

God Is Our Father

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 1, Kindergarten

Lesson 1 Goal

- Your child will identify God as Father and discuss how he has created the world and provides for us.

Key Points

- God is our heavenly Father.
- God never stops loving us.



Parent Reflection

God is all-powerful. He is all-seeing and all-knowing. Yet he chooses to reveal himself to the people he has created not in some fearsome way, but as a parent. When asked how to pray, Jesus says to call God “Father” (Luke 11:2). Saint Paul points out that all of us have been “adopted” by God the Father as his children by being joined with his Son through Baptism (Romans 8:15).

As Father, God is provider. He gives us the things we need. Jesus teaches us not to be afraid to ask God for the things we need, saying, “Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!” (Matthew 7:9-11).

The *Catechism* points out the new revelation Jesus brings regarding God as Father: He is Father not only in the sense that he is Creator of everything, but he is eternally Father by virtue of his relationship with Jesus, the Son (CCC, 240). Through the mystery of the Holy Trinity, God, in his very being, is Father, Son and Spirit.

Reflection Question

What are my images of God the Father?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #3
- safety scissors
- drawing paper

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #3 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

“Jesus, we know you are God, the Son and that you love God, the Father. You told us that God the Father is our Father, too. You told us that God the Father loves us greatly and wants us to know him as our Father in heaven.”

“Thank you, God our Father, for loving us so much! Please be with us as we learn and live and love today. Amen.”

Discovering

God Loves Us. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about how much God loves us.

Ask your child, “What are some ways God shows us how much he loves us?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. God the Father Provides for Us. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. We Thank Our Father. Have your child think about God our Father, then ask him or her to name some of the things God the Father gives us. Encourage your child to freely name general items such as food, shelter, water, love, and specific items like friends, parents, pets, trees, flowers, fruit, firefighters, doctors, and more.

Show your child the praying hands template (Activity Master #3). Ask him or her to cut out the

praying hands. Invite your child to draw on the hands a picture of something for which he or she is thankful. Ask your child to tell you about the picture. Together offer a prayer of thanks for the gift named, and for all the gifts God gives your family.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. Show your child the picture of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton on the Family Activity page. Then read more about Saint Elizabeth to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “What were some of the important things Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton did to teach people about God?” (*She wrote textbooks; she opened a school; she began an order of religious sister.*)
- ▶ “What can you do to help others know about God?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray the Our Father with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead it not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

A Loving and Faithful Parent

Elizabeth was born in New York City. Her mother and little sister died when Elizabeth was a child. She missed them, but she knew they were with God. She prayed often and helped others. She loved to play the piano.

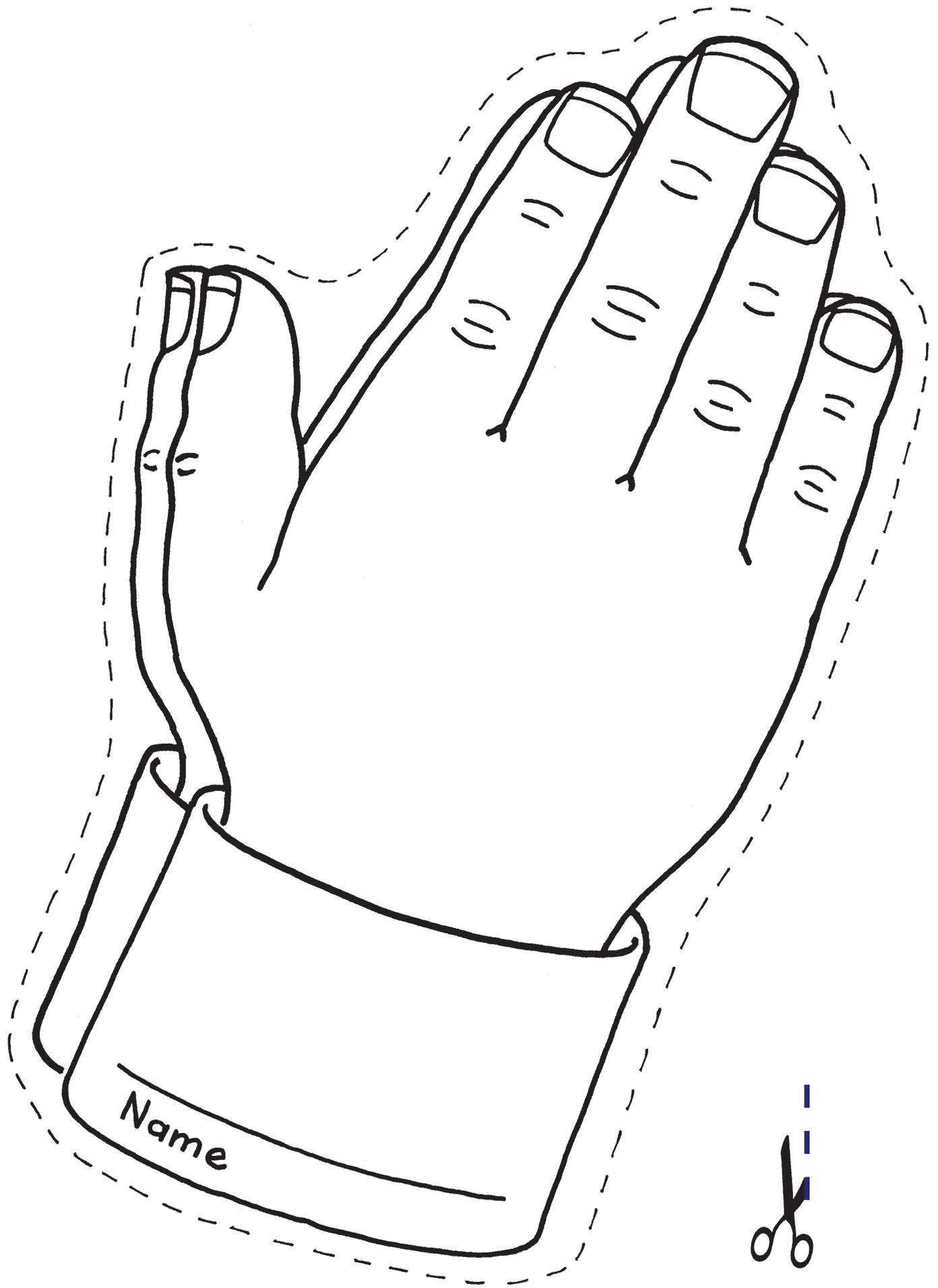
She married a wonderful man named William Seton. They had five children: Anna Maria, William, Richard, Catherine, and Rebecca. When William’s father died, Elizabeth and William took care of William’s eight younger brothers and sisters for a few years!

While Elizabeth and William’s children were still very young, William died. Many things changed for Elizabeth. Once very rich, now she was poor. She had to find a way to take care of her five children with very little money and no home.

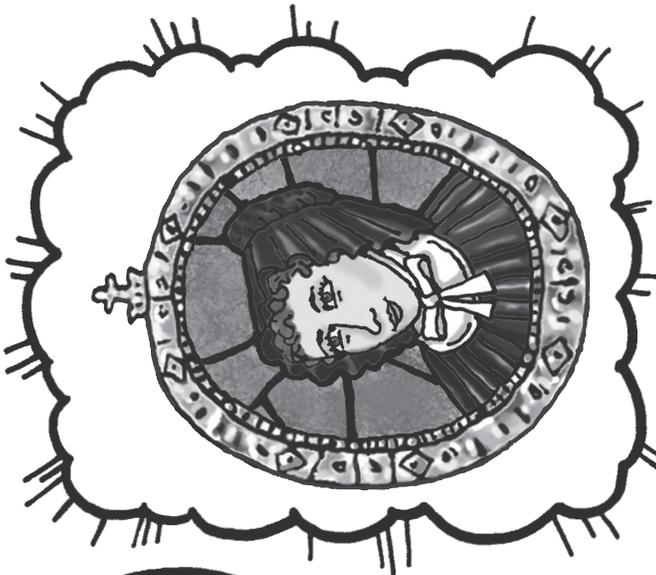
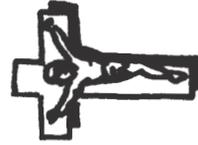
During this time, Elizabeth felt God calling her to join the Catholic Church, and she and her children became Catholic.

A priest asked her to open a school for Catholic children, the first Catholic school in the United States. Elizabeth went on to start many schools. She wrote textbooks. Other women joined her work, so she set up an order of sisters called the Daughters of Charity. Of course, she took care of her own children, too!

People remember Elizabeth for her holiness and the many things she did for education. But she was also a good mother, who always loved and helped her children. She did all this because she herself was a child of God.



DRAW



**Saint
Elizabeth Ann
Seton,
pray for us!**

Jesus Is Our Friend

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 2, Kindergarten

Lesson 2 Goal

- Your child will express understanding of Jesus as a friend who wants to know and love us.

Key Points

- Jesus is God the Son.
- Jesus wants to know us and be our friend.



Parent Reflection

Jesus was with God in the beginning, and is himself God (John 1:1–2). Scripture tells us that God the Father sent Jesus, his Son, to us “so that we might receive adoption” as his children (Galatians 4:4–5).

A God who reaches out to us in such a personal way is truly worthy of our awe and our praise. Saint Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, discusses the great humility of Jesus Christ, “who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness” (Philippians 2:6–7). This is a God to whom we can relate.

Jesus took the lowest place in humanity so that all people would find him approachable. In fact, it is he who first approaches us so that we are no longer slaves to our sin but rather friends of God (John 15:15). Jesus wants a personal relationship with each of us. We find our friendship with God through both our individual walk with him in prayer and daily life and our relationship with the Church, which is the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12–20).

Reflection Question

In what ways do I see Jesus as a friend?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- heart-shaped cutout
- safety scissors
- drawing paper
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together

a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Prepare a heart-shaped cutout using drawing paper.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “In our prayer we will talk to Jesus. Jesus is God’s Son. Isn’t that a wonderful thing to know about Jesus?”

“Jesus knows many things about you and me. Jesus is fully God, but he is also fully human. Because Jesus is also human like us, he understands when we feel sad, or silly, or mad. Jesus knows what it is like to be sick or hurt or hungry. He knows all about us! And he loves us!”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

“Dear Jesus, you love us so much! And you are with us when we _____.”

(Encourage your child to think of different

experiences and emotions to finish the prayer (example: “when we are happy,” “when we play”) Take two or three turns completing the sentence.)

“Thank you, Jesus, for your love. Please bless us today as we learn about you. Teach us to be loving too. Amen.”

Discovering

Jesus and the Children. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Jesus and the children.

Ask your child, “How can we tell or show Jesus ‘thank you’ for loving us?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Let the Children Come to Me. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils.

Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. “Jesus Loves Me” Hearts. Give your child a heart-shaped cutout. Read the words on the heart to your child. Invite him or her to decorate the heart using markers or crayons.

If there is time, give your child a few moments to reflect. Invite him or her to imagine being one of the children with Jesus.

