a great deal from one another. Don't miss the opportunity to help your child recognize that Jesus is his/her friend—actually, a true BFF! In Christ, your child will find total acceptance and the support he/she needs to become his/her best self—a child of the Father.*

Children at This Age: *As you well know, the role of your child's peer group is very important. In order to fit in, your daughter/son may attempt to emphasize her/his belonging by speaking harsh words and participating in behaviors at the expense of others. Insecurity can lead her/him to be highly critical and even cruel to those who are at the lower end of the adolescent social structure. It is important to help your child to remember the value of kindness and charity as well as your expectation that she/he will speak and act with compassion. Encourage your child to respond to others in a loving way.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 131,
Encountering Christ

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Invite your child to read the first part of the leader prayer. You will read the Psalm verse. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that Jesus wants to have a relationship of love and friendship with us.

Say: Let’s listen to God’s Word and hear Jesus speak of the complete unity he shares with his Father.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Jesus invited everyone to change their hearts and return to the Father. We should look to Jesus as an example of how to treat others in our lives.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What is Jesus’ relationship with his Father like? (**Jesus and his Father are perfectly one.**)
- Did Jesus have friends? If so, what did he expect from them? (**Jesus expected the same things from his friends that we do: faithfulness, support, enjoying time spent together.**)

Turn to Page 132,
Getting Started

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Read the first paragraph.

Direct your child to read the instructions and complete the chart on page 132. When he/she is finished, ask your child to share a couple of his/her answers.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 133

Complete the first two sections of the activity by discussing them together. Ask your child the third question. Offer some insight when he/she is finished that reflects our belief that all love begins within the relationship of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So anytime we love, we are sharing the love that begins in God with another person.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 134–139. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 139,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Alternate reading the bullet points with your child. Invite him/her to share any new things he/she learned about Jesus and relationships from this chapter.

Turn to Page 140

Ask your child to silently read the Our Catholic Life text.

Parents, Consider This: *How many times have you said to someone, “Oh we have to do lunch!” Food, family, and friends quite naturally go together for human beings. In fact, research tells us that both the frequency AND the length of our encounters with others directly impacts our happiness and decreases stress. The same was true for Jesus. He invested much time and energy in those around him. The Gospels are filled with stories of Jesus sharing a meal with others. It is important for your child to understand that the true meaning of friendship is defined in and through our friendship with Christ. Learning to love as Jesus loves is the sure way to develop lasting and meaningful friendships. Frame the many discussions you will have with your daughter/son about friends and friendship inside of her/his life of faith.*

Share with your child any evidence you see that one of his/her friends is a good friend—a friend like Christ.

Read the story of Prisca and Aquila, friends of Saint Paul and devoted followers of Jesus.

Point out the Rank activity. Both of you will make a list of the five qualities of friendship that you believe are most important. Compare the qualities you came up with and then share with each other how your best friends have shown those qualities.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Love on Page 386.



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Life in Christ

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Describe what the Gospels tell us about Jesus' love for us
- Express ways to live out the teachings of Jesus
- Examine justification as the forgiveness of sins and the return to the goodness for which humans were first created
- Discover that Baptism helps us live in "right" relationship with God because of the sacrifice of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit
- Discuss the role of conversion in spiritual renewal in discipleship
- Explore how the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is an experience of conversion

Parents, Consider This: *Who among us has not wrestled at some point with the need to change? It might have been something as simple as adapting to a new cell phone or as difficult as giving up a life-threatening habit, like smoking. Change challenges us. Jesus challenges us to give up our life of sin. These words may lose meaning in the world today where we sometimes prefer to use the word mistake instead of sin. Sin is real. It is a failure to live in right relationship with God and others. Emphasize, to your child, the importance of living out that which we believe and coming back to Jesus in a spirit of repentance when we recognize we have sinned. Helping your daughter/son to know this truth and accept the consequences of the choices she/he makes will help her/him to grow in holiness.*

Children at This Age: *At this age your child may grapple with impulse control. His/her behavior is largely governed by how he/she feels at any given moment, and it may change several times in one day. You are not imagining all those mood swings! At this time in your daughter/son's development, she/he needs to learn the connection between personal values and behavior. Your child will learn best when she/he has consistent moral behavior modeled by you. Your daughter/son needs to see that you are authentic and that your faith in Jesus guides your life.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 143,
Life in Christ

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that having Jesus Christ as a part of our lives makes a difference; we can make life-giving choices to bring the light of Christ into the world and to continue Christ’s mission.

Say: Jesus understands us and knows our needs. Today we will focus on the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Jesus is the Vine, the Bread of Life, and the Light of the World who offers eternal life to those who believe. Our God wants so much for us to live in his life that he gives us many ways to connect with him.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does Jesus’ mission mean to you? (Jesus’ mission is to bring all people into right relationship with his Father. Your child may have various thoughts on how this affects him/her.)
- What difference can believing in Jesus make in how you live? (It should make ALL the difference because he is the center of our lives.)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 144,
Getting Started

Ask your child to read the first paragraph. Work with him/her to review the directions and complete the chart on page 144. (The missing words in the first part of the chart are as follows: Good, Vine, Light, Life.)

Turn to Page 145

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Direct your child to complete the Write activity in the book while you complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, discuss your responses.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 146–151. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 151,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Ask your son/daughter to read aloud the bullet points. Discuss ways we can be renewed by our faith in Jesus.

Turn to Page 152

Ask your child to silently read the Our Catholic Life text.

Parents, Consider This: *One of the great obstacles to taking responsibility for our words and actions is the seemingly inborn need to blame others. There is always a “laundry list” of reasons why we do what we do, and most of those reasons have to do with circumstances and/or people who “made” us behave that way. It is a good spiritual practice to claim the freedom that Christ died to give us. The freedom and the grace to make our own choices despite other’s words and actions. Helping your child to understand the gift that has been given us by Christ’s saving sacrifice on the Cross will set her/him on a lifetime journey of responsibility and true freedom.*

Review the steps that can help someone deepen his/her relationship with God. Each of you should choose one of these steps you can commit to doing more regularly in the month ahead. Tell each other what that is and then check back in a month to see how faithful you have been and what a difference it has made. Reinforce the truth that the stronger our connection to Christ, the stronger our capacity to act in freedom.

Read aloud the story of Blessed Victoria Rosoamanarivo. Stress that she was not a nun, but a lay person who lived out the call of her Baptism.

Point out the Consider activity. Since our life of sin is a personal journey, your child will probably not be comfortable sharing his/her answers to this activity with you. Instead, discuss how never admitting you need to change or to turn away from sin prevents you from growing into the person God created you to be.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Love on Page 386.



