

Sacraments of Initiation

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 this chapter, your child will explore the Sacraments of Initiation— their form, their effects, and their meaning. Think back on your child's Baptism and the joy and excitement of that day! This child of God, who is God's gift to you, was welcomed into the Christian community and the Catholic family of your parish. Reflect on the symbols of that day: the water of Baptism that gave your child new life in Christ; the white garment signifying purity and human dignity; the holy oil of Sacred Chrism that anointed him/her as priest, prophet, and king; the baptismal candle, symbolizing the Light of Christ and signifying how your child can carry that light into the world. Remember the hopes and dreams you had for your son/daughter that day. Recall the love of God you experienced at your child's Baptism. Let this reflection renew your love for God and for your child today.*

Children at This Age: *Seventh-graders are beginning to want to understand why they are here on Earth and what their purpose is. As your child begins to develop intellectually and spiritually, she/he may begin to question her/his roles in life in a more serious way. You can encourage your child to learn the gifts she/he has to offer by affirming them when you observe them. These might be areas in which your daughter/son excels, qualities she/he has that reflect a good character, or virtues she/he seems to possess. Remember that young people at this age are often drawn to groups that give them personal support while also affirming their desire to be part of something bigger than themselves.*

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

- Explain how the Sacraments of Initiation bring us into a relationship with Christ and the Church
- Identify the effects of Baptism
- Describe Confirmation as the Sacrament of Initiation through which the spiritual life received in Baptism is strengthened
- Give examples of ways to use the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in life situations
- Relate the strength that we gain from receiving the Eucharist to each person's call to participate in the mission of the Church
- Examine how we experience the presence of Christ in the two parts of the Mass, but most fully in the Eucharist
- Define transubstantiation

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 263,
Sacraments of Initiation

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 the opening lines of the leader prayer, and invite your child to read the Psalm verse. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Say: We are baptized into Christ, and through our Baptism, we each have a special place in the Church.



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 receive the gifts of faith and new life through our Baptism, our initiation into the Church.

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 it that because of Baptism we have new life in Christ?
(Baptism is the Sacrament that unites us to Christ and through which we share in his life as members of the Body of Christ.)
- What helps you feel at home with your family, with your friends, with God? (Some examples might be: feeling safe and accepted, knowing we can be ourselves and that we are cared for and loved, feeling we can serve others in meaningful ways.)

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

Have your child read aloud the opening paragraph as well as the directions for the Sacraments of Initiation web.

Work on the chart together. See how much information your child can come up with on the outward signs and ritual actions of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Add some of your own ideas to the page. As you work through the chapter, invite your child to come back to this page to fill in any more information he/she discovers.

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 **Remind** your child that the Sign of the Cross is a sign of our Baptism into Christ and of our belonging to the Church.

Read aloud the directions for this page. Have your child complete the activity in the book, while you complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, show and explain your illustrations to one another.

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.

Turn to Page 272 **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 given an opportunity to ponder the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which we receive at Confirmation. It is worthwhile to take some time to regularly reflect on the presence of these gifts in our own lives. Particularly, consider the gift of fear of the Lord, which also means awe and wonder of God. It allows us to realize all the blessing God has given us. As we move from task to task in life, we often neglect to simply thank and praise God for all he has created and for the blessings of our own life. We tend to take the wonder of God's grace for granted. We can go through the motions of life and neglect to look back and see God's plan unfolding. Smaller things, like comfort, entertainment, financial gain, what others think of us, etc. can easily dominate our thoughts and our priorities in life. All the while, our God, who is greater than anything in the world, is pouring out his powerful creation before us at all times. This week, try to be open to God's surprising you with goodness and peace.*

Ask: What changes do you think we might experience in our life if we devoted ourselves to spending more time in awe and praise of God?
(Share how you feel when you take the time to do this. Encourage your child to recognize how this helps us keep our priorities in line with our spiritual values.)

Say: Let's read about Saint Catherine of Genoa who wrote about her prayer experiences and devotion to Christ.

Read aloud the People of Faith text.

Say: Fear of the Lord is the Gift of the Holy Spirit that helps us to recognize God's greatness. Saint Catherine of Genoa clearly recognized God's greatness. Despite the obstacles she encountered in her life, she made her prayer life and service to others her priorities.

Ask: Do you think facing obstacles in our faith journeys can bring us closer to God?

Discuss your thoughts with one another.

Point out the Explain activity. Work independently to complete it. Once you both have finished, share two characteristics of Jesus you believe you have or will take on and explain why you chose them.

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



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