

Chapter 1

Chapter 1

Featured Story

The Risen Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11–18)



Lesson Goals

- to identify that Christ died, rose from the dead, and is with us now
- to recognize that we meet Jesus in the sacraments
- to express that we confess our sins and are forgiven by God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Lesson at a Glance

Go (10 minutes)
Opening Prayer
Engage Activity

Seek (30 minutes)
Featured Story
Core Learning Activity

Find (20 minutes)
God's Treasure of Forgiveness
Lesson Wrap-Up
Closing Prayer

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and chapter 1 activity booklet

Music Suggestions

- "I Believe in Jesus," by Invitation Music (Invitation Publishing)
- "With Us" (Acoustic) [Live], by Hillsong Live (Hillsong Music)

Jesus Is Always with Us

Background Focus

Every sacrament is a treasure because every sacrament is a gift of the presence of God. Given to the Church by Jesus Christ, the sacraments bring his presence to us through human words and actions and through material elements like water, bread, wine, and oil.

The sacraments use the gifts of the material world to bring us into the realm of the spiritual. The sacraments are "doorways to the sacred." There is a particular place in the Mass in which the water and wine are mingled in the chalice, and the priest prays, "By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity" (*Roman Missal*). Our humanity is the water. The divinity of Christ is the wine.

In every sacrament, our lives are mingled with Christ's living and risen presence. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the sacraments that does not have an external material or earthly element (like water, bread, or oil) as part of its celebration. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the earthly element is the confession of sins, and the presence of Christ, in his love and forgiveness, is mediated by a hand extended in blessing and the comforting sound of a human voice, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (*Rite of Penance*).

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite your child to turn to page 1 in the chapter 1 activity booklet and locate the prayer on that page.
- Begin prayer by making the Sign of the Cross, then saying, "Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read the prayer in the activity booklet. Invite your child to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross. Have your child put the activity booklet away for now.

Engage Activity

- Invite your child to recall everything they know about Jesus and record their answers on the board. Give them some examples if they need help. (*Answers might include: born in Bethlehem, is the Son of God, healed people and taught people about God, was crucified on the cross, etc.*)
- Emphasize the point that Jesus died, was buried, and rose from the dead. Remind your child that this is what Christians celebrate each year on a very special and holy day. Ask them if they can name that holy day, the greatest day of the year. (*Easter*)
- Tell your child that they will read about Jesus rising from the dead and will explore why that is important for us today.

t Seek (30 minutes)

Featured Story

- Invite your child to find John 20:11–18 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1701).
- Direct them to turn to page 1702 and place an "I found it!" sticker next to the Featured Story.
- Tell them that the words between the leaves on page 1702 are a shortened version of the Scripture story on the previous page.
- Ask your child to look at the artwork on pages 1702–1703. Invite them to describe what they see in the artwork and to predict what the Bible story might be about.
- Invite them to read the title on the page, and ask your child to share what the words "Risen Jesus" mean. (*Jesus was crucified on the cross, but he rose again and is now risen from the dead.*)
- Ask your child to share what they know about Mary Magdalene. (*She was a friend to Jesus. She loved Jesus very much. That is why she was visiting his grave.*)
- Read the Featured Story. Then ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as these:
 - Why was Mary Magdalene crying? (*She did not know where Jesus was.*)
 - What did the angels ask her? (*"Woman, why are you crying?"*)
 - What did Mary Magdalene answer? (*"They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have put him!"*)
 - What happened when Mary Magdalene turned around? (*She saw Jesus.*)

Understand It!

- Read Understand It! on page 1703.
- Invite your child to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review these key points:
 - Mary Magdalene was very sad when Jesus died. She did not expect to see him again.
 - When she went to the tomb, she did not find his body. She thought someone had taken it. She was very upset.
 - Then she turned around and saw Jesus! At first she didn't know it was Jesus. But then he said her name, and she knew who it was.
 - Jesus was alive after all! Mary was so happy! She ran to tell the other disciples. (See John 20:18.)

Live It!

- Read Live It! on page 1703.
- Ask your child to share what they would write in their diary for that first Easter Sunday if they were Mary Magdalene, using these questions:
 - What would they say they were thinking or feeling as they went to the tomb?
 - How did they feel after they saw Jesus and he spoke their names?
- Explain that we are happy that Jesus rose from the dead because it means that he is always with us. Explain that he is still with us today in a very special way.
- Pray this short prayer with your child: "Thank you, Jesus, for rising on that first Easter Sunday."