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One in Christ

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *Even though as adults we have a pretty good understanding of the concept of time, living in the United States can color this understanding. For example, in this country, we stand before historical buildings and think about “long ago” in terms of a couple hundred years. In other places around the world, people stand before ruins of “long ago” that are thousands of years old. Growing in appreciation that our faith has been handed down to us for thousands of years helps us to understand the awesomeness of Jesus’ promise that the Holy Spirit would always be with us. Pondering the mystery that along the way there are many people who have given their lives or endured hardship so that we might be given the gift of our faith can be somewhat overwhelming. It’s important to understand that the authority of the Catholic Church comes from Jesus through the Apostles. However, the responsibility to hand on our faith begins right in your family.*

Children at This Age: *At this point, your child has not yet completely developed the skills of critical thinking that would allow him/her to understand the sometimes fine distinctions between different realities. For instance, he/she may be susceptible to the notion that one religion is the same as another because their belief systems are basically the same. As your child begins to develop friendships with others outside of the Catholic Church, it’s important that she/he knows and understands the essentials of the Catholic faith. This will help her/him to express with confidence the truths and values of the Catholic Church.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Examine the beliefs contained in the Creeds that unite members of the Catholic Church
- Discover that the Church is apostolic
- Compare the Latin (Roman) Catholic Church and the Eastern Catholic Church
- Discuss the distinctions in the celebration of some of the Rites in the Eastern and Latin Church
- Describe events leading to the Great Schism
- Examine the origin and the consequences of the Protestant Reformation
- Explain why Catholics pray, hope, and work for unity among all Christians

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 155,
One in Christ

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Say: Our Church is a community of diverse people who share in the mission of Jesus. Let’s listen to God’s Word as Saint Paul describes some of the spiritual gifts we are given as followers of Christ.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: The Catholic Church is made up of people from many different cultures, but we are united by our common beliefs and practices.

Ask: Is this something that is easy to see when we go to Mass? Why or why not?

Discuss your thoughts.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How do all Christians have different gifts yet one belief? (*We are all brothers and sisters of Christ through our Baptism, yet God made each of us for a different purpose.*)
- What does it mean to be different but to share one faith? (*Because we live all over the world, the way we pray and worship may be somewhat different, but all Catholics believe in the same Creed.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 156,
Getting Started

Read the first paragraph and direct your child to fill in the Examples of Our Unity web with things that unite the Catholic Church no matter where she is, such as beliefs, practices, or prayers that we hold in common.

Invite your daughter/son to share her/his answers. You might encourage her/him to revisit this graphic organizer at the end of the chapter to add any additional information she/he has learned.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 157

Have your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, discuss your insights. This will not only give you a window into your child's relationship with a friend but also a glimpse into one another's thinking and heart.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 158–163. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 163,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 164

Direct your child to silently read the Our Catholic Life text.

Parents, Consider This: *We often hear the phrase, “I come from a long line of...” Inherent in that phrase is the need to identify ourselves in relationship to our past. It is important for our emotional and psychological well-being to see ourselves inside of a bigger picture. That’s what makes ancestry-based websites and trips to Ellis Island or the town our grandparents came from so popular. Our Catholic Church is far more than an institution. It is our family of faith that is a community made one by our belief in Jesus and the power of his Holy Spirit. Your child NEEDS to be consciously connected to Jesus’ Body as much as he/she needs the things you do to keep his/her physical body healthy and strong. As you read through the first paragraph on this page, recommit your family to strengthening your life in the Church. It is a gift you have been given.*

Share with your daughter/son the things in the Catholic Church that are most important to you.

Ask: *What is one thing that you wonder about the Church? (If you cannot provide the answer, e-mail the director of your faith formation program and ask for help.)*

Read together the story of Saint Peregrine, the patron Saint of people who suffer with cancer. It seems that every family has someone who is struggling with that disease. Look for more information online and, if possible, make a votive candle for the person you know who could use your support and the support of Saint Peregrine.

Complete the List activity separately. Then come together to share your answers with one another.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Love on Page 386.



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student & Family section of aliveinchrist.osv.com.

The Church Is Apostolic

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *One of the most inspiring gifts in an eighth-grader's life is the idealism they can hold for those who stand up for what is right and good. They have deep respect for those who believe in a cause so strongly they are willing to die for it. Perhaps that is because the opposite of this is hypocrisy. Most young people this age have a low tolerance for duplicity. As you work on this chapter together, you and your son/daughter will be reminded of the depth of the legacy of faith we share as Catholics. Learning about the Apostles of Jesus and how they stood up for their beliefs, even to the point of imprisonment and death, can be very inspiring. Help this history come alive in the way you share your beliefs and in the telling of their stories. These stories can capture your child's imagination and perhaps reignite your own faith and desire to do something great for God!*

Children at This Age: *History is something we cannot begin to appreciate until we have lived long enough to begin to see the patterns of growth in our own personal histories. Eighth-graders are often beginning to discern these patterns of growth. Frame your discussion of the apostolic Church as the roots of our Catholic ancestors. Engage your son/daughter in the lives of the Apostles as well as the present-day leaders of the Church. Share with him/her the passions, fears, and successes of those who led the early Church. Those leaders are still part of our heritage today. Find the website for your diocesan office and search for information about the bishop of your diocese and past bishops so the history of your local Church becomes more real for your child.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Describe Sacred Tradition as the Church's faithfulness in teaching the same faith and proclaiming the same Gospel that was handed on to us from the Apostles
- Define Apostolic Succession as the authority to lead and teach the Church that can be traced through the centuries from the Apostles to their successors, the bishops
- Explain the authority of the Magisterium
- Recognize the Nicene Creed and Apostles' Creed as containing the basic truths of our faith that express our oneness of belief
- Discuss the importance of ordained ministers in preaching the Good News

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 171,
The Church Is Apostolic

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Read aloud the first line of the leader prayer. Invite your son/daughter to read the Psalm verse. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that our faith has been passed on to us—that others who have come before us have taught about what it means to follow Jesus.

Say: Let’s listen to God’s Word and hear how the disciples were devoted to the teaching of the Apostles and to praying, celebrating, and living as Jesus wanted.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: The Catholic Church has always kept the same faith and proclaimed the same Gospel handed on to us from the Apostles.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How are things we think and do today as a Church connected to people from the past? *(This question invites us to reflect on what it means to be an apostolic Church. Our teaching and leadership reaches back to Jesus Christ and the Apostles.)*
- Why should we care about what people in the Church believed long ago? *(As the Body of Christ, we are connected to those who came before us in faith, even those who are no longer living. Through our rituals and traditions, we stay connected to the Church throughout our history.)*

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 172,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Tell your child to read the directions and complete the chart on page 172. When he/she is finished, ask your child to share a couple of his/her answers. Add any leaders or servers you are aware of that your son/daughter might not have thought about.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 173

Have your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with each other some traditions that have been passed on in your family and parish. Discuss the ones that seem most important to you.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 174–179. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 179,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words. Discuss how each of the roles mentioned in the text are necessary for carrying out the Church’s mission.

Turn to Page 180

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: In the Our Catholic Life section of this chapter, your child will be reading about the Nicene Creed. This Creed is the summary of what we believe that we proclaim together at every Sunday Mass around the world. It is a reminder and testimony of our belief in God's faithfulness to us. While the language of the Nicene Creed can sometimes be daunting for a young person, it can help your child to embrace the spirit of the community of believers that transcends time and place, and marvel at how God's faithfulness has been consistent through the ages and pervasive through different cultures. It is a privilege to have such a rich heritage of faith. Encourage your child to gain confidence in God who personally loves each of us so much and who remains faithful throughout history. We grow into understanding of the meaning of the Creed as we live our faith. Through prayer, we can receive the guidance to understand what we need for each age and stage of our lives to live faithfully.