Ask how it would feel to be with Jesus like the children were. Encourage your child talk about what he or she would say to Jesus.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Paul. Show your child the picture of Saint Paul on the Family Activity page. Then read more about Saint Paul to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ “Did Saint Paul know Jesus when he was on earth?” (No.)

▶ “At first Saint Paul was not Jesus’ follower. What made him come to understand that Jesus had come from God?” (He met Jesus in a vision.)

▶ “What did you like best in the story of Saint Paul?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray the Our Father with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead it not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Saint Paul

Meeting Jesus

Paul lived during the time that Jesus had lived, died, rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, but he did not meet Jesus during that time.

Paul was a smart, well-educated Jewish man. When he believed in something, he believed it strongly and acted on his beliefs. He heard about the people who were followers of Jesus and he watched them. Paul decided they were wrong. He worked very hard to have many of Jesus’ followers arrested! This was called “persecution.”

One day, on his way to arrest more followers, he saw a big flash of light. He fell to the ground. He heard a voice telling him to stop hurting Jesus’ followers.

Paul could not see because of the light, but he

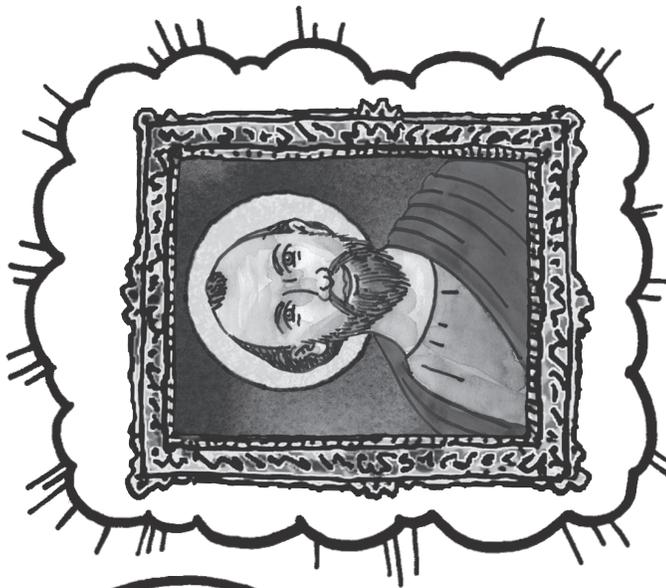
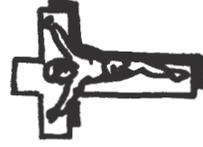
said, “Who are you, sir?”

The voice answered, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.”

Paul was shocked. He knew Jesus had died. Yet he had heard the voice! This changed Paul. Now he believed that Jesus was not only a good person, but God too!

Of course, Paul now believed strongly in Jesus. And of course, he acted on his new beliefs. Paul traveled the rest of his life, teaching, starting churches, and writing letters to Jesus’ followers. Sometimes he was arrested; sometimes he was hungry. But he was able to encourage many people to love and live as Jesus taught. For this reason, he is called the greatest Christian missionary.

DRAW



**Saint
Paul,
pray for us!**

The Holy Spirit Helps Us

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 3, Kindergarten

Lesson 3 Goal

- Your child will learn about the Holy Spirit as the Divine Person of God who lives with us and helps us do what God asks us to do.

Key Points

- The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
- God the Holy Spirit lives in us and helps us do what God asks.



Parent Reflection

God the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, has loved with God the Father and God the Son since the very beginning, and is joined in their mission (CCC, 743). The Holy Spirit is Breath of God that animates God's Creation (CCC, 703). It is the Holy Spirit who prepares Mary to bear the Christ child (CCC, 722; 744), and causes John the Baptist to proclaim his coming (CCC, 717–719). It is the Holy Spirit who speaks through Peter and proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost.

From the time of ancient Israel, God makes it clear that one day he will place his Spirit within us, making the human heart his dwelling place (Ezekiel 36:26–27). Jesus echoes this promise, saying he will send his Spirit as Comforter, and that the Spirit would lead his disciples “into all truth” (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit is the Person of God who is closest to us, for he dwells within us.

Reflection Question

How does the Holy Spirit speak to me?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- four balloons
- string
- white drawing paper, 8.5" x 11", cut into quarters
- tape
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint's pages from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Blow up the balloons.
- Cut string (about 2 feet long) and attach to each balloon.
- Create a model "Holy Spirit balloon" by drawing on a piece of paper a picture of something good that the Holy Spirit helps us do (example: protects us).
- Be prepared to tape your picture to a blown-up balloon with a string attached.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: "Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God."

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, "Today, we are going to pray that we can come to know God more. We will use words and movements. Please listen and do what I do so that you can join me in prayer."

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

"In the name of God the Father, who gave us the seas,"

- Cup hands near waist.

"and the earth,"

- Extend arms to create a circle in front of you, touching fingertips, arms at about shoulder height.

"and the skies."

- Straighten arms and extend above head, fingertips pointing up.

"And in the name of God the Son, who teaches us all about love,"

- Brings hands to place over heart.

"that God loves us"

- Keep hands on heart.

"and that God wants us to love each other."

- Hug yourself.

"And in the name of God the Holy Spirit"

- Extend arms above head again.

"who comes to us"

- Bring arms down to touch forehead with fingertips.

"in many"

- Move fingertips to lips.

“many ways.”

- Touch fingertips to heart.

In your name, we pray that we come to know and love you as you know and love us.

Amen.

Discovering

The Holy Spirit Helps Us. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about how the Holy Spirit is always with us. Begin by telling your child that the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.

Ask your child, “How can the Holy Spirit help you?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. The Holy Spirit Is with Us. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity and have him or her complete it.

2. Holy Spirit Balloon Toss. Have your child recall that we can’t see or touch the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is like wind that carries a balloon up into the sky; we can’t see the wind, but we know it’s there. The Holy Spirit helps us to do what God wants, to do what is right, to help others, and to pray.

- Invite your child to draw pictures on the papers you prepared (paper cut into fourths) with each picture showing a different way that the Holy Spirit helps him/her to do what God wants him or her to do.

Give your child the blown-up balloons, and have him/her tape one of the pictures on each of the balloons.

- With the balloons, have your child sit down on the floor with you. Toss one of the balloons in the air and call out your child’s name. Have him/her try to catch the balloon before it touches the ground.

- When your child catches each balloon, he/she removes the drawing from the balloon and holding the drawing, says, “The Holy Spirit helps me... (whatever action the drawing depicts).”

- Repeat these steps several times.

Tell your child that the Holy Spirit helps us in many ways, and that we should be open to his help.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Matthew. Show your child the picture of Saint Matthew on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Matthew to your child (see page 4).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “What was Saint Matthew’s job before he became a follower of Jesus?”
- ▶ “What are some ways you can tell others about Jesus?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Matthew using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

In the name of God the Father, who gave us the seas,

- Cup hands near waist.

and the earth,

- Extend arms to create a circle in front of you, touching fingertips, arms at about shoulder height.

and the skies.

- Straighten arms and extend above head, fingertips pointing up.

And in the name of God the Son, who teaches us all about love,

- Brings hands to place over heart.

that God loves us

- Keep hands on heart.

and that God wants us to love each other.

- Hug yourself.

And in the name of God the Holy Spirit

- Extend arms above head again.

who comes to us

- Bring arms down to touch forehead with fingertips.

in many

- Move fingertips to lips.

many ways.

- Touch fingertips to heart.

In your name, we pray that we come to know and love you as you know and love us.

Amen.

Saint Matthew

Filled with the Holy Spirit

Jesus chose twelve men to be his Apostles. One was Matthew. Many Jewish people didn't like him because of his job. Matthew was a tax collector.

Matthew was Jewish too, but he worked for the Romans, who ruled the Jewish people. He had to collect money from the Jewish people to pay the rulers. Some tax collectors also cheated and took extra money. Many people were confused when they saw that Jesus, who they knew was holy, had chosen a tax collector.

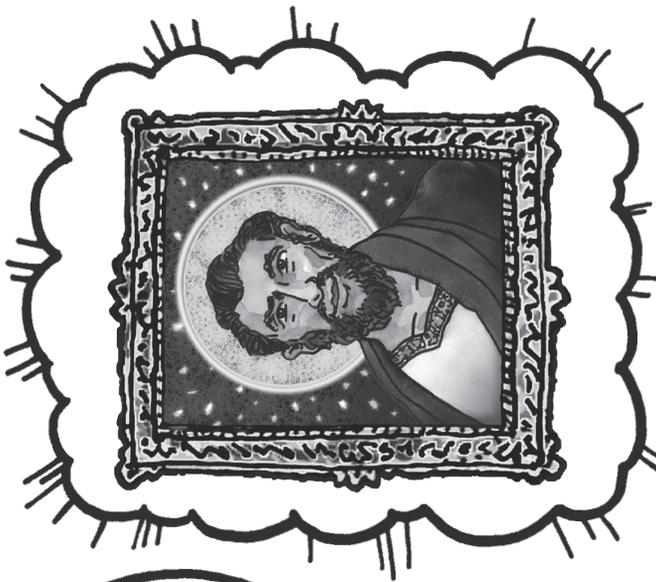
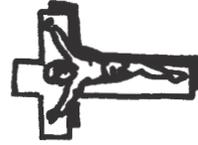
But Jesus knew there was good in Matthew. One day he saw Matthew hard at this work. "Follow

me!" Jesus said. Matthew left his work and followed Jesus for the rest of his life!

Matthew had the courage to do this because, like all of Jesus' Apostles, the Holy Spirit had come to him.

After Jesus went back to God in Heaven, Matthew worked hard in many ways to teach about Jesus and his great love. One way Matthew did this was sharing his story of Jesus in what is now known as the Gospel according to Matthew. The Gospel of Matthew is part of the Bible.

DRAW



**Saint
Matthew,
pray for us!**

God Talks to Us

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 4, Kindergarten

Lesson 4 Goal

- Your child will discover that God speaks to us, especially in Scripture, but also through other people, through his creation, and in our own hearts.

Key Points

- God speaks to us in Sacred Scripture
- God speaks to us in other ways also; through the Church, in the things he made, through those who care for us, and in our hearts.



Parent Reflection

As Catholics, we believe in the one true God. We believe that it is possible to know God through his creation and through his Divine Revelation. God revealed himself gradually, first through his covenants with his people (e.g., his promises to Noah, Abraham, and Moses), and most completely in the Person of Jesus Christ.

There is no better way for God to show us who he is than in the Person of Jesus. Since the time of Christ, the Gospel has been passed on in two ways—orally (through Sacred Tradition) and in written form (Sacred Scripture).

It is important to note that the Church relied on Sacred Tradition to guide her through the first centuries of her existence. We continue to rely on Sacred Tradition and the teaching authority of the Magisterium to interpret Scripture in the modern world.

God's Word is transmitted in an active way. While the Gospel (the "Good News" of Christ) does not change, it is passed on by a living Church in which God plays an active role. We can come to know God today through study of his Word in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, which "make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God" (Dei Verbum, 10).