Tell It!

- Ask your child to look at the images in Tell It! on page 1703.
- Invite your child to use the images to retell the Bible reading as best they can.
- Have your child use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story pages that capture their interest. Remind them to save enough stickers to use on the remaining chapters.

Core Learning Activity**The Bible Says**

- Invite your child to stand with their hands at their sides.
- Explain that we will play a game similar to Simon Says.
- Give directions in these or similar words:
 - We will begin by standing with our hands at our sides.
 - When I say, "The Bible says, 'Christ has died,'" you will crunch down, put your hands over your head, and repeat, "Christ has died." Then you will stand up again with hands at sides.
 - When I say, "The Bible says, 'Christ is risen,'" you will lift your arms into the air and say, "Christ is risen. Alleluia!" *Alleluia* means, "Praise God!" Then you will put your hands at your sides again and wait for the next direction.
 - If I don't say, "The Bible says," then you are to stand still and do nothing.
 - If you move when I do not say, "The Bible says," you will be given one strike. If you get three strikes, we will declare "Game over."

Note: As in the game Simon Says, vary your directions, sometimes saying, "The Bible says," and sometimes omitting it. Remind your child to stand with their hands at their sides while awaiting the next direction. It will be helpful to end the game with, "The Bible says, 'Christ has risen,'" to end on a positive note.

- Remind your child of the Bible story for the day and how happy Mary Magdalene was when she realized that Jesus had risen from the dead.

- Tell your child that Jesus, rising from the dead is Good News that we celebrate each year at Easter. Explain that we rejoice in this and celebrate the fact that Jesus continues to be present to us in a special way today.

✕ Find (20 minutes)**God's Treasure of Forgiveness**

- Explain that Jesus gave us seven great and holy signs of God's love, and that these signs are called **sacraments**. Explain that Jesus is present to us in a special way in the sacraments so that we can follow him more closely. Tell your child that the sacraments give us **grace**, the gift of God's life in us, which makes us God's children and helps us to stay away from **sin** and to do good things. Explain that a sin is something we say, do, or think that does not follow God's Law.
- List the Seven Sacraments on a piece of paper, and give a brief description of each. Explain how the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist begin our life in the Church. Ask your child if they know that they have been baptized.
- Continue by explaining that in Baptism, we become children of God and all of our sins are washed away. Tell your child that the sins we commit after Baptism are forgiven through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Circle this sacrament on your paper.
- Remind your child that this time together is to help them prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Tell them that this sacrament has many names:
 - Its official Church name is: the **Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation**. Often this is shortened to "the Sacrament of Penance" or "the Sacrament of Reconciliation."
 - Often we call this sacrament "**confession**," because in it we confess what we have done wrong. We say, "We are going to confession tomorrow afternoon."
 - Sometimes it is called "the sacrament of **conversion**," because this sacrament helps us to *convert*, or change, for the better.

- Help your child understand that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacrament in which we meet Jesus in a special way. In this sacrament, we ask God to forgive us. Explain that after we confess our sins and are forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we will be filled with new life again.
- Invite your child to turn to page 3 in the activity booklet and complete the activity. *Answers: 1. Forgive, 2. conversion, 3. Baptism, 4. confession, 5. better. Word at bottom: grace*

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite your child to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and invite them to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from your child, and write their answers on a piece of paper.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the paper, and circle them:
 - Christ died, rose from the dead, and is with us now.
 - We meet Jesus in the sacraments.
 - We confess our sins and are forgiven by God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Ask your child to place the chapter 1 sticker in the correct circle on the treasure map.



Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by making the Sign of the Cross, then saying, "Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Make the Sign of the Cross on your child's forehead as you say: "____, God calls you by name. You are God's child. You belong to God." Encourage the child to respond, "Amen."
- Play a piece of music, if you have time, that speaks about belonging to God, being children of God, being called by name, or following Jesus.
- End with the Glory Be prayer (see page 1992 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*). Then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Family Suggestions

For additional ideas, activities, and prayers that can be used by your family for this chapter, please refer to the Family Page on page 4 of this chapter's activity booklet.