Ask: What happens when we focus too much on what we know and understand about faith rather than trust in God's providence? (The journey of faith is of the heart as well as the head. Bringing our trust to God in prayer and trying to be faithful to God in action will help us to keep balance in how we live our faith.)

Ask: What do you think might be happening in the picture? (Young people are sharing something, maybe a memory or picture, with an elderly person. They are living their faith in loving relationships with others.)

Read aloud the story of Saint Peter Damien and how his faithfulness to God influenced others and brought about reform in the Church.

Say: We have learned about the Creed and how it articulates our beliefs and is an affirmation of our faith. Saint Peter Damian reminds us that sometimes we have to be leaders who stand up for what is right though it may not always be comfortable or what we may want to do. Now let's look at the List activity. We are both going to do this activity and then talk about it.

Once you have both come up with something that reflects the work of the universal Church, share your answers with each other.

Conclude the session by praying the Evening Prayer.

Lord, from the rising of the sun to its setting, your name is worthy of all praise. Let our prayer come like incense before you. May the lifting up of our hands be as an evening sacrifice acceptable to you, Lord our God. Amen.



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The Church Is Catholic

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *The missionary work of the Church might be far from your everyday life or thoughts. That probably is because the image we have of the missionary mandate of the Church is too narrow, limiting our understanding to vowed religious and ordained persons. The work of spreading the Good News is the work of all Christians, though we may have many and varied ways to carry that out. Through our everyday actions and words, people are experiencing God's love and care. We can be conduits of God's love if we root our lives in prayer and continually choose to serve others unselfishly. Some people are given the gifts of an outgoing personality, a talent for speaking to groups, and verbal skills to share God's love in a public way. Some are given the gift to serve quietly in their family and community. Pray for the guidance and grace to know the best way you can love and serve the Lord.*

Children at This Age: *Eighth-graders are often working to form coherent, consistent belief systems of their own. It may appear that they are rejecting the beliefs of parents and other authority figures. In fact, it is more likely that they are seeking to become independent and establish ownership of their own beliefs. Your child may not be ready to state his/her personal religious convictions and beliefs for others but that doesn't mean he/she is without them. Remind your son/daughter that just as Jesus sent out the Apostles to carry out his mission, he is counting on young people today to proclaim the Good News and help to build a world of justice and peace.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Examine the missionary mandate of the Church
- Explain why every Catholic should discover their personal call to be an evangelist
- Describe the Church as catholic, for she proclaims the fullness of God's truth to everyone, everywhere, throughout time
- Explore how the Church proclaims the teaching of Christ by adapting to the culture while never compromising the truth
- Discuss the Church's three-step process for leading people to Christ through her missionary plan
- Provide examples that show how all member of the Church can share in missionary work

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 183,
The Church Is Catholic

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that having the right words to say isn’t always easy, especially when talking about our Catholic beliefs.

Say: Let’s listen to what happened when Christ sent out his disciples to spread the Gospel message to everyone and to offer the gift of salvation to all people.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: As members of the Church, we are called to share the Good News of Christ, to invite everyone into the Body of Christ.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How does the Good News reach every corner of the Earth? (It is in the plan of God’s salvation for the world that through the Church and through our loving actions, the Good News reaches everyone possible.)
- How can you explain your Catholic faith to a friend? (This response could be a personal explanation of what faith means to your child. Or he/she could respond in terms of a description of the Church such as recalling her characteristics and explaining that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. There are various ways that your child might respond to this question.)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 184,
Getting Started

Invite your child to read aloud the opening paragraph.

Read the directions and ask your son/daughter to complete the activity on page 184. When he/she is finished, share two reasons why it is important to grow, and some examples of who can help us. Ask your child to share two of his/her thoughts.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 185

Have your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have her/him complete the Top Ten List in the book. You can complete this activity on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share your lists with one another.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 186–191. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 191,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words. Invite him/her to reflect on how he/she is being called to share in the missionary work of the Church.

Turn to Page 192

Read the Our Catholic Life text.

Invite your son/daughter to share the aspect of the Church’s missionary mandate that interests him/her the most.

Ask: How can we share in the missionary Church right now?

Discuss your thoughts.

Have your child silently read about Saint Agnes, the patron Saint of girls and engaged couples.

Parents, Consider This: *Reflect on the Church's mission to spread the Good News. Remember that we can do this in many ways: by what we say, by what we do, and by the ways we treat each other. By loving others and working for causes that bring about justice and peace, we can help God to build his Kingdom. We can better learn how to do this by watching and learning from others who live their faith in ways that inspire us. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite a conversation with someone whose faith you admire. Share with you son/daughter something of what you learn about this person. Invite him/her to do the same. You both may learn more about the Catholic faith from watching the person you chose and listening to what they say. Be a model of someone who supports the missionary work of the Church through your prayer and financial support.*

Say: We have learned about the missionary mandate of the Church and the many ways we can directly or indirectly support that mission. We need to remember that living our faith can permeate every aspect of our life.

Point out the Discuss activity. Once you have both thought of your favorite Catholic symbol and season, share one thing you would still like to understand about being Catholic.

Conclude the session by praying the Evening Prayer.

Lord, from the rising of the sun to its setting, your name is worthy of all praise. Let our prayer come like incense before you. May the lifting up of our hands be as an evening sacrifice acceptable to you, Lord our God. Amen.



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The Christian Faithful

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Recognize the importance of each member of the Church
- Explain that because of our Baptism, each member of the Church shares in Jesus' roles as priest, prophet, and king
- Describe the work of the laity in supporting the life of the parish community
- Describe the parish's mission to serve others in Christ's name
- Explain why the evangelical counsels are gifts that call people to a consecrated religious life
- Explore the different forms of consecrated religious life

Parents, Consider This: *The opportunities to grow in faith and serve others are often no further away than our own parish church. In fact, many faithful Catholics probably can't even name all of the ministries their local Church provides, as most parishes are quite open to assisting members of most any faith formation, liturgical or human concerns committee, or ministry. If we seriously thought about it, we probably do not take in deeply enough the privilege and responsibility of the priestly, prophetic, and kingly offices of Christ conferred on us at Baptism. Some, maybe even your child, may be called to consecrated religious life or to ordained ministry. We can pray for any young person who has that calling, and we should support them in every way. But for most of us, our life and our service to God and the Church will be as one of the lay faithful. How beautiful would be the Body of Christ here on Earth if we each contributed our gifts with generosity and humility in service to others.*

Children at This Age: *Most eighth-graders are just in the process of forming their own identities as members of a parish. Their experience in the parish may largely depend on the involvement they have had with their families. Your son/daughter will likely respond if provided concrete opportunities to get involved in the Church. Doing so can provide a sense of community and the opportunity to discover and use his/her individual gifts. Your child may have the desire to serve but may not yet have developed the organizational skills nor the independence to find ways to serve. Help by organizing opportunities and working with the staff at your parish to create and support opportunities for your child and other children this age to serve others in your community.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 195,
The Christian Faithful

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that we are each called to share God’s love with the world.