Reflection Question

What are some ways I have heard the voice of God in my life?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- materials for sacred space: Bible, parish bulletin, symbols of nature, photo of someone special to your family, heart-shaped cutout
- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #4
- safety scissors
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather to-

gether a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #4 (included with this lesson).
- Place the Bible, a parish bulletin, symbols of nature, a photo of someone special, and the heart-shaped cutout on or near the prayer table.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Invite your child to the prayer space and to quiet himself or herself for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, *“God speaks to us. God does not call us on the phone, or send a text message. It helps if we know the many ways God does talk to us. I am going to name some of them.”*

- Hold up the Bible.

“God speaks to us through Sacred Scripture.”

- Hold up a parish bulletin or picture of your parish church.

“God speaks to us through the Church, which includes the Pope, bishops, priests, deacons, religious brothers and sisters, and all the People of God, including us!”

- Hold up the symbol of nature.

“God speaks to us through all creation, such as

clouds, wind, animals, and things like this (____).”

- Hold up the photo you brought in.

“God speaks to us through people that love us. This is a picture of my (friend, father, sister, etc.). You can think about the people that especially love you.”

- Hold up the heart.

“And God speaks to us in our heart, especially when we are quiet. Isn’t it wonderful and exciting to know that God talks to us? Let’s pray about this.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead:

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

“Thank you, God, for speaking to us in so many ways! Help us to hear your voice and may your message come to rest in our minds, in our own words, and in our hearts. Amen.”

Discovering

God Talks to Us. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about how God talks to us.

Ask your child, “How can we hear God’s Word?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask

your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. God Speaks to Us in Holy Scripture. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. My Book of Scripture Stories. Invite your child to share some favorite stories from the Bible, such as Creation, Noah and the Ark, Christmas, and the Resurrection. Give your child a copy of Activity Master #4. Demonstrate how to cut and fold the paper to make a small Bible. Have your child draw color a picture or object(s) on each page of the Bible book that tells about a Scripture story.

Remind your child of Scripture stories you have read together. Invite your child to choose a favorite story to read at bedtime.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Jerome.

Show your child the picture of Saint Jerome on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Jerome to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “Saint Jerome had no computer, printer, or modern technology of any kind. How do you think he did his work?”
- ▶ “How can you tell others about God’s Word in the Bible?”
- ▶ “What did you find most interesting about the story of Saint Jerome?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Jerome using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child. .

Thank you, Jesus for your holy Gospel. Help us to listen and learn from you. Open our hearts to your word. Help us to follow your teachings. Help us lead others to you. Amen.

Saint Jerome

Knowing Scripture, Knowing Jesus

Saint Jerome loved to learn! He read often and studied hard. He learned at least five languages! He especially studied Sacred Scripture. He wrote, “To know the Scriptures is to know Christ.”

Saint Jerome also loved God greatly. He tried very hard to live the way Jesus had lived.

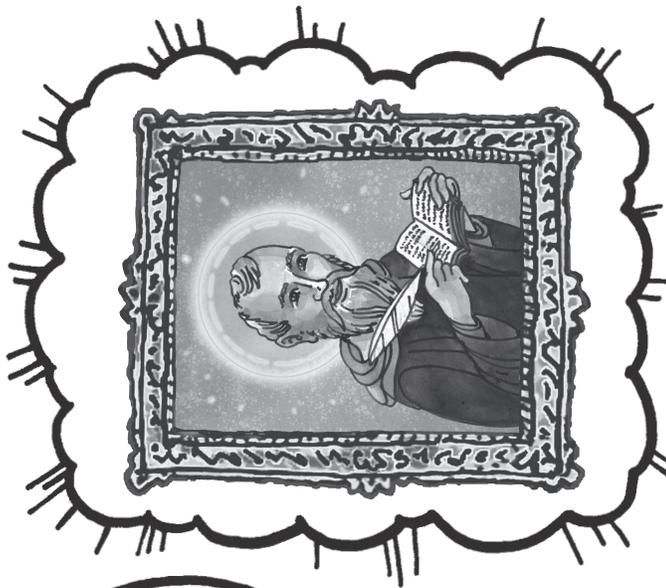
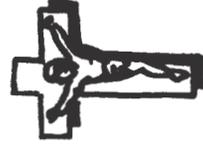
Pope Damasus saw how smart Jerome was and how careful he was with his work. He gave Jerome a huge, important job: Jerome was to take the whole Bible and translate it into another language!

Jerome did his job carefully and well, and it

took him the rest of his long life to finish it! First he read the Scriptures written in a language called Hebrew. Then he read them in Greek. He also learned Aramaic, the language Jesus had spoken. Then he carefully wrote all of this into a language called Latin.

After Saint Jerome wrote the Scriptures in Latin, they could be written into many other languages, including Spanish and English. So Saint Jerome’s work helps us too, even though he lived a very long time ago! We remember Saint Jerome because his love of Scripture led to his love of God.

DRAW



**Saint
Jerome,
pray for us!**

← Fold First

The Bible

Name _____



We Pray to God

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 5, Kindergarten

Lesson 5 Goal

- Your child will explore various ways to talk to God through traditional and spontaneous prayers and nonverbal prayer.

Key Points

- We can talk to God through prayer.
- God hears us when we pray.



Parent Reflection

Jesus teaches that God hears us when we pray, and describes God as a loving Father who pays close attention to his creation and will listen to our requests and care for our needs (Matthew 6:25–34; 7:7-11). When asked about how we should pray, Jesus teaches his followers the prayer commonly known as the “Our Father” or the “Lord’s Prayer.”

The Lord’s Prayer includes seven petitions, discussed in detail in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2803–2854).

1. Hallowed be thy name—We enter into God’s plan by praying that his name will be made holy.
2. Thy kingdom come—Represents a desire both for the return of Jesus and for the coming of God’s Kingdom here on earth, in our own lives.
3. Thy will be done—We unite ourselves to the divine plan.
4. Give us this day our daily bread—A demonstration of our trust in God as Father to meet our material and spiritual needs.
5. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us—We ask for God’s mercy, knowing that we can only receive it with an open heart if we have shown mercy to others.
6. Lead us not into temptation—Subjecting ourselves to the will of God, we ask him to unite our will with his.
7. Deliver us from evil—We ask for protection in the struggle against all that goes against God’s plan.

Reflection Question

Which petition(s) of the Our Father is (are) especially relevant to me right now?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- poster board large enough to write the letters of the alphabet on
- drawing paper
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together

a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Write the letters of the alphabet on the poster board.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “What do we call it when we talk with God? (Encourage your child to think of the word *prayer*.)

We can pray in many ways. We can pray by asking God for help for ourselves and others. We also thank God. Those are just some ways that we pray, but we can pray always. Let’s use some different ways to pray today.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

“Do you want to thank God for something?” (Encourage your child to pray a short prayer.) *“Sometimes we say an asking prayer for someone else, such as for a sick neighbor or friend. Can you think of someone special to pray for?”* (Encourage your child to say

a short prayer for someone special.) *“And we often say thanking prayers. Do you have a thanking prayer?”* (Have your child say a thanking prayer.) *“There are even more ways we pray. Thank you God, for all the different ways to pray!”*

Discovering

Pray Always. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about prayer.

Ask your child, “When do we pray the Our Father?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. We Can Talk to God through Prayer.

Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Praying to God from A to Z.

 Help your

child recall that when we pray to God, we are talking to him and that he *always* hears us. Sit with your child and hold up the poster board showing the letters of the alphabet. Begin by sharing that we can talk to God *wherever* we are. God always hears us! Then, point to the letter A and say, "I can pray to God in the attic or while I am eating an apple, or in the afternoon, or in America, or in an apartment, or in the army, and so forth. This playful modeling gives your child the freedom to name words or circumstances to show that he or she can pray to God at any time no matter where they are or what they are doing. Continue with this through the alphabet. Have your child draw a picture of his or her favorite place to pray.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Teresa of Ávila. Show your child the picture of Saint Teresa of Ávila on the Family Activity page and read about her. Then read more about Saint Teresa to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

► "Teresa was joyful and playful. She was also serious and worked hard. When you feel joyful,

how do you talk to God? When you feel serious, how do you talk to God?"

► "What do you like best about this story?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint Teresa using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray the Our Father with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead it not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Saint Teresa of Ávila

Talking and Listening to God

Teresa was a fun, friendly girl who wore pretty clothes. She danced, sang, and told wonderful stories. Teresa also talked with God when she was a little child. She prayed in many ways.

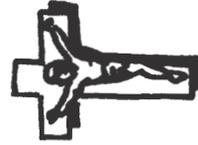
When she was a teen, she became sick. She spent time getting better by reading and praying. Teresa felt God was listening to her and was calling her to become a religious sister. She moved to a convent.

At the convent, Teresa noticed that the religious sisters were not praying as much as they should. One day, when Teresa was praying by herself, she had strong feelings about how Jesus had

suffered for us. She knew that everyone should spend more time in prayer. God had been listening to Teresa, and now Teresa heard what God was saying: God was calling her to make changes. She started new convents and changed old ones. Teresa traveled all over Spain, wrote letters and books, and prayed. She met with kings and the Pope. People still enjoyed her jokes, her friendliness, and her charm, but they saw too how much God loved this holy person.

And Teresa went on talking with God. She could pray so well, that many people said Teresa even joked with God!

DRAW



**Saint
Teresa of Ávila,
pray for us!**

God Protects Us

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 6, Kindergarten

Lesson 6 Goal

- Your child will recognize Jesus as the Good Shepherd and understand how we are like the sheep he cares for.

Key Points

- God protects us.
- God gives us what we need.



Parent Reflection

From the image of the staff carried by Jesus as the Good Shepherd to the Pope's staff, the staff symbolizes safety. Shepherds have the task of guiding sheep to safety and bounty. Many times sheep are unaware of dangers and pitfalls that await them, as we are unaware of similar threats. Psalm 23 begins, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." What comfort and peace are the rewards when we decide to relinquish our selfish wants and rely on provisions from the Good Shepherd.

Psalm 23 continues with images of resting under the shepherd's watchful eye, in the safety of his promises, finding plentiful peace, contentment, and mercy.

In John 10:16 Jesus is quoted as saying, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep" (John 10:11). It couldn't be clearer. The Good Shepherd has since made that sacrifice, and as a good shepherd, saved us from danger. Now it is time to shepherd our children toward a better understanding of the Good Shepherd's guardianship as we ourselves deliberately work to more fully release our lives to the Good Shepherd's care. There we will find the peace the world cannot give us.

Reflection Question

When have you completely put your faith and trust in Jesus?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #6
- safety scissors
- craft sticks
- black construction paper (for ears)
- card stock (for cutouts of lamb face)

- stick-on googly eyes (2)
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #6 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “In the Bible we read poems or songs written about God. These are songs written long ago to praise or thank God. These poems or songs are called psalms. Psalm 23 says that God is like a shepherd over us. Just like a shepherd protects his sheep, God also protects us.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

*“The Lord is my shepherd;
There is nothing I will need.
In green pastures you let me graze;
To safe waters you lead me;
you restore my strength.
You guide me along the right path,*

for the sake of your name.

