

Our Reason for Hope

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 raising of Lazarus showed that Jesus had power over humanity's greatest fear—death
- Discuss why Jesus' Resurrection gives us hope for our future
- Express the Church's teaching on Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory
- Explain how our life on Earth affects our destiny for eternity
- Describe the Last Judgment
- Explain the significance of the Works of Mercy in relationship to eternal life

Parents, Consider This: *Saint Catherine of Siena wrote, "It is heaven all the way to heaven and hell all the way to hell." In this session, you will be helping your child reflect upon the mysteries of eternal life. During these discussions and in your family's experiences of death that will come, remember to always hold these two truths before your child: God's desire is for each of us to live forever in union with him (Heaven), and Heaven is both the gift we receive and the choice we make through our attitudes, words, and actions. Help your child to see that our task as disciples is not only to be Christ for others but also to see Christ in others, and to act and react accordingly. We must also strive to turn away from sin and live in right relationship with God and his People, and then, it will be Heaven all the way to Heaven!*

Children at This Age: *Seventh-graders are becoming aware, in a personal way, of their own mortality. This can be frightening if we do not trust that Jesus has returned to us the gift of eternal life. If your child has not already, he/she will soon likely experience the death of family members (in particular, grandparents and other older relatives) in ways he/she has not before. Your son/daughter will need you to help him/her process these losses and look at them through the eyes of faith. This is one of the most teachable moments for any of us in our spiritual lives.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 315,
Our Reason for Hope

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 opening lines of the leader prayer. Have your child read aloud the Psalm verse. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Explain that hope comes with the Resurrection of Jesus, the hope of eternal life that Jesus’ Death and Resurrection made possible.

Say: Let’s listen to God’s Word as we are reminded that we have hope because we are saved, and that there is life beyond death.



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 look forward, hope-filled, to the coming of God’s Kingdom and to living in eternal happiness 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 it mean to wait with hope? (*Hope is our capacity to trust in the promises Jesus made to us.*)
- What does it take to get to Heaven? (*live a life in response to God’s invitation to love by loving him and others*)

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 opening paragraph.

Say: We may wonder where people go when they die, or if we will ever see them again. We may also wonder what it takes to get to Heaven. But Jesus promises us eternal life, and that he will come again.

Direct your child to write his/her thoughts about Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory. She/he may struggle with Purgatory, but remember, this exercise is meant to check current understanding. Tell your child that he/she will learn more about the Church's teachings about life after death in this chapter.

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 **Explain** the activity to your child. The question posed could be phrased this way, "What do you want your life to mean?"

Have your son/daughter complete the activity in the book, while you complete it on a separate piece of paper. Keep in mind that he/she will not be able to answer with the same depth as you. After you both have completed the exercise, share your answers with each other.

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,* review the "In Summary/Catholics Believe" section. Read aloud the summary statement and the three bullets. Ask your child to summarize what Catholics believe about eternal life.

Turn to Page 324 **Direct** your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *When someone first placed your child in your arms, the sacredness of that moment was blanketed in a new sense of responsibility. Our faith teaches us that from that first breath, it became your privilege and obligation to walk this child into God's arms in eternity. Your family is the sacred ground within which your daughter/son first experiences communion and learns that she/he is a beloved child of God, a child in need of God's mercy. The world is in great need of young people who are passionate about their faith and committed to helping God manifest his Kingdom here on Earth. May you continue to be your child's guide, for surely the waters will become rougher in the days ahead. As your child reaches for your hand, may she/he know with certainty that your other hand is holding the Lord's.*

Discuss All Souls Day with your child, using the information in the Our Catholic Life section. Think about some prayers you can use to remember those who have died. Remind your child about the prayers listed in the back of the Student Book.

Say: As a young man, Saint Francis de Sales worried that he might not get to Heaven, but once he was convinced that God is love, his worries left him. He devoted his life to teaching others about God's love. His book, *Introduction to a Devout Life*, is a guide to choosing Heaven each day during this life.

Have your child read aloud the People of Faith text.

Explain that even though Saint Francis lived at a time when the Church faced many problems because of the Protestant Reformation, he always urged people to treat one another with kindness, even if they disagreed with one another.

Say: Hope is trusting in God's promises.

Ask: What can we do to grow in trusting God?

Discuss. After your conversation, read aloud the instructions and work independently to write about ways to become a more hope-filled person. Share your thoughts with one another.

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



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