Say: Let’s listen to God’s Word on how we can be salt of the Earth and light to the world.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Young people, like you, can be active participants in the life of the Church, especially through the ministries of the school and parish. You are not too young to be a light to the world.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does it mean to be salt for the Earth and light to the world?
(This question invites us to reflect on the ways our presence changes the groups and communities to which we belong. Do I affect them by actively serving, contributing, or leading others to Christ or am I passive and not really making a difference?)
- What is your place in the Catholic Church? (As an individual’s identity develops, we become more able to see our strengths and how we fit into our local parish as well as in the Church as a whole.)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 196,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Tell your child to read the directions. Work together to complete the chart on page 196. As you complete the chapter, you might want to come back and add any new information to the chart.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 197

Have your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with each other some things that you would tell another family about your parish's staff, ministries, and faith formation.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 198–203. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 203,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each of the bullet points, then ask your child to think about how she/he can play a larger role in helping bring knowledge of God’s Kingdom to the secular world.

Turn to Page 204

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *The Our Catholic Life section of this chapter reviews some of the many options and directions our vocations can take us in as faithful Catholics. It reminds us it is not what we choose to do that is as important as how we choose to carry out the role or profession in which we find ourselves. Do we accomplish our work with the love of God as our central purpose? It is easy to forget the awesome opportunity we have each day to grow closer to God and more understanding of our family and friends. We are more likely to find the will, the time, and the energy to do this if we choose to listen to God in prayer. We must remember that the Holy Spirit is with us to help us with the small decisions and choices we have in everyday life. The Holy Spirit can also help us to discern the big choices we make regarding vocation, career, and state of life. Let your child know you pray for him/her, especially when he/she has big decisions to make. Remind your son/daughter of your prayerful support, especially in the midst of challenges and in difficult times.*

Point to the photo and ask how the people shown might be bringing the love of God to others.

Ask: What are some of the ways you think you are being called to serve?

Invite your child to share her/his thoughts.

Say: Now let's read about Blessed Edmond Ignatius Rice and how he served by founding Catholic schools and the "Irish Christian Brothers."

Read aloud People of Faith.

Say: We have learned about the importance of the vocation we choose and the way we serve in that vocation. The Consider activity will help us think and pray about our own vocations. We are both going to do this activity and then talk about it.

Once you have both thought about your own vocation in life and written your paragraph, share why you have chosen or plan to choose a particular vocation. Pray the vocation prayer together.

Conclude the session by praying the Evening Prayer.

Lord, from the rising of the sun to its setting, your name is worthy of all praise. Let our prayer come like incense before you. May the lifting up of our hands be as an evening sacrifice acceptable to you, Lord our God. Amen.



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Honoring God

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Recall the covenant that God established with the Israelites
- Examine ways to keep the First Commandment by making God our first priority
- Discover why faith, hope, and love are called the Theological Virtues
- Explain why idolatry keeps us from experiencing true faith, hope, and love
- Describe attitudes and behaviors that are not in accord with the First Commandment
- Examine attitudes and behaviors that are not in accord with the Second Commandment

Parents, Consider This: *Someone suggested that if you want to know what your priorities really are, take a look at your checkbook register and your calendar. Where we spend our time and money reveals a lot about what our priorities are. It is probably true that 95% of your time and resources are devoted to your family. While the Church teaches that the needs of your spouse and children are your first responsibility outside of your relationship with God, she also teaches us that the purpose of Catholic parenting is to teach our children that they have been created to be a gift to the world. The time, talents, and treasures of your family should not be centered on your wants but on the world's needs. Teaching your children that they are not the center of the universe—God is—is a truth that will help them grow to be holy women and men.*

Children at This Age: *At this age, your child is forming the value system that will guide her/his choices. She/he will be largely influenced by the values of her/his peers and our media-driven culture. Your daughter/son may struggle with her/his impulses for what seems gratifying at the moment and what others determine is popular versus what she/he knows is right. It is important to remember that your child's conscience is constantly being formed. Remind your daughter/son often that you expect her/him to make good choices—choices that are a response to God's great love for her/him. It is important to communicate the concept that, for the Christian, God is not a priority in life but the priority.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 211,
Honoring God

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Pray the first few lines of the leader prayer. Have your child read aloud the Psalm verse. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that God should be number one in our lives. He should always be our top priority.

Say: The first three Commandments focus on our relationship with God—loving him with all our heart, soul, and mind. Let’s prepare to hear his Word.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Living in a true covenant relationship with God requires that everything we do and say is a witness to being loved by God and loving him in return.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What matters most in life? (*Listen carefully to your child’s answer.*)
- How can you show that God is important to you? (**through our attitudes, words, and actions**)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 212,
Getting Started

Read the first paragraph.

Direct your child to read the instructions and complete the chart. (*The Commandments are listed on page 373.*) Encourage your son/daughter to share his/her responses; add how you observe the first two Commandments.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 213 **Have** your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, place a star next to the activities that are self-driven and a check mark next to the activities that are other-driven. Review each other's calendars and discuss what you notice about them (i.e., similarities, differences). Pay special attention to where your priorities lie.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 214–219. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 219,
In Summary *When you return,* review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read the introductory paragraph. Have your child read aloud each bullet point. Invite him/her to describe how we can recognize a person who holds/follows each belief listed here.

Turn to Page 220 **Direct** your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *Do you think if someone asked your child to describe the most important relationship in your life that he/she would respond, "The most important relationship in my parent's life is his/her relationship with God." Probably not. More likely, your child sees that he/she is the center of most of your time, energy, and even financial resources. That is why it is not only important but necessary for him/her to see you pray, celebrate the Sacraments, read the Scriptures, and make time for other people's needs. Your son /daughter must see in you what it means to respond to God's love with our lives. There should not be any separation between life and faith.*

Discuss the questions at the beginning of the Our Catholic Life text.

Ask: What do you hear God telling you about your relationships?
How will you respond?

Invite your child to silently reflect on her/his answers.

Read the story of Saint Blaise, and discuss with your child the courage it took for this Saint to keep his faith even in the face of death.

Direct your child to complete the List activity. You can do the activity as well on a separate piece of paper. Share with one another some ideas on how you could help each other do what you think is necessary to strengthen your relationship with God.

Conclude the session by praying the Hail, Holy Queen on Page 383.



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Honoring the Family

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *Do you ever long for the days when your child was a toddler who thought you had all the answers and that your hugs and kisses would heal every hurt? When you look at your daughter or son, these days you see a person who often thinks you know very little and may even turn away from signs of affection. These are the signs of the journey of building an identity. Your child has reached a stage of life in which she/he will likely be feeling some conflict with you in her/his search for independence. The energy and patience you will need as your child begins to think for herself/himself can only come from the Holy Spirit. Pray for your child and yourself, as you navigate these challenging waters, always remembering that the family is the school of love.*

Children at This Age: *Adults can sometimes appear to young people to know very little, because the music and elements of popular culture that are so important to young teens are often less familiar to adults. At the same time, your child is dealing with the knowledge that you are human and sometimes wrong. He/she may use this insight to justify following his/her own decisions over your instructions. Your son/daughter can be torn between the desire to be protected by you and the desire to be independent. In the midst of these competing desires, you stand as the constant, loving presence of God.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Express what it means to follow the Fourth Commandment
- Explore what it means to honor one's parents
- Identify the lessons we can learn and apply from the Holy Family
- Examine the components necessary for a strong faith-filled family
- Explain the importance of a well-formed conscience
- Discuss the vital relationship between the family and the Church

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 223,
Honoring the Family

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that from our families, we learn about God and what it means to love him and be a sign of his love to others.