*Even when I walk through a dark valley,
I fear no harm for you are at my side;
Your rod and your staff give me courage.
You set a table before me.*

*You will anoint my head with oil.
My cup overflows.
Only goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the Lord
for years to come.”
—Psalm 23*

Discovering

The Lord Is Our Shepherd. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about prayer.

Ask your child, “When do we pray the Our Father?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Follow the Shepherd. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Little Lamb. Help your child glue the paper ears to the lamb's face. Show him or her how to draw a nose and mouth on the face. Let your child dab cotton balls in the glue or paste to cover the lamb's face. Help your child peel and attach the googly eyes onto the lamb's face.

Talk with your child about how a lamb needs the care of a shepherd.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Juan Diego. Show your child the picture of Saint Juan Diego on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read about Saint Juan Diego to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

► "In Mexico there is a custom of saying to ba-

bies, 'May God be as good to you as he was to Juan Diego.' What do you think this means?" (Possible answer: *God will protect and bless me.*)

► "What did you like best about this story?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint Juan Diego using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray in the words of Psalm 23 with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

The Lord is my shepherd; (Child repeats.)

There is nothing I will need. (Child repeats.)

In green pastures (Child repeats.)

you let me graze; (Child repeats.)

To safe waters you lead me; (Child repeats.)

Amen.

Saint Juan Diego

A Holy Man

Long ago on a winter morning in Mexico, a man was walking miles to go to Mass. He was old and very poor, but all who knew him said he was a good and kind person.

"Juan Diego!" a voice called suddenly. A beautiful Lady appeared! Bright light shone all around her! She said, "I am the Mother of God." Juan Diego was so surprised! She then said, "Tell the bishop to build a church here."

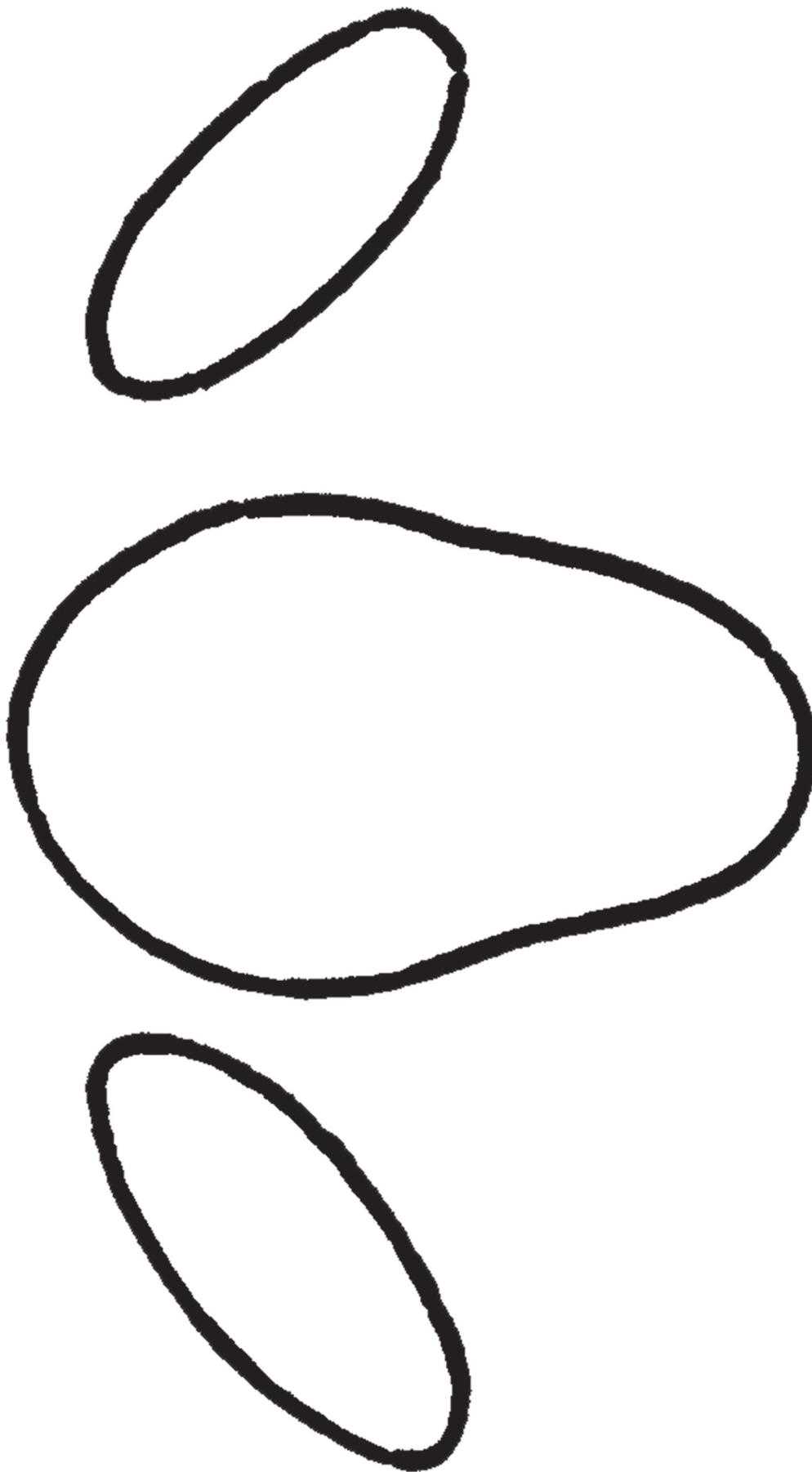
When Juan Diego went to the bishop's office, people laughed at him. The bishop did not believe him. The Lady appeared again; Juan Diego went back to the bishop, who still did not quite believe him.

Then the Lady gave Juan Diego a sign for the bishop: roses growing in the winter! He carried the

precious roses in his cape, or tilma. At the bishop's place, Juan Diego opened it, letting the roses tumble out. Everyone was shocked, but not at the flowers. They were staring at the tilma, for on it now was a colorful image of the Lady just as Juan Diego had seen her!

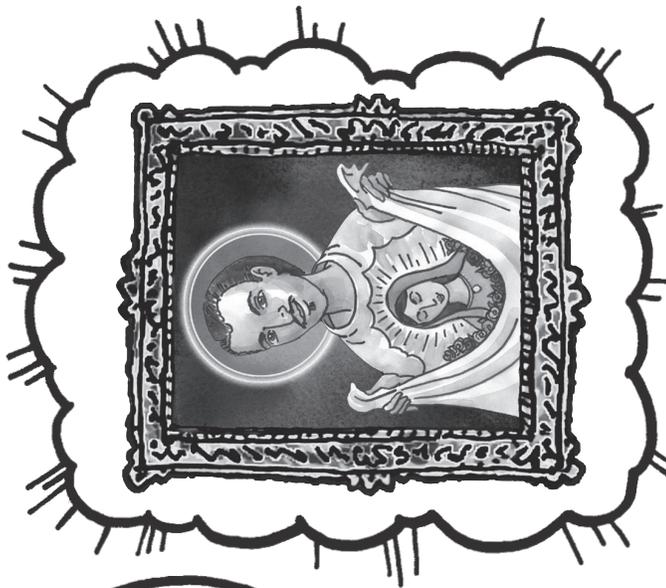
Now everyone believed Juan Diego! A church was built, where the miraculous tilma was placed.

A small room was attached to the church for Juan Diego. There he lived by himself, praying and taking care of the church and the tilma. People came to see the tilma, and the very, very old Juan Diego spoke to them about God's love. They called him a "holy man," and asked him to pray for them.



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DRAW



**Saint
Juan Diego,
pray for us!**

Jesus Tells Stories

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 7, Kindergarten

Lesson 7 Goal

- Your child will learn about what Jesus taught us about prayer.

Key Points

- Jesus taught us that God always hears our prayers.
- Jesus often used parables to teach.



Parent Reflection

One of Jesus' primary methods for teaching people about God was through parables. These parables were told in the common language of the people. Jesus talked about God using simple language and stories about things that would have been commonplace in his day—shepherds and sheep, a sower planting seeds, workers in a vineyard, for example.

Jesus knew that some of the things he was teaching about God would need to be understood over time, because they would only be fully appreciated in light of his own death, Resurrection, and Ascension. For that reason, he taught some lessons in symbolic ways, knowing that they would be more clear at a later time, and handing on additional knowledge to his Apostles so that his teachings would be interpreted correctly.

For us, also, Jesus' parables contain truths that can only be discovered over time, as we grow closer to him, and as the events of our lives cause us to have a different perspective. It is important that we reflect on Jesus' teachings again and again and allow ourselves to consider how they may apply to us in our present experiences. In this way, we can allow the coming of God's Kingdom in our own lives.

Reflection Question

What new insights can I discover in the parables of Jesus?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- drawing paper
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “We can say that Jesus is a teacher. He teaches us many things. He teaches us to share what we have. He teaches us to be kind to others. He teaches us to forgive people that have been mean to us. He teaches us that all people are loved by God. Let’s take a minute to sit quietly and think about, or meditate on, what Jesus has taught us.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Parent: *Thank you, Jesus, for teaching us that all people are loved by God.*

Child: *Thank you, Jesus our teacher!*

Continue the prayer by taking turns with

your child thanking Jesus for different things he teaches us. Follow each with “*Thank you, Jesus, our teacher!*”

Discovering

Jesus Tells a Story about Prayer. Tell your child that Jesus often taught using stories called parables. Parables are stories about everyday things that help us learn something about God. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Jesus and what he tells us about prayer. Tell your child that the story about the man knocking on the friend’s door is a parable.

Ask your child:

“How are you like the man knocking when you talk to God in prayer?”

“The man asked for bread. What would you ask God for?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the first two “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Listening to Jesus. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and

invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the drawing activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Jesus Tells Me a Story. Give your child drawing paper and coloring pencils or markers and have him or her create a drawing that illustrates Jesus telling a story. Invite your child to explain to you what is happening in the drawing, and what story Jesus is telling.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Luke. Show your child the picture of Saint Luke on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read the story about Saint Luke to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “If you wrote about Jesus to people who didn’t know about him, what would you say?”
- ▶ “What was your favorite part of this story?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Luke using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Thank you, Jesus, for being our teacher. Thank you, Jesus, for teaching us how to love. Amen.

Saint Luke

Saint Luke Writes about Jesus

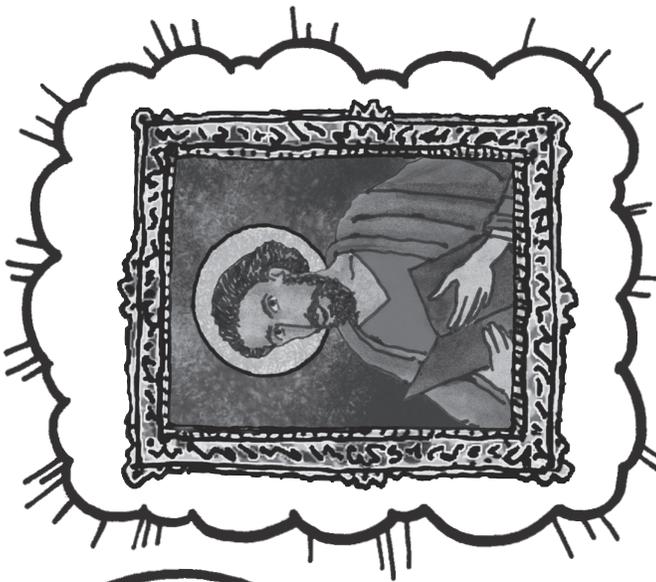
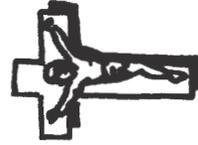
Saint Luke lived a very long time ago, but never met Jesus in his lifetime. He was a writer and traveler. He was probably a doctor, and maybe an artist. We know he spoke Greek, and he was such a good writer. We can guess that he went to school for many years. He was Saint Paul’s good friend and helper.

