

# FAMILY+FAITH

TRINITY



## UNIT OVERVIEW

**The Big Question:** How is Jesus the perfect sign of the Father made visible in the world through the work of the Holy Spirit?

### Our Catholic Tradition

- We relate to the three Divine Persons of the Trinity in different ways. We are children of God the Father, brothers and sisters of Christ, and Temples of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit furthers God's work on Earth. (CCC, 257)
- We belong to the People of God through Baptism and belief in Christ. The Church is part of God's plan for all people to come to know him and love him, and all her members have a role in spreading his message. (CCC, 778)
- The Church is both a visible, structured organization and the Mystical Body of Christ, in which the Holy Spirit lives uniting the Church, guiding her, and giving the community and each of us life. (CCC, 771, 809)

### Our Catholic Life

- Jesus' Transfiguration revealed his Divine glory as the Son of God, and shows us God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (CCC, 554–556)
- Through Baptism, each of us shares in Christ's mission as Priest, Prophet, and King. We offer our lives and prayer to God, and we show others the Good News through our words and actions, and through how we serve and lead others. (CCC, 1546–1547)
- The Gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to give witness to Christ and live faithful lives, and the Fruits of the Holy Spirit are the results of those gifts working in our lives. (CCC, 1831–1832)

## HOW YOUR CHILD UNDERSTANDS

The Trinity is a mystery for all Catholics— young and old alike. It's difficult sometimes to comprehend that God is three and yet one. Eighth graders, with their growth in abstract reasoning, are beginning to better comprehend this than when they were younger. Part of that understanding means being comfortable with a mystery we cannot adequately explain.

Eighth graders still often feel like the Church is really for the adults, and they are just along for the ride. They need help to understand and appreciate that they are not just the Church of tomorrow; they are a very real part of the Church today. Help your children to see how they can be a part of the ministry and mission of the Church in their own ways.

Eighth graders sometimes feel invincible, and are at a point in their lives when their quest for autonomy can lead them to consider risky choices. Remembering that we are a union of body and soul can help them appreciate that even when bad decisions don't harm our bodies, they can harm our souls. The Holy Spirit helps us grow to be the people God made us to be, but taking even a few steps down the wrong path can sometimes put us in a position in which it is difficult for us to find our way back.

**PEOPLE OF FAITH**

Saint Lucy  
283–304  
December 13

Saint Lucy was a brave young woman who gave her life to God. When Lucy was still a young girl, she made a vow that she would remain unmarried and would serve God all her life. When she was older, her mother promised a rich young man of Syracuse that Lucy would marry him. Lucy kept her vow and refused to marry the young man. She stood strong in her faith at a time when Christians were persecuted for their beliefs. The rich young man denounced Saint Lucy as a Christian to government officials who eventually sentenced her to death. This is why Saint Lucy is venerated as a virgin and martyr. Saint Lucy sets a good example to young people who are challenged or questioned for their faith by peers. Her life shows us to stand strong in our faith, no matter how hard the situation may be.



**CONSIDER THIS**

Do you believe the findings of studies which report that we determine happiness based on the quality of our relationships?

It appears the yearning to love and be loved is deep within our human nature. We regret more than anything the ways in which we did not love authentically or were not loved deeply. Our human nature reflects the very nature of God, who is himself a perfect relationship of love. Jesus is the perfect sign of the Father—the sign of a love that sacrifices everything in order to restore the possibility of union with God for all eternity. In the moments when you are aware of love’s presence in your family, you are sharing in the divine life brought to us through the Holy Spirit. “When a family becomes a school of virtue and a community of love, it is an image of the loving communion of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (USCCA, p. 377).

**CONNECT**

In the midst of your hectic lives, look for opportunities to really see each other. Develop a family practice of saying once a day, “You are God’s gift to me,” to someone in your home.

At this age, friendships are critical to your child. Keep a special bowl in your kitchen that holds slips of paper with the names of your friends and your children’s friends. Before you leave for the day, say a simple blessing like, “Bless our family and friends, Lord. Let your love help us grow as better friends and family members. Amen.”

**PRAY**

Jesus, you made the Father’s love visible through your Holy Spirit.