Say: This week’s session tells us that we are called by God to always love and honor our parents. Let’s begin by listening for what God has to say to us in his Word.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: We are both going to get the chance this week to think about the reason we are a family. I hope this will help us both grow in our understanding of each other and what God wants for and from our family.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions listed below:

- What are our responsibilities in this family? (*Both of you should share your thoughts.*)
- Why did God design the human race so that we would be born into a family? (*We need a community that supports us and helps us to learn and grow.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 224,
Getting Started

Read aloud the first paragraph.

Say: Family is the first place where we learn to live in relationship with others, which sets a pattern for the way we interact outside of the family.

Invite your child to complete the chart. When he/she is finished, observe how many times the references indicate things done for him/her and how many indicate what she/he does for others. Discuss your observations with your child.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 225

Direct your child to complete the activity on page 225. Invite him/her to share who he/she chose as a person of influence and why. Share with your child about a family member who has served as a role model and/or influenced you.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 226–231. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 231,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Remind your son/daughter that we sometimes consider others, whom we share bonds of love with, our family members even if we are not blood relatives.

Turn to Page 232

Direct your daughter/son to silently read the Our Catholic Life text on family relationships.

Parents, Consider This: *Have you ever been offended or hurt by something that someone did or said only to find out later that the person never intended to hurt you? Unfortunately, it was that person's lack of ability to communicate or a misunderstanding on your part that caused the rupture in your relationship. Learning how to communicate with one another and how to forgive are keys to a happy life. Especially at this age, your child is learning from your relationships and interactions with your spouse, your extended family, and your friends. Try to look at yourself through your child's eyes and be attentive to what your relationships are teaching him/her. It is a humbling thought to realize that how your son/daughter understands God's love begins in the way you allow his love to flow through you.*

Point out the photo. Invite your child to describe the relationship that she/he sees being portrayed.

Read together the story of Saint Helena. Discuss why she was so interested in finding the places that were important in the life of Jesus.

Complete the Plan exercise independently. When finished, share your answers with each other. Both of you should choose one thing from your plan and really commit to it for the next week. When you gather for your next session, begin by asking if your daughter/son has noticed the changes you were working toward. Comment on what you have noticed about her/his actions.

Conclude the session by praying the Hail, Holy Queen on Page 383.



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student & Family section of aliveinchrist.osv.com.

The Dignity of All

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Examine why society functions best when each person respects everyone else
- Discuss the fundamental rights of persons and how to achieve prosperity, peace, and security for everyone
- Examine why the Church must speak out about social and economic matters
- Discuss how the New Commandment is meant to be followed by organizations and nations
- Explain how solidarity compels us to work for the rights of others
- Describe how we can further justice, love, and peace through our own actions
- Recognize that all sins are social in that they affect society

Parents, Consider This: *Many popular television shows about family life portray parents in an unrealistic and/or negative way. The children are often “wiser” and more worldly than the parents, and they are often shown teaching the parents how to navigate through the modern world. Watching these programs can produce or encourage an attitude that is disrespectful toward adults. Forming your child to respect himself/herself and others begins in your expectation that he/she respect you. When you make your home a place where each member is treated with respect and kindness, you are building the foundation for your child to stand against prejudice, bullying, and intolerance.*

Children at This Age: *You may be confused that your child can be so self-centered that she/he is angry and pouting because you will not take her/him to a concert in another state, while at the same time she/he wants to volunteer for a week’s work in an impoverished part of the country. At this age, while your child is growing in social consciousness and the capacity for empathy toward others, she/he is also growing in understanding that she/he is not the center of the universe. Encouraging your daughter/son to recognize and be moved to action by the needs of others will help her/him keep Christ in the center of the universe. Discussing news stories in light of our Catholic beliefs will help your child to be more attuned to the needs of the world.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 235,
The Dignity of All

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that when we see each other as God’s work of art, we treat each other with love and dignity.

Say: Jesus is the core of how we live and show our faith. Let’s listen to God’s Word about living as a community of one heart and mind, in Christ.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Because God created each person, we all possess equal human dignity. Therefore, we should work for the common good so that all people have what they need.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How are we supposed to take care of each other? (*make a conscious effort to be aware of the needs of others around us and far from us, and respond with actions that are based upon their needs*)
- What can we do to show others the dignity they are due? (*Our words and actions should reflect what we believe about their sacredness as a creation of God.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 236,
Getting Started

Read aloud the opening paragraph.

Have your child read the directions for the Dignity and Respect chart. Ask him/her to fill in any examples he/she can come up with. Discuss what he/she wrote and share any examples you might be able to add.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 237 **Direct** your child to answer the questions for the activity in the book while you complete it on a separate piece of paper. Share your answers with each other.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 238–243. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 243,
In Summary *When you return,* review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read the opening sentence and each of the three summary points. Discuss with your child how the Church works to make sure that public and political authority acts within the framework of truth, justice, freedom, and solidarity.

Turn to Page 244 **Direct** your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *If you go to the home page of the Catholic Relief Services website and observe the rolling banner, in a matter of seconds, you will see the physical, emotional, and spiritual wounds of the world being tended to by our Catholic Church. As Catholics we serve the needs of others and work for the justice of all in the universal church, in our parish communities, and even in our homes. While a family supports and nurtures the lives of its members, one of the most significant purposes of the family is to help each member discover the gift he/she is to be for the world. We are created for each other. It may be time to take a serious look at the life of your family and ask yourself: Can I do a better job of teaching this truth?*

Use your tablet or laptop to research one of the three organizations listed in the Our Catholic Life section; share with your child what impressed you about the work of this group. Invite your daughter/son to share what interests her/him. If you do not have access to a computer at home, go to your local library and use one of theirs.

Point out the brief story on Saint John Chrysostom, an early Church father who wrote about taking care of others.

Read aloud the People of Faith paragraph.

Discuss Saint John's quote and his emphasis on the needs of the poor. Could that statement apply to the many "extras" we have in our homes as well as our churches?

Review together the suggestions in the Identify activity for responding to our Catholic Social Teaching. Discuss one thing your family **will do** this week to serve the needs of others.

Conclude the session by praying the Hail, Holy Queen on Page 383.



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student & Family section of aliveinchrist.osv.com.