He wrote two very important parts of the Bible: the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. Through those books, we learn about the night Jesus was born. We learn about Baby Jesus being brought to the temple by Mary and Joseph, and meeting Simeon and Anna. We learn about Jesus

being baptized, and about the time Jesus read the scroll in the synagogue. And Saint Luke wrote down many of the parables that Jesus told, like the story we read (today). We also learn about the disciples of Jesus and how they taught others about Jesus after his Resurrection.

Through his writing, Saint Luke teaches us that Jesus often took time to pray. He shows us that Jesus wants us to take care of one another, especially people who are poor or sick or have other needs. And, through Saint Luke’s writing, we know that Jesus taught that God loves everyone—not just one group of people, but all people!

DRAW



**Saint
Luke,
pray for us!**

Listening to Jesus

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 8, Kindergarten

Lesson 8 Goal

- Your child will better understand the importance of listening to Jesus and doing what he says.

Key Points

- When the wedding feast ran out of wine, Jesus' Mother Mary told the people to listen to Jesus and do what he said.
- We should also listen to Jesus and do what he says.



Parent Reflection

This Spirit is embodied fully in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the fulfillment of the law, not having come to abolish it, but to show its true meaning (Matthew 5:13). It is through our unity with Christ in Baptism that we are joined to the New Covenant and become children of God. In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells his followers, “Abide in me as I abide in you. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit” (John 15:4, 5b). Jesus goes on to describe how one remains in him: “If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love” (John 15:10).

The Spirit speaks to us in a variety of ways—through the Word of God as revealed in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, through the Church, and through our own hearts. We must remain open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives, asking God how he would want us to follow Jesus by choosing love this particular day, in this particular situation. In doing so, we allow God an opportunity to fashion us into the people he made us to be.

Reflection Question

What is Jesus calling me to do at this moment?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- mini sponge cake
- white icing
- sprinkles

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint pages from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Jesus listens to our prayers. Today, let us pray for whatever is in our hearts.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

“Let us pray. Jesus, we know you listen to our prayers. Today, help us to be good listeners to what you ask of us. Amen.”

Discovering

Do What He Tells You. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the wedding feast at Cana.

Ask your child, “How does Jesus tell us what to do?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask

your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. The Wedding at Cana. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Decorate the Wedding Cake. Invite your child to decorate a mini wedding cake with icing and sprinkles. Talk about the wedding at Cana and Jesus’ great miracle: turning the water to wine. Pray grace and enjoy!

3. The Communion of Saints: Zacchaeus. Show your child the picture of Zacchaeus on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Zacchaeus to your child (see page 3).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “Jesus knew Zacchaeus’ name. Do you think he knows your name?”

► “The others thought Jesus shouldn’t go to Zacchaeus’ house. Why did they feel that way? (*Because Zacchaeus was a sinner*)

► “What did Jesus show the others when he forgave Zacchaeus?” (*God’s love and forgiveness*)

Have your child write and draw about Zacchaeus using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Let us pray. Jesus, we know you listen to our prayers. Today, help us to be good listeners to what you ask of us. Teach us to do as you tell us. Amen.

Zacchaeus

Doing What Jesus Asks

In the city of Jericho, there lived a man named Zacchaeus. There are three things you need to know about Zacchaeus: he was rich, he was short, and he wanted to meet Jesus.

Zacchaeus was rich because in his job, it was easy for him to trick people into giving him extra money. This was not right, and Zacchaeus knew it.

Now Jesus was coming to Jericho, and Zacchaeus hoped to see him. Crowds of people were lining the road. Zacchaeus, being short, could not see anything but the people around him. So he ran down the road where Jesus would be coming. He climbed a tree and waited.

When Jesus came to the tree, he looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, come down quickly for

today I must stay at your house.” Zacchaeus scrambled down. Jesus knew his name! Jesus wanted to come to his house! He greeted Jesus joyfully.

Other people grumbled, “Why is Jesus going to stay at Zacchaeus’ house? He’s a sinner!” Zacchaeus said to Jesus, “Lord, half of everything I have, I will give to people who really need it. And any money I got unfairly, I will repay—I will repay them more than I took. They will get extra from me.” Zacchaeus was asking Jesus for forgiveness.

The others watched as Jesus forgave Zacchaeus. Jesus knew that Zacchaeus would now do what Jesus teaches all of us—to love and treat others with fairness and kindness.

DRAW



**Zacchaeus,
pray for us!**

Welcome to God's Family

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 9, Kindergarten

Lesson 9 Goal

- Your child will learn about Baptism as a welcoming to God's family, the Church.

Key Points

- When we are baptized, we become part of God's family, the Church.
- A baptismal candle, special oil called Sacred Chrism, a white garment, and especially the pouring of water are all things we see when someone is baptized.



Parent Reflection

At our Baptism, we become joined with Jesus Christ as we share in his life, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. When we are baptized, we die to sin, are buried with Christ, and are raised up to live a new life in Christ (CCC, 1210–1284; Romans 6:1–4).

The signs of Baptism include water, oil, a white garment, and light. The individual being baptized is immersed in water (or water is poured over his or her head) with the words, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Rite of Baptism). The baptized is then anointed with consecrated oil, called Chrism. This signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit and the reality that all of us who have put on Christ in Baptism share in his work as Priest, Prophet, and King. A white garment is placed on the newly baptized, signifying the truth that he or she has put on Christ and is now free from the stain of sin. A baptismal candle is lit from the Easter candle (which represents Christ), showing that the newly baptized has received the light of Christ and is welcomed into the Church to participate with her in being the "light of the world."

As members of the Body of Christ, we are not only mysteriously connected with the Church on Earth, but also with those who have gone before us (including the saints and our deceased loved ones). Not even death can separate God's family from one another!

Reflection Question

What does my Baptism mean to me today?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- glitter (optional)
- a photo or photos of your child's baptism
- Activity Master #8

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #8 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: "Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God."

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, "Did you know that when people are baptized, they become part of God's family? We sometimes call God's family the Church. We don't mean just the building we call 'church'; instead, we mean all the people in the world who are Christians."

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Say: "Let's pray today for everyone who is part of the Church, part of God's family. We can pray for them by name. You can call out a name of someone who is part of God's family and together we will say, 'Lord, hear our prayer.'"

Child: I pray for _____.

Together: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Allow your child to name several people to pray for. Conclude with these or similar words:

"Jesus, we thank you for blessing and caring for all the people we love and all the people in the world. Amen."

Discovering

The Baptism of Jesus. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Jesus' baptism.

Ask your child, "Do you remember when you were baptized?"

Show your child photos of his or her baptism. Point out some of the symbols of Baptism, such as the baptismal candle, anointing with Sacred Chrism, the white garment, and especially the pouring of or immersion in water.

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. We Become a Part of God's Family, the Church! Turn to the drawing in the main activ-

ity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. My Baptism Banner. Help your child complete Activity Master #8. Then have your child color the activity master and decorate it with glitter. Display the banner in your home.

3. The Communion of Saints: Blessed (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta. Show your child the picture of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta on the Family Activity page and read about her. Then read more about Blessed Teresa of Calcutta to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ “What beautiful things can you do for God?”

▶ “How did Blessed Mother Teresa see all people?” (*As God’s children; as part of God’s family*)

Have your child write and draw about Blessed Mother Teresa using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Dear God, at our baptism, we were washed with water and dressed in white to start anew as your children! Our candles show that we are lights in the world! We are a part of your family. Help us always live as your children. Amen.

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Everybody in God’s Family

Teresa was a religious sister. She loved God and spent her life helping others. Teresa saw all people as part of the family of God. And because they were God’s children, they deserved to be treated with respect and love.

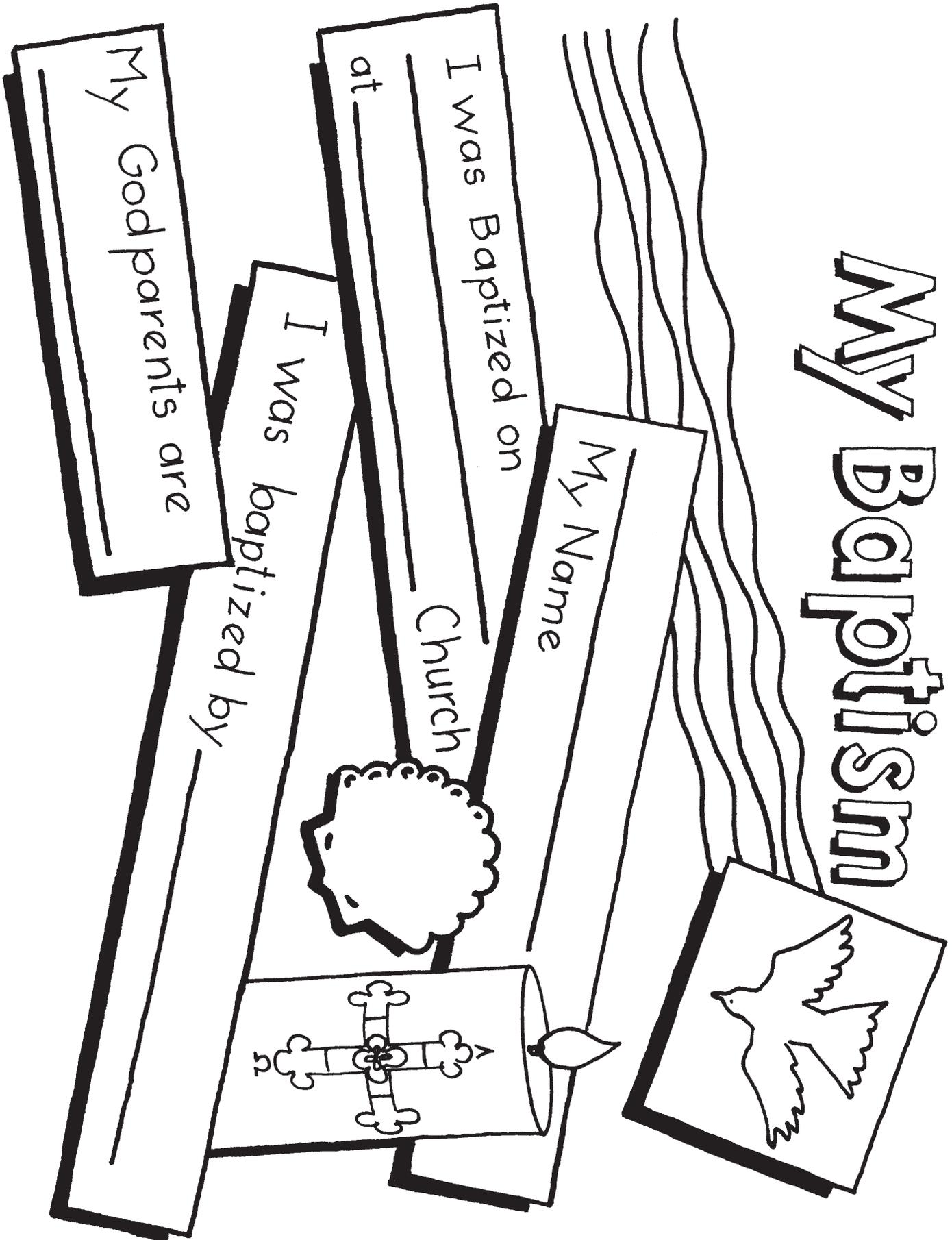
Teresa helped people who had no homes or food. She cared for people who were dying and had no family to be with them. Teresa found places for people who were very sick but

couldn’t go to hospitals. Teresa worked with others to make homes for tiny babies who had no one else to take care of them.

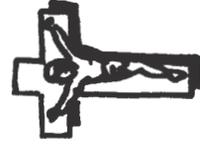
She tried to teach others that even the poorest people in the world were part of God’s family. Teresa said, “God is close to you, he is with you. Just keep the lamp burning and you will always see him.”

My Baptism

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DRAW



**Saint
Teresa of
Calcutta,
pray for us!**

My Parish

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 10, Kindergarten

Lesson 10 Goal

- Your child will have an opportunity to learn about your local parish community.

Key Points

- My parish is my neighborhood family of Catholics.
- The pastor is the priest who is the leader of the parish.



Parent Reflection

Christianity has always been a communal religion. In Scripture, Jesus sent the disciples out in groups of two as they began to evangelize and form new communities of faith. The parish church continues to be an important place to nurture our faith.

The bishops of each diocese, as the immediate successors of the Apostles, offer guidance to the Church, particularly in the areas of faith and morals. Priests are coworkers of the bishops in the apostolic mission of Christ (see CCC, 1562).

While we all share in the priesthood of Christ by virtue of our Baptism, the ministerial priesthood is unique in that bishops and priests are at the service of all the faithful (see CCC, 1547). Because the priest represents Christ, he also represents the whole Church, the Body of Christ, when presenting the prayer of the Church (see CCC, 1552). The priesthood is a special gift of God to his people—a visible sign of Christ's presence, his leadership, and his service.

Reflection Question

How can I support and encourage my pastor in his ministry of leadership and service?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- painting paper
- washable, primary colored tempera paints
- paint apron
- paint brushes

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Optional: cut out a simple church shape from the painting paper.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words:

“Now that we are in this prayerful space let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “In our church, (*name of parish*), we pray and celebrate together. Can you name some of the people we pray with?”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead:

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Invite your child to say, “*We pray for*” and you say a name of a person from your parish community (such as the pastor or parish staff and parishioners). Together, say “*Amen*” after each prayer.

Discovering

Live Together in God’s Love. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about living together in God’s love.

Ask your child, “How can you be a peacemaker?”

Talk with your child about how your parish is a gathering of God’s people and your neighborhood family of Catholics. Talk about how the pastor leads this gathering.

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Let the Children Come to Me. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Parish Paintings. Provide painting paper and painting supplies and invite your child to create a painting of your parish church. Talk with

your child about his or her finished painting and the specific details highlighted.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Lydia.

Show your child the picture of Saint Lydia on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Lydia (below) to your child.

Ask your child:

- ▶ “What are some special things about Saint Lydia?”
- ▶ “Are there people at our parish who, like Saint Lydia, help others become closer to Jesus?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Lydia using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray for your parish with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

We pray for all those in our church family at (name of parish). Today we especially pray for (invite your child to pray for the pastor or other members of the parish staff). Amen.

Saint Lydia

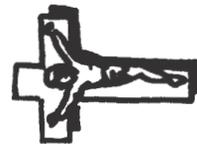
Making a Parish

Long ago Saint Paul traveled from place to place, teaching people about Jesus. In the city of Philippi he met a businesswoman named Lydia.

Lydia prayed to God often. One day, Lydia and other women gathered near the river to pray. Saint Paul saw them and asked to speak with them. Paul talked of Jesus and his love for us. Lydia came to understand that Jesus was God. She decided to become a follower of Jesus.

A follower of Jesus gets baptized and encourages others to do so also. A follower shares what she has with others and may offer to set up times and places to meet and pray. Lydia did all these things. She and her whole family and workers were baptized. She welcomed Paul and other travelers to stay at her home. And, her home became a place for more of Jesus' followers to gather, pray, and learn.

DRAW



**Saint
Lydia,
pray for us!**

Special Leaders in the Church

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 11, Kindergarten

Lesson 11 Goal

- Your child will understand that the Pope is the earthly leader of our universal Church and the bishop leads the parishes in his local diocese.

Key Points

- The Catholic Church exists all over the world.
- The Pope, the bishops, and the pastor are special leaders in the Church.



Parent Reflection

Knowing he would soon be leaving his followers, Jesus not only chose twelve disciples who would teach everything he had commanded (Matthew 28:20), but he also chose a particular leader to shepherd those he had called to leadership.

In Matthew 16:19, Jesus says to Peter, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

When the Apostles died, their successors were chosen by the remaining Apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We see this practice beginning in Scripture with the choosing of Matthias to succeed Judas (Acts 1:15–26). This practice continues to the present day, though its form has changed somewhat with the growth of the Church.

Like the other eleven Apostles in Peter’s time, our bishops are charged with oversight of the Church in their local area, or diocese, and the Pope guides the bishops and helps to settle any matters upon which consensus needs to be reached. The office of Pope is a source and sign of our unity as Catholics’—one flock, under one shepherd (John 10:16).

Reflection Question

In what ways am I “living what I celebrate” in my daily life?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- safety scissors
- drawing paper
- picture of current Pope (easily available on-line)

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint pages from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Did you know that there are Catholic people like us all around the world? Let’s pray for them, knowing they pray as we do! Let’s also pray for the Pope, the leader, of all the world’s Catholics, and the bishops, who are his helpers.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Name some countries in the world and together pray for the people in those countries.

Parent: *Dear Jesus, today we pray with the Catholics in (name of country).*

Parent and child: *Jesus, hear the prayers of all of us!*

Discovering

Prayers for All of Us. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Jesus’ prayer for the Apostles and those who would follow them.

Ask your child, “Who did Jesus pray for? Why?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Church Leaders. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it. Point out the pope and the bishops in the picture.

2. Pictures to the Pope. Talk to your child about our current Pope. If possible, display or

show your child a picture of him. Invite your child to draw a picture or write a letter to the Pope. Help your child if he or she wants to write words on their picture. Should you wish to actually send the pictures/letters, you can use the following address:

His Holiness Pope (name)
Vatican City State, 00120
Italy

3. The Communion of Saints: Pope Saint John XXIII. Show your child the picture of Pope Saint John XXIII on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint John XXIII to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ “Pope John had a great-uncle who helped him grow closer to God. Who helps you grow closer to God?”

▶ “What did you like best from the story about Saint John XXIII?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint John XXIII using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray for the Church with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

“Dear Jesus, today we pray with all of the Catholics in the whole world.”

Invite your child to pray for Church leaders or for any other intention.

Parent: *Jesus, hear the prayers of all of us!*

Parent and Child: *Amen.*

Pope Saint John XXIII

Good Pope John

Angelo Roncalli lived on a farm in Italy with his family. His great-uncle Zaverio was a holy, loving, and smart man who spent time with Angelo. He helped Angelo come to love God and see all people as God’s family.

When Angelo grew up, he became a priest. He learned many new things, but he kept all that his great-uncle Zaverio had taught him in his heart. As a priest, Angelo had many jobs. During a war, he carried hurt people to hospitals. Because he saw how bad a war can be, later, he wrote an important paper called “Peace on Earth.”

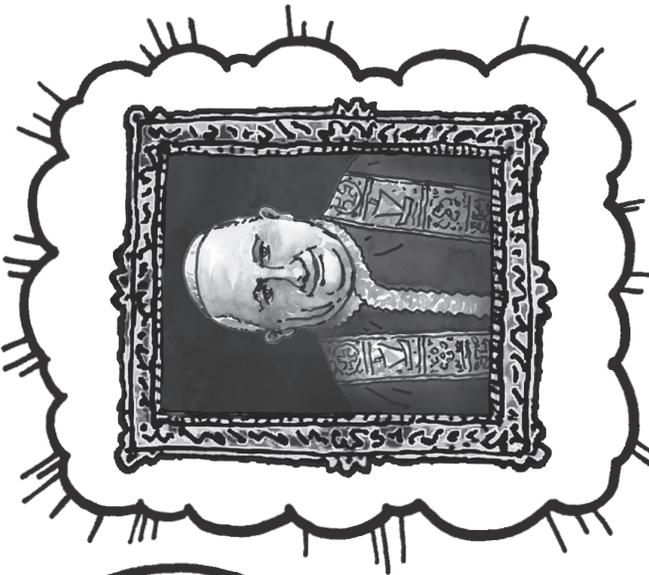
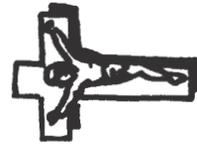
Later Father Angelo Roncalli had jobs in other countries. He loved meeting people and saw how important it is for people to work together even when they had different ideas. “I don’t

want to hurt anyone. I always try to be honest. I try to trust others,” Father Angelo said. “I look people in the eye and remember that Jesus wants us all to be one family.”

People saw how he loved life. He often smiled, laughed, and made jokes. He became a bishop, and then, he was picked to be the Pope! He chose to be called John. Often, he was called Good Pope John.

Pope John worked hard. He wanted Catholics to work and pray together and to reach out to others with respect and love. As the popes before him, he continued to make the Church a good place for people to come to know and love God. And all over the world, people came to love Good Pope John, too.

DRAW



**John
XXIII,
pray for us!**

What Happens at Mass?

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 12, Kindergarten

Lesson 12 Goal

- Your child will learn about the two main parts of Mass, with attention to the things we see and hear in Mass.

Key Points

- In the Mass, we gather together to worship God.
- The Mass has two main parts: The Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.



Parent Reflection

The Mass is divided into two main parts—the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The central element of the Liturgy of the Word is the reading of Sacred Scripture—the Word of God. We believe that God really speaks to us through these ancient writings.

During the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we believe Jesus becomes really and truly present to us under the forms of bread and wine. At the moment of consecration, when the priest repeats the words of Christ at the Last Supper, the bread and wine are changed completely into Jesus' Body and Blood. While they still appear as bread and wine, we believe that Jesus Christ gives himself as real food and real drink in this meal (John 6:55).

At the conclusion of the Mass, we are told to "Go in peace." We have been fed with the Word of God and nourished with Christ himself in the Eucharist, and we go out to be the Body of Christ to others. We are called to live what we have celebrated and received.

Reflection Question

In what ways am I "living what I celebrate" in my daily life?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Masters #10 and #11
- safety scissors
- white paper, large enough to wrap a shoe box
- shoebox
- white cardstock
- tape

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint pages from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #10, 11, and 2 (included with this lesson). (You may wish to tape Activity Masters 10 and 11 to white cardstock.)
- Use the white paper to wrap the shoebox.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Today we are going to learn a new word. The new word is *worship*. Have you ever heard that word at Mass? To *worship* means to praise and honor God— to tell him how great he is. One way we worship, or honor God, is when we are at Mass. We will sing part of our prayer today. Our prayer will be from one of the psalms in the Bible. I will sing a part of the psalm, and you may repeat it.”

Sing the following words to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” Sing the first line and then sing with your child to repeat it. Continue this way for the whole song.

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your

child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Sing, “*Shout shout joy--ful----ly
Row, row, row your boat
To the Lord of all!
Gent-ly down the stream.
Worship the Lord with songs of gladness.
Mer—ri--ly merri--ly merri-ly merrily
Come be--fore him now!
Life is but a dream.*”

(If you prefer to read the Psalm prayer:)
*Shout, shout, joyfully
To the Lord of all!
Worship the Lord with songs of gladness.
Come before him now!*
(Based on Psalm 98:2, 100:2)

Discovering

The Two Parts of Mass. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Mass.

Ask your child, “What is your favorite part of the Mass?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Who Needs These Items for Mass? Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Altars. Have your child cut the items from Activity Masters #10 and #11 and fold them according to the fold lines and secure with tape. Place the items on their altar (shoebox) and use this as a teaching resource to talk about what happens at Mass.

3. The Communion of Saints: David, shepherd, musician, and king. Show your child the picture of David on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about King David to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ "What were some of David's special talents?"
- ▶ "Many of David's songs are called psalms. Have you heard that word before? Have you ever sung a psalm?" (*Tell your child that we pray a psalm during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.*)
- ▶ "What was David like as king?"

Have your child write and draw about King David using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Shout, shout, joyfully

To the Lord of all!

Worship the Lord with songs of gladness.

Come before him now!

David, shepherd, musician, and king

Songs of Worship

Long before Jesus was born, there lived a family that had eight boys. The youngest was named David. The family owned sheep, and David was given the job of taking care of these sheep.

David was also a musician. He sang and played a harp. He also made up songs. Because David loved and trusted God very much, he often sang songs about God. Sometimes his songs thanked God for all the wonders of Creation. Through song he also thanked God for helping him. Other times he sang to ask for God's help.

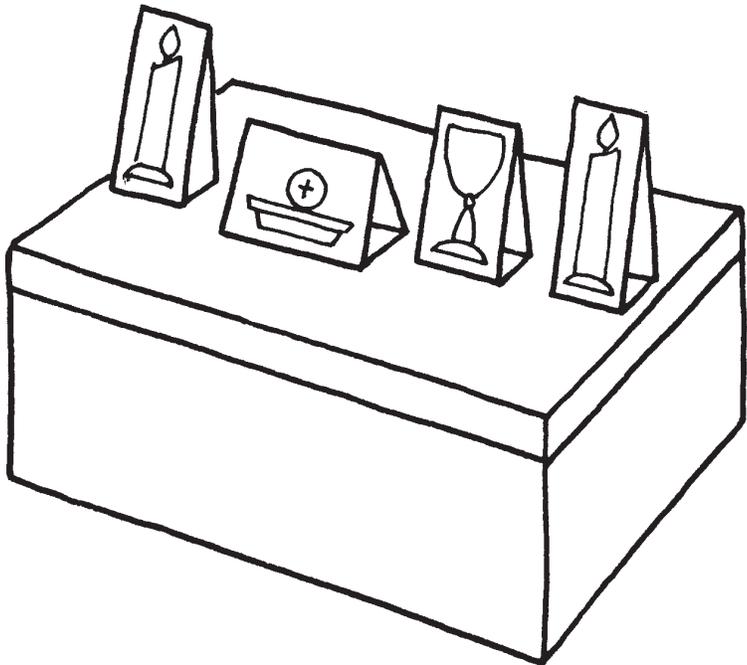
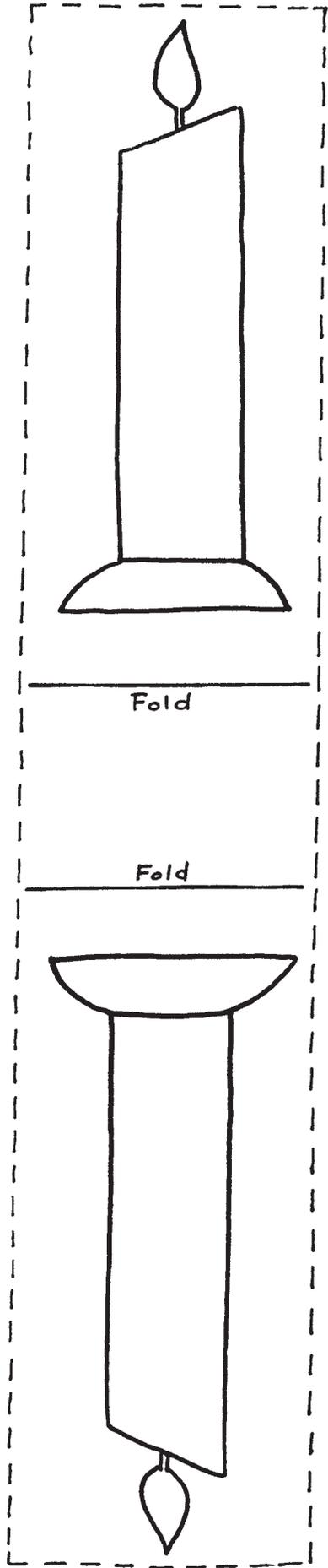
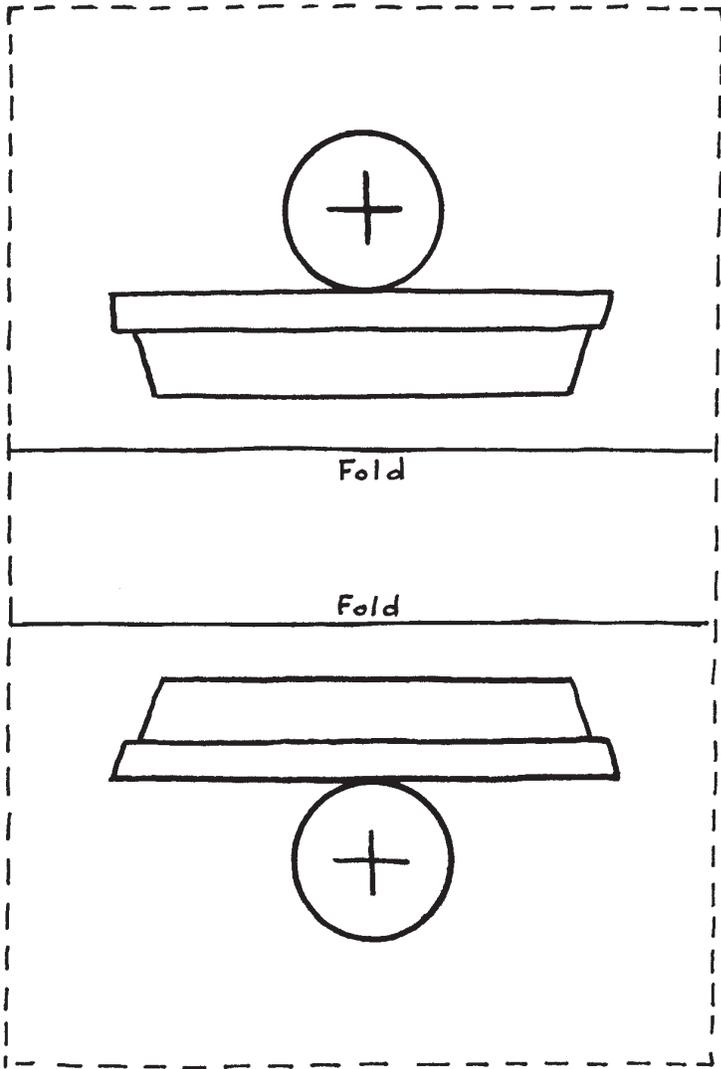
Many of David's songs were about his joy for God. He sang of God's love and care. And he sang of God's greatness. David worshipped God with his songs.

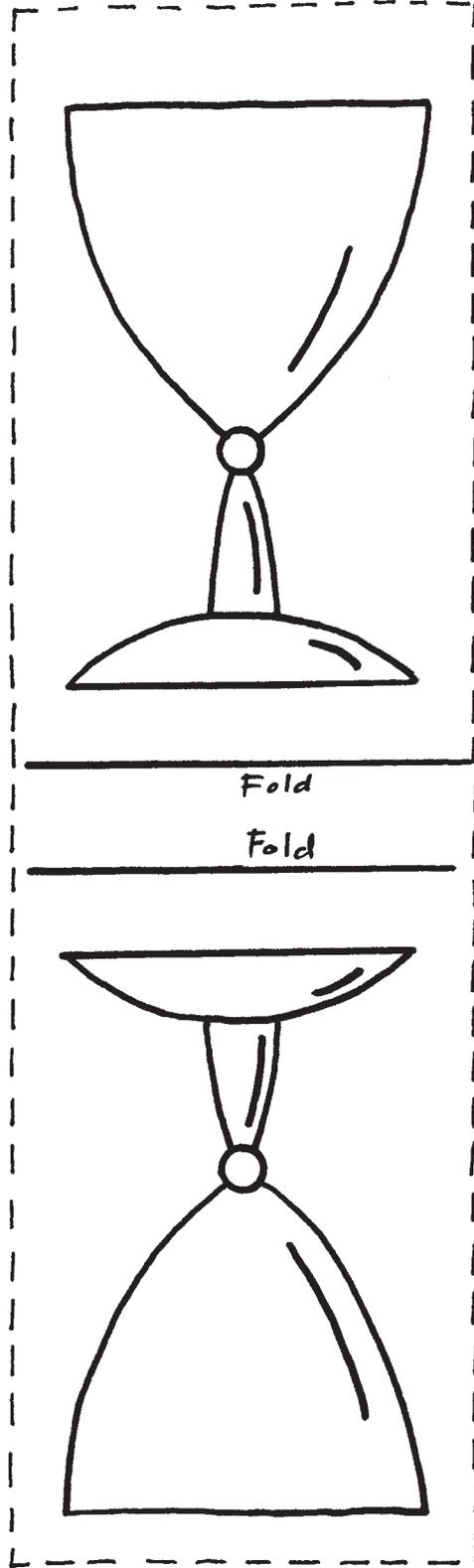
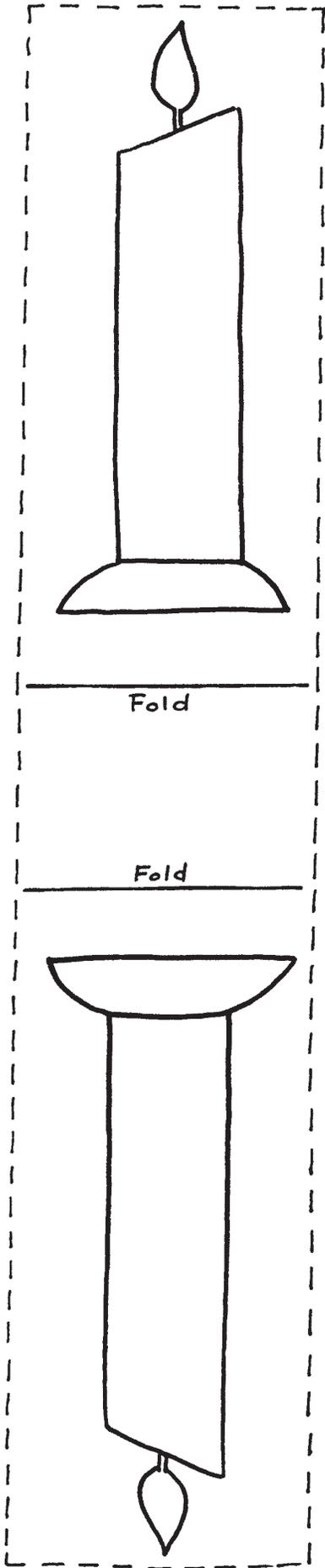
As he grew up, David had many, many ad-

ventures. He became a great leader and soldier. Eventually, he was chosen to become king. He was an excellent king. No matter where David went, or what he had to do, he felt God was with him.

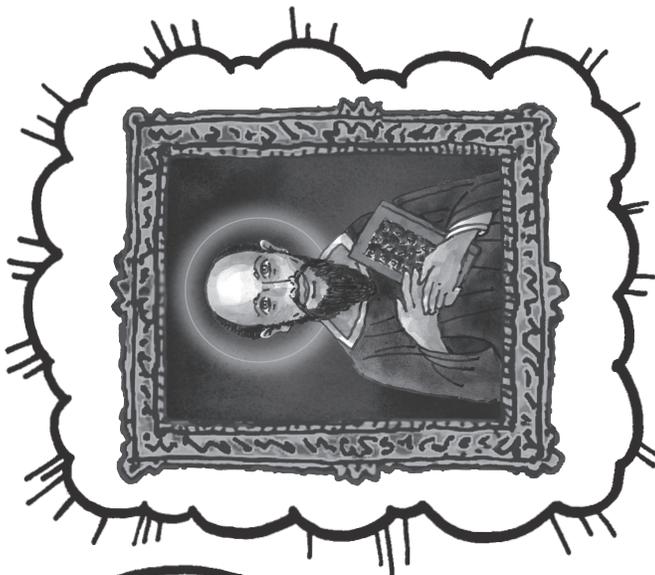
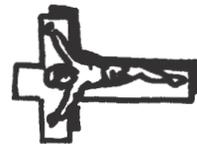
As king, David was a powerful man, but he knew he was not more powerful than God. And so, he celebrated God. David and his followers danced for God. They played the cymbals, harps, and tambourines. They shouted with joy and David continued to dance. And together they sang!

Then King David gave everyone bread and blessed each person, sharing his joy of God with them.





DRAW



**King
David,
pray for us!**

Family Celebrations

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 13, Kindergarten

Lesson 13 Goal

- Your child will explore ways we celebrate as family—in the home and as a parish.

Key Points

- Families celebrate special times.
- Sacraments are the family celebrations of our Church.



Parent Reflection

God wants to share his very life with us. He does this in a powerful and visible way through the sacramental celebrations of the Church. Sacraments include visible signs and actions by people and invisible actions by God. The rituals of sacramental celebrations make the invisible work of God visible to us.

Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist are called Sacraments of Christian Initiation because they are the celebrations by which one enters into the life of the Church. The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick are called Sacraments of Healing, because they are signs of God's healing of body and soul. The Sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders are called Sacraments at the Service of Communion because they are "directed towards the salvation of others" (CCC, 1534).

The greatest of our Church's "family celebrations" is the celebration of the Eucharist, which is called "the source and summit of the Christian life" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 47). This is the place and time when we express most fully our connectedness as the family of God.

Reflection Question

What have the Sacraments meant to me in my own walk with God?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- stapler
- plain white paper plate
- 10" length of ribbon

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: "Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God."

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, "God is with us. We can't see God or touch God with our fingers, but we still know he is with us. God is with us during happy times, sad times, and when we are angry or silly. And, God is with us when we celebrate loudly and in the quiet times of our lives too."

Let's take a minute of quiet to be with God in our hearts." Model a prayerful moment of silence.

"God is always with us, but let's thank God for a time where we especially felt his presence."

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Let us thank God for being with us during a special time. We will say words to a psalm as part of our prayer. The words are: Let us come

into the presence of God with thanksgiving" (Based on Psalm 95:2). Encourage your child to recall a special time.

Say, "Thank you, God, for being with me when _____."

Together: "Let us come into the presence of God with thanksgiving" (Based on Psalm 95:2).

Discovering

Signs of God-with-Us. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Sacraments.

Ask your child, "Where have you seen signs of god in the world?"

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Celebrate Special Times. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. “Birthday Celebration Balloons. Invite your children to describe how your family celebrates birthdays. Give your child a paper plate and invite him or her to decorate it like a birthday “balloon.” Help your child print “Happy Birthday” on each side of the plate. Color the “balloon” and include other birthday symbols. Staple a 10” piece of ribbon to the “balloon.”

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Josephine Bakhita. Show your child the picture of Saint Josephine Bakhita on the Family Activity page and read about her. Then read more about Saint Josephine to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ “What was Saint Josephine’s life like before she went to live with the religious sisters?”

▶ “What are some things that made you feel sad in Saint Josephine’s story? What made you feel happy?”

▶ “What are some ways you know God is with you?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Josephine Bakhita using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Dear Jesus, we know that a Sacrament is a special celebration of the Church. We know it is a sign that God is with us.

Together: *Let us come into the presence of God with thanksgiving.* (Based on Psalm 95:2).

Saint Josephine Bakhita

“God Will Increase”

Long ago, there lived a little girl called Bakhita. This means “fortunate one” but she was not at all fortunate, or lucky.

Bakhita did not live with her family. Other adults made Bakhita work very hard. She could never play or go to school. They treated her very, very badly.

No one ever told Bakhita about God. When she saw the moon, stars and sun, she wondered, “Who made these wonderful things?” Bakhita wished she knew who this Creator was.

She also felt something special in her heart. All around her were mean people, but Bakhita was also feeling that God was with her. Bakhita couldn’t see or touch God. She did not know

any prayers, or even a name for God. But God was with her.

When Bakhita got older, her life changed. She went to live with religious sisters. They were loving and kind. They told her all about God and God’s great love for her. Bakhita understood that the special feeling she always had was God with her! She was a child of God!

With her Church family, she received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion. When Bakhita was baptized, she took a new name, Josephine. It means “God will increase.” And God was with her on that special day too!

DRAW



**Saint
Josephine
Bakhita,
pray for us!**

We pray, “Glory to God!”

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 14, Kindergarten

Lesson 14 Goal

- Your child will focus on praise to God and will relate this to the angels’ song of praise, which we sing at Mass.

Key Points

- Praising God means telling how wonderful he is.
- We praise God in the Mass when we sing “Glory to God.”



Parent Reflection

When we recognize Christ’s presence in our daily lives, we realize that things are not all up to us. We are relieved of the burden of facing overwhelming tasks, decisions, and situations without God’s help. Rather, we can do all things, through Jesus, who gives us strength (Philippians 4:13). God, who is much bigger than we are and worthy of our glory, will help us.

Another way in which giving God glory brings us peace is that this recognition of God brings structure to the chaos of our lives. Our priorities are reorganized when we place God first, giving him the glory he is due. When we know Jesus is with us, and we glorify the father, we put God first. While this also means some limits in our lives, God’s guidelines and rules are more about freeing us to be the people he truly made us to be. We don’t always know what will make us happy, but God knows his purpose for making us.

Finally, when we know Christ is with us, and when we give God glory over all else, wounds are healed and we are drawn closer to one another. The divisions among us begin to disappear, pain from past failures or broken relationships is dissipated, and we are formed as the Body of Christ. This truly is cause for rejoicing!

Reflection Question

How do I give glory to God in my daily life?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- safety scissors
- dry beans
- lightweight paper plates
- crepe paper or ribbon

- stapler
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 (included with this lesson).

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Our God is great. God is so awesome; our minds can’t even understand his greatness! And when our hearts are full of God’s love and greatness, we like to talk and pray about it, so we praise God. We can praise God like the angels who said, ‘Glory to God in the highest!’ Every time we go to Mass, we praise God. Listen carefully to these words and tell me if you have ever heard them before:

*Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.”*

Discuss whether your child has heard this at Mass. Say that it is part of a prayer we call the “Glory to God.” Next, ask if he or she recognizes these words from the Mass:

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

Say, “Let’s praise God right now! I will say something about God’s greatness, and together we can shout these happy words, ‘Glory to God in the highest!’”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Parent: When we wake up in the morning to a beautiful day, we can say,

Together: Glory to God in the highest!

Parent: When we hear the crash of great waves or the rumbling of thunder, we can say,

Together: Glory to God in the highest!

Parent: When we have been sad or frightened and then we felt God was with us, we can say,

Together: Glory to God in the highest!

Discovering

A Good King. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about King Hezekiah.

Ask your child, “How do we praise God in Mass

and at home?"

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Glory to God. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Paper Plate Musical Shaker. Invite your child to make a musical shaker using the dry beans and paper plate. Have him or her color and decorate one side of a paper plate. Next, place some beans in the center of a paper plate. Fold the paper plate in half and place the ends of four long strips of crepe paper or ribbon inside the edges of the folded plate. Staple the edges of the plate together so that the beans stay inside and the streamers are secure. Invite your child to use his or her paper-plate musical shaker in a dance of praise to God. Have fun with your child in praising God through music and dance.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Tutilo. Show your child the picture of Saint Tutilo on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Tutilo to your child (see page 4).

Ask your child:

► "What are some ways Tutilo and his friends used their talents to praise God?"

► "How did the monks make the music books they needed?"

► "What did you like most about this story?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint Tutilo using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray a prayer of praise with your child.

Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead.

Say, "Here is a wonderful prayer from the Bible where we praise God and tell him how wonderful he is!"

Praise God with trumpets.

Praise him with harps and lyres.

Praise him with drums and dancing.

Praise him with harps and flutes.

Praise him with cymbals.

Praise him with loud cymbals.

Praise the Lord, all living creatures!

Praise the Lord!

(Psalm 150)

Together:

Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you,

we glorify you,

we give you thanks for your great glory.

Amen!

(Roman Missal)

Saint Tutilo

Many Ways to Praise God

Note: *Explain to your child that a monastery is a place where religious brothers, sisters