

The Early Church

Preparation for the Session

Turn to Page 173,
the Family + Faith page.
Vivos en Cristo, Page 347

In this chapter you will cover the following objectives:

- Describe the feast of Pentecost as the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles
- Examine how the Acts of the Apostles tells the story of the early Church
- Define *Apostolic Succession* as the passing down of authority and power to lead and teach the Church from the Apostles to the bishops
- Appreciate that the Holy Spirit continues to animate the Church today

Read the **Consider This** feature. What thoughts or reactions do you have to the opening question?

Parents, Consider This: *One of the sad consequences of the increasing number of people who live great distances from their extended family is that our children experience a separation from their family history. It takes an intentional effort on everyone's part to stay connected. Every human being needs to see themselves in the context of their family history. This is especially important for children. As a baptized member of the Church, your sixth grade child is ready to place him/herself in the family story of the Church. As your child searches for an identity, developing a deep sense of belonging in both your family and the Church will help her/him grow in security and happiness.*

Read these other sections on the Family + Faith Page.

- *Your Child Learned.* This highlights some of the content of Sacred Scripture and Tradition in the chapter.
- *Children At This Age.* This will help you to understand how your child processes and learns at this developmental level.



Let's Sing: These songs connect the session topics and can be downloaded from aliveinchrist.osv.com.

- Spirit, Come Down
- Come to Us, Holy Spirit

INVITE: Encountering God in His Word

Turn to Page 165,
The Early Church
Vivos en Cristo, Page 331

After gathering the supplies that you will need, 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 Invite your child to make the Sign of the Cross. Read aloud the Psalm verse from the book. Help your child to respond.

Say: After Jesus' Death and Resurrection, he appeared to the disciples and gave them a mission. Listen to what Jesus said.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word Ritual you learned in the Introduction Session or play Track 1 of the *Songs of Scripture* CD.

- Proclaim God’s Word 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.

Now, look at the *What Do You Wonder?* box.

Say: The mission Jesus gave to the disciples is the same mission we, as Christians, carry out today.

Invite your child to respond to the questions. Ask what else she/he might wonder about being sent to share the Good News.

DISCOVER: Learning God’s Truth

Turn to Page 166,
The Risen Jesus
and the Holy Spirit
Vivos en Cristo, Page 333

Have your child read the first two paragraphs.

Point out the artwork on the page that shows the interaction between Jesus and Thomas. Explain that Jesus understood Thomas’ need to see in order to believe.

Move to the Catholic Faith Words box and review the definition of the word **Holy Trinity**.

Ask: Why do you think the Apostles were afraid after Jesus’ Death? What gave them hope?

Turn to Page 167,
The Coming of the Spirit
Vivos en Cristo, Page 335

Take out your Bible. Ask your child to find Acts 2:18.



Proclaim the Scripture, communicating the drama of the event.

Point out that the disciples believed in Jesus’ promise, even though they did not know what would happen.



Have your child highlight the effect the Holy Spirit had on the Apostles.

Then, turn to page 324 in the Our Catholic Tradition section in the back of your child’s book. Pray aloud the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Activity

Complete the Share Your Faith activity. Discuss the two gifts from the Holy Spirit (p. 318) that the world needs most.

Turn to Page 168,
The Church's Work
Vivos en Cristo, Page 337

Read aloud the question at the top of the page. Tell your child he/she will learn the answer as you study the next two pages.

Ask your child to silently read the first paragraph and circle the word **mission** in the text. Read aloud its definition in the Catholic Faith Words box.

Ask: Have you ever been given a special mission or job before? Share a time when you were given a mission by someone. Bring the conversation back to the mission of the Church.

Summarize the text under “The Early Church.”

Tell the children that Jesus promised the disciples that they would be his witnesses “to the ends of the earth.” Saint Paul and others fulfilled this promise. (See Acts 1:8.)

Discuss how the mission of the Church today is similar to the mission of the early Church. Encourage your child to give specific examples.

Have your child silently read the text.

Tell your child that many Christians suffered persecution in the early Church and some Christians still suffer persecution in the world today.

Ask: To what extent are you willing to openly profess your faith as a Christian? When is this hardest to do?

Share how easy it can become to take your faith for granted. You may want to search online for places where Christians are being persecuted today.

Ask: What do you think gives those people the courage to die for what they believe in?

Read aloud the two paragraphs on “The Church Today.”

Walk through the pictures of the recent Popes.

Ask your child what he/she might know about Pope Francis. (He's the first Pope from Argentina; he's the first Pope who is from The Society of Jesus; he took the name Francis because of his love for the poor.)

LIVE: Living Our Faith

Turn to Page 170,
Our Catholic Life
Vivos en Cristo, Page 341

Ask your child to focus on how they can be a good witness for Jesus.

Read aloud the first paragraph

Share television shows, movies, or news reports in which witnesses played a key role.

Summarize the second paragraph, which is an introduction to the content in the chart.

★ **Read** the three sections, one at a time. Each section is worthy of serious conversation before writing in the blanks beside them.

Turn to Page 171,
People of Faith
Vivos en Cristo, Page 343

Read the paragraph about Saint Timothy.

- Share your reactions to the information.
- Share with your child about the person who first told you about Jesus.

Activity

Direct your child to complete the Live Your Faith activity. Help only when he/she may need further direction. It would be a great exercise for you to complete this activity as well.

Parents, Consider This: *When speaking to the Youth of the World from Rio de Janeiro, Pope Francis spoke to the need for witnesses of the faith. His words speak profoundly of witness. "Faith is a flame that grows stronger the more it is shared and passed on, so that everyone may know, love and confess Jesus Christ... Jesus did not say: 'go, if you would like to, if you have the time'... he said: 'Go and make disciples of all nations.' Sharing the experience of faith, bearing witness to the faith, proclaiming the Gospel: this is a command that the Lord entrusts to the whole Church."*

Turn to Page 173,
Family + Faith Page and
conclude with the Let's Pray
prayer on this page.
Vivos en Cristo, Page 347

Parents, Consider This: *It's important to form our children in the common language of prayer. We encourage you to pray the Prayer to the Holy Spirit (see Page 324), during your night prayer this week.*



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