Worship and Grace

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Define a Catholic ritual as a pattern of behavior that makes use of actions and symbols
- Identify the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist
- Describe the practice of adoration outside of Mass
- Explain how our spiritual life strengthens our moral life
- Identify Precepts that have personal significance
- Explain why Sunday is the day Catholics worship and rest
- Relate our observance of Sunday to the Third Commandment

Parents, Consider This: *The importance of developing an understanding of the signs and symbols of our Sacraments cannot be underestimated. As we celebrate the Sacraments, we may think of the experience in terms of the entire ritual—going to Mass, having a child baptized, or witnessing a marriage. But each Sacrament is rich in the various signs and symbols within the ritual. As your child grows in comprehension of the abstract and underlying meanings of the signs and symbols, the more deeply he/she will appreciate how God is present in each Sacrament. As we learn to savor the richness of each element of the sacramental rituals, the significance and relevance unfolds. Taking the time to discuss this with your child will help him/her to grasp the power of the ritual you are sharing. For example, think of how the bread and wine that become the Body and Blood of Christ nourish us to help us live in the ways Jesus taught us. Compare that to how eating good food nourishes us to live in healthy ways. In your conversations, help your child bridge the gap between visible signs and invisible realities.*

Children at This Age: *Eighth-graders are entering into the age when they will begin to make deeper connections between the past and the present. This developmental growth can create opportunities for teaching the value of a religious tradition. Also, at this age, a young person may occasionally become unsettled or even fearful when they see their lives changing and becoming more complex. A function of ritual and tradition is to provide a sense of stability. Sacraments are, in part, about connecting with our own past and the past of the Catholic Church. Though the memory of young people may be limited because of their age, they are still linked to a “corporate memory” that connects them to salvation history.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 251,
Worship and Grace

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that the first Christians understood that God was first in their lives, and their everyday actions reflected that knowledge.

Say: Listen to the Scripture reading and see why we should make gathering together to pray and worship a priority.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: When we worship, we often use rituals—patterns of behavior that make use of actions and symbols. We’re going to learn more about this as we study this chapter.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How does the Church worship? (*Review the rituals you experience together as part of the worship celebrations you have had in your parish and in other Catholic churches you have attended together.*)
- What is the relationship between worshipping God and living a holy life? (*Discuss the connections between the formation we experience in worship and how that informs and helps guide us in our moral choices and actions.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 252,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Tell your child to read the directions and complete the chart on page 252. When he/she is finished, discuss together some of the ways your family observes the Sabbath. How is this day different from the other six days of the week in your family's life?

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 253

Have your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with each other some of the routines you and your family follow that keep you spiritually healthy.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 253–259. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 259,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words. Discuss how the way we worship and pray impacts our daily lives.

Turn to Page 260

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *The Our Catholic Life section of this chapter focuses on the significance of honoring the Lord's Day every week by participating in Mass with your family, and safeguarding this day to allow for rest and reflection in the busy schedules most people juggle. The regular practice of being together as a family at Mass strengthens our relationship with God and the Church in ways that form us in a Christian life. Mass is not something we just attend. We are invited to fully participate by listening, singing, and praying. By giving our undivided attention and conscious and active participation in Mass, we become fully engaged and have the opportunity to purposely reflect on our Catholic symbols and seasons. Through the discipline of our faithfulness to participate wholeheartedly with the worshipping community, we can grow closer to God.*

Ask: What is one way you feel part of the Church as you celebrate Mass on Sundays?

Discuss your thoughts with one another.

Say: The culture we live in seems to move at a very fast pace. Taking time to worship, rest, and reflect on our faith is not necessarily encouraged by our unusually busy schedules and the expectation that we should always be available for work, sports or music practices, or various extra-curricular activities. In some ways, we have to be willing to be counter-cultural and take responsibility to order our week by observing a Sabbath day that is different from the other days of the week.

Read about Saint Thomas Becket, who exemplified strength of character to defend the faith and the Church even at the cost of his own life.

Say: We read about the importance of worship and the significance of observing the Sabbath by worshipping with our family and faith community. Saint Thomas Becket is an inspiring example of someone who loved God above all things, including power, prestige, and even his own life. Now, let's look at the Identify activity. We are both going to work on this activity and then talk about it.

Once you have both completed the activity, share your answers with each other.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Contrition on Page 386.



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Faithful Living

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *One of the most significant decisions anyone makes is the decision about a life vocation. Ultimately, we will choose one of the following: the single life, vowed religious, ordained ministry, or marriage. This chapter focuses on the Sacraments at the Service of Communion, which includes Marriage and Holy Orders. These choices might seem a distant reality for your child. But how others live out these choices will affect his/her perceptions of marriage and the ordained ministry. Children learn what these choices mean by observing family, friends, neighbors, and the people they know from your parish. Hopefully, your child will have many rich experiences of people around him/her who reflect God's love in their marriage or service as a priest. Give your child opportunities to have personal contact with a priest and faithful happy married couples. Discuss with him/her how important these life commitments are. Pray for your son/daughter that good role models will come into his/her life to inspire and guide him/her. Good role models can help your child form an understanding of personal gifts and charisms and identify how these things can be used for good in his/her chosen vocation.*

Children at This Age: *Truthfulness and reliability are important characteristics to nurture and affirm in anyone, but certainly in younger adolescents. If they have personally experienced being let down by someone they thought they could trust, it may lead to cynicism. Children at this age need to see that, while sometimes people fall short of our expectations and fail us, personal integrity also exists. Eighth-graders may not have a wide experience of different communities, but they may be highly influenced by the leaders in your particular parish. Hold up the example of faithful couples and priests that you know. Point out specific ways you witness their character and integrity. Thank and affirm them for the good ways they affect and influence your family and community.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Explore marriage as a covenant of fidelity
- Examine how the love of a married man and woman reflects Christ's love for his Church
- Compare and contrast the vows of Holy Matrimony and of Holy Orders
- Explain how priests act *in persona Christi* and *in persona ecclesiae*
- Relate the truths held by the Sixth and Ninth Commandments to the Sacrament of Matrimony
- Explain why all people are called to practice chastity and modesty

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 263,
Faithful Living

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that we should pray for the courage and the strength to be faithful to God, in our words and actions.

Say: The Sacraments strengthen us to be faithful to our commitments and our relationships. Let’s listen to an example from Scripture about what it means to live faithfully.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Ask: How do you respond to God’s promise to be faithful to you?

Discuss this question together.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How are you an example of a faithful person? *(Being faithful might seem like second nature to some. Notice faithfulness in others and consider how someone might evaluate your faithfulness.)*
- What does it mean to be faithful to God, to yourself, and to others? *(Consider the attributes that lead to being faithful. Recall what practices and habits you have cultivated to be a faithful person.)*

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 264,
Getting Started

Read aloud the introductory paragraph.

Tell your child to read the directions and complete the chart on page 264. When he/she is finished, share some things you know about the Sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders. Ask your child to share some of the information he/she wrote down.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 265

Have your child read aloud the instructions for this page. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with each other about some promises you have made and how you have kept them. Discuss together the importance of keeping promises.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 266–271. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 271,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words. See if you can each identify some ways that the virtues of modesty and chastity can help all people.

Turn to Page 272

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: Faithfulness means honoring our commitments to ourselves, being faithful to God, and being faithful to others. It is important that we remain true and loyal in all of our relationships, but as Catholics, our faithfulness to God should be one of the most important aspects of our life. Being true to ourselves and consistent in living what we believe is the path to peace of mind and heart. Being faithful in our relationships with others by honoring our friendships and family relationships leads to rich and meaningful connections with others. Sometimes it is hard to maintain a sense of balance in life—to not overcommit ourselves and get worn out or under committed and not be engaged in life. This is a great time to examine the balance in your own life, and help your child to cultivate faithfulness to his/her commitments to God, himself/herself, and others.

Discuss the commitments you both can make to God, to yourself, and to others this week. (*Make sure what you suggest is realistic and achievable. Affirm the ways you see these commitments already lived out.*)

Say: Saint Benedict the Black was a freed slave who became a Franciscan lay brother and a cook at a convent. He lived out his faithfulness to God as a friar and leader in his community.

Invite your child to read aloud the brief People of Faiths story.

Point out the Identify activity. Work independently to answer the questions. Once you both have thought about promises you have made and the responsibilities that come with them, discuss how you are doing in keeping them.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Contrition on Page 386.



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The Liturgical Year

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Explore how the Church celebrates the Paschal Mystery through a yearly cycle of seasons and feasts
- Identify the seasons of the liturgical year
- Recognize that in the liturgy, the three Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity are present and active in our worship
- Explore how we are transformed by the liturgy to become more like Christ
- Discuss how daily prayer and the Liturgy of the Hours open our minds and hearts to God

Parents, Consider This: *Our lives are a mixture of routines and patterns as well as unique moments. For example, you will celebrate your child's birthday this year as you do every year but did you ever think, "My child will only be this age once." He/she is only 4 or 8 or 12 years old for one year. Yet, the pattern of the year will be similar, revolving through the seasons, attending school, celebrating holidays and family traditions, taking summer vacations, etc. As you move through your family calendar, you also will be cycling once again through the liturgical year of the Church. In this chapter of **Alive in Christ**, you and your child will be exploring the liturgical year. You will study how the Church remembers special events in the story of the life of Jesus and in your own stories. Through the cycle of seasons and feasts, the Church celebrates the Paschal Mystery around the world. You will hear how the Eucharist is at the heart of the liturgical year and all of the Church's life. In the Eucharist, we commemorate the saving work of Christ and remember his actions recorded in the Gospels. More than that, it is the means by which we are transformed, as we remember and try to live as Christ lived. As we do so, others may come to know Christ through our actions and words.*

Children at This Age: *Eighth-graders want to use their gifts and abilities, but they are often still trying to figure out what those gifts and abilities are. We can help them grow into their gifts and encourage them to use them by being an affirming presence in their lives. In time they will own their strengths and share them with others. They also are beginning to understand and appreciate tradition and ritual. They have lived long enough to remember things that have been done over and over, both in their own family celebrations and in the Church. Help your son/daughter to connect with the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year. Remind him/her that yearly celebrations give us an opportunity to reflect on the growth and change that has taken place during the year. It also allows us to regularly practice recognizing how God blesses us continually throughout the year in many and various ways.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 275,
The Liturgical Year

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Pray the first part of the leader prayer. Have your child read aloud the Psalm verses. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Say: As we grow and learn and experience God through our Church year after year, we come to an even deeper awareness of who he is and who we are in his eyes.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: The different seasons of the liturgical year help us pattern our lives on the life of Christ.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the following question found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does the Church celebrate through the year, year after year?
(The story of Jesus, God among us who lived, died, rose, and saved us.
This is also known as the Paschal Mystery.)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 276,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Tell your child to read the directions and complete The Church Year web on page 276. When he/she is finished, ask him/her to share something about each of the liturgical seasons. You should also share something you know about each liturgical season.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 277

Have your child silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with each other one predictable thing and one unpredictable thing that you experienced over the course of your life.

Discuss some of the changes you are looking forward to in the future.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 278–283. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 283,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Alternate reading the summary text and the bullet points. Share your thoughts with each other on how participation in Sunday Mass and our own regular personal prayer can help us live the life of Christ.

Turn to Page 284

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *The Our Catholic Life section of this chapter focuses on the Liturgy of the Hours. The public prayer of the Church marks each day as holy with certain prayers and readings for different times of the day and night. It also connects with the different liturgical seasons and feasts of the Church year and, in doing so, to the Paschal Mystery. It is a beautiful thought to realize that fellow Christians pray the Liturgy of the Hours at all times so this prayer is looping around the world at all times. If the Liturgy of the Hours is not part of your regular prayer practice, look into it. Consider praying the Liturgy of the Hours for one day as a family or choose one of the times of praying such as Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer and pray that as a family for a week.*

Remind your child that it is important to make prayer a part of our daily lives. *(Consider the patterns we form around our daily routines. It takes discipline and consistency to keep faithful to a regular prayer life.)*

Read aloud the story of Saint Maria del Transito de Jesus Sacramentado, who started a missionary group to help the poor and orphans of Argentina.

Say: Saint Maria showed her willingness to be faithful and adjust to the changes she had to make to continue in religious life in spite of illness and disappointment.

Point out the Reflect activity. Work on it independently. When you both have completed the activity, share some of your answers with each other. Discuss what part of faith you need to develop in order to keep making your way through the Paschal Mystery of your life.

Conclude the session by praying the Act of Contrition on Page 386.



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student & Family section of aliveinchrist.osv.com.

The Communion of Saints

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *One of the consequences of a society that is so mobile is that too often our children do not have the opportunity to live in close proximity to their grandparents. Families that do live in close proximity often find themselves in situations where they don't seem to have enough time to spend with older family members. It becomes difficult for our children to connect themselves to a bigger story—the story of their ancestors. This is necessary for our children in order to help them avoid feeling overwhelmed by the concerns and worries of the present day. It gives them a bigger picture. That is one of the reasons why learning the stories of the Saints will help your child grow in faith. It will help them to connect to the story of salvation that has been handed on to us by people of faith.*

Children at This Age: *Your child is transitioning between a stage in which he/she thinks very concretely (and the need to experience something through his/her senses in order to understand it) and the more abstract thinking characteristic of adults. Therefore, experiencing all of the sensory aspects of our faith can be especially helpful in cultivating a meaningful spiritual experience. Equally important is a discussion of the underlying meaning behind the signs and symbols used in our Catholic faith. No matter the age of your child, it is important that they are surrounded by sacramentals in your home. Visible signs help us remember that our faith is the center of our life and our family.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Explore how we show our communion with all Church members when we support one another through prayer and sacrifice
- Explore the meaning and the practice of sacramentals
- Recognize that sacramentals help us to grow in faith
- Explore the use of blessings within and outside of Mass
- Explain how Church art, if used properly, helps Catholics worship God
- Differentiate between idolatry and honoring the person portrayed in an image

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 291,
The Communion of Saints

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Say: Explain that in this session he/she will learn they are a part of something whole and something holy, the Communion of Saints. Let’s begin by listening for God’s Word to speak to our hearts.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: You know that Baptism has made all of us a member of the Communion of Saints.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does it mean to die in Christ so to live with him? (*That we die to a life that was separated from God by Original Sin and live in the new life Jesus gives us because he reconciled the world to his Father.*)
- How are you a part of the Communion of Saints? (*Each of us shares in Jesus’ desire for us to grow in holiness and communion with him.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 292,
Getting Started

Have your child complete the boxes. Remember that this is a pre-assessment of the things they will be learning in this session. It might help to explain the difference between a prayer and a devotion. An example of a prayer is the Eternal Rest. An example of a devotion is a novena (a series of days when we say particular prayers).

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 293

Read the activity instructions together. This is a particularly beautiful exercise that will provide insight into the hearts of both you and your child. Complete the activity on a separate piece of paper. Share what you wrote with each other.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 294–299. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 299,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 300

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *The sound of a particular song or the taste of a particular food may help us to touch a memory of someone we have loved. Our memories are a gift that allow us to feel once again the presence of those who are no longer with us. When we experience those moments, it is a good time to remember to pray for those who have died. As our loved ones continue their journey to Heaven, our love for them continues in the form of prayer. Just as we are called to help each other to let go of what stands in the way of God's perfect love here on Earth, we continue to do so for those who have died and may not yet be in the fullness of God's presence. Because of Jesus' Death and Resurrection, we stand firm in our belief that love is stronger than death.*

Read the story of Saint André aloud. Discuss what it must have been like for him to be orphaned at such a young age.

Substitute the activity on the page by looking up the birthdays or death anniversaries of the people in your family who have died. Write their names on a family calendar and remember them in a special way on those days.

Conclude the session by praying the Prayer to the Holy Spirit on Page 384.



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Examples For Living

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *You may have noticed how your child and his/her friends are in search of role models. All too often they find them in the wrong places—such as popular actors, athletes, and musicians who may not always be good examples. Sometimes children this age are attracted to rebellious personalities. Your child needs to be taught that there is a difference between resistance and rebellion. Rebellion is often a response to the pursuit of one's own pleasures and ego, while positive resistance is a response to injustice. The Saints provide us with examples of both.*

Children at This Age: *Your son/daughter may sometimes have difficulty relating to the Saints unless you help him/her to understand that these were real people who also struggled at times with doing what was right. Both Saint Augustine and Saint Francis lived a part of their lives in the pursuit of ego and pleasure. After encountering Jesus they became men who stood for the rights of the poor and the outcast. They moved from rebellion to resistance. Many people have been moved to deeper lives of holiness through reading the stories of the Saints. Your home should have at least one book that tells the stories of the most known Saints. It might also be a good practice to have your child research a lesser-known Saint to share once a month with the rest of the family.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Recognize that Mary lived a life of faithful obedience to God
- Identify Mary's Assumption as the Church's teaching that, at the end of her life, Mary (body and soul) was "taken up" (assumed) into Heaven
- Explore the many feast days and popular devotions that honor Mary
- Recognize that Saints are role models for us
- Identify canonization as the process of becoming officially recognized as a Saint in the Church

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 303,
Examples For Living

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Say: Explain that in this session, you will look to the Saints as ordinary people who made an effort to “seek the face of God” every day of their lives.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: The Saints took to heart the words of the Beatitudes as an invitation to grow into deeper love with God through Jesus.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does it mean to be blessed? (*It means that God is present with us in those times when we live with our eyes focused on him and not what the world thinks is important.*)
- How do the Saints show us faithful living? (*They were people who loved Jesus and his teachings and spent their days trying to live as he taught.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 304,
Getting Started

Read the first paragraph. Ask your child to complete the chart. Encourage him/her to find some of the feasts on the Internet.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what he/she thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 305

Choose one Saint from all of the People of Faith in your book. Together, read additional information about the life of this Saint from credible Internet sources. Then work with your child to list some questions you would ask him or her about the categories listed on the page.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 294–299. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 311,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 312

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *Your child is reading about the call to holiness that we receive at our Baptism. This is another way of saying that God intends for all of us to be Saints. For Christians, it is the first thing we should think about in the morning and the way we begin to examine our conscience at night. How far have we travelled away from that way of thinking? In our world it is possible that we can get through an entire day, maybe even a week, without paying attention to our relationship with God. God doesn't expect perfection from us, but he does want progress. Saint Catherine of Siena said, "It's heaven all the way to heaven, and it's hell all the way to hell!" Talk with your child about ways that the both of you can be more intentional about becoming Saints.*

Read the story of Blessed Mariam and talk about the way in which she lived the Beatitudes.

Replace the Identify activity by each of you writing on a piece of paper five sentences you would like people to be able to say about you. Do they reflect your eternal goals? Share them with each other and discuss how you could use your time, talent, and treasure to make those statements true about your life.

Conclude the session by praying the Prayer to the Holy Spirit on Page 384.



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From Age to Age

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

Parents, Consider This: *What are you willing to die for? That is a difficult question. The old saying, “Life isn’t worth living unless you find something worth dying for,” helps us to name what we value most. We have been given the treasure of our Catholic faith because thousands of people throughout the centuries decided that the name of Jesus was worth dying for. Today, the persecution of Christians continues to take place. We stand on the sacrifices of those who have gone before us, as we are asked to stand for our faith each day. As your family continues to stand against the values of the culture that challenge the Gospel, pray for the courage to live as disciples of Jesus Christ.*

Children at This Age: *When your daughter/son reads the stories of the martyrs, she/he may tend to think of religious persecution as something that happened long ago, or at least something that happens in other places, far away. Your child will need help in understanding that persecution comes in a number of different forms, from peers and popular culture to oppressive governments. Knowing the stories of the Saints who have endured such hardships can inspire her/him to live a life of faith. You can help your child develop a spirit of commitment within the Church community by encouraging actual involvement in the many ways the Church exercises and carries out her mission.*

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Describe the general life situation of the early Christians before Constantine
- Examine how the Edict of Milan changed the development of Christianity
- Explain how the use of indulgences was one of the factors that led to the Reformation
- Examine how the Council of Trent worked to make Church teachings clearer and reform abuses

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 315,
From Age to Age

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Pray the first part of the leader prayer. Have your child read aloud the Psalm verse. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Say: This week we are going to learn about the persecution that the earliest Christians experienced. They faced insults, ridicule, and challenges, and risked their lives for believing in Christ and living their beliefs. Yet, God called them and us to be his Church and continue to be his voice in the world. Let’s prepare to hear his voice in our own lives.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: God cares about every day of your life. He wants you to be happy, but knows that there will be suffering and pain because of evil and sin.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- How does God give you the strength you need to face the challenges in life? (*He walks through difficult times with you.*)
- How can you accept the call of serving God? (*By first listening for the ways he communicates his plan for you.*)

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 316,
Getting Started

Read the first paragraph. Ask your child to complete the chart. After discussing his/her thoughts, talk about any of the challenges you might add.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 317

Ask your child to read aloud the activity instructions. While he/she completes the activity on the page, answer the same questions yourself on a separate piece of paper. Your child will learn much about you and those who helped you from the answers that you give.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 318–323. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any questions he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 323,
In Summary

When you return, alternate reading the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” bullets with your child. Have them rephrase each summary point in his/her own words.

Turn to Page 324

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *You have walked quite a faith journey with your child this year. The time you have spent in sacred conversation has helped you to grow in your relationship with Christ and your relationship with each other. You have ended each of these sessions by focusing on the lives of Saints, our role models. Remember that research tells us that you are still the most significant role model in your child's life. The decisions you make each day to live or not live your faith in word and action are being observed and reflected upon by your child. In the Gospels, Jesus says, “Let the little children come to me.” May God continue to bless all of the members of your family as you lead your children to him.*

Reflect on the story of Saint Marianne. Discuss what she believed was worth dying for.

Read the instructions for the Identify and Describe activity. Think about the changes you have experienced in the Church during your lifetime. Share this information with your child.

Conclude the session by praying the Prayer to the Holy Spirit on Page 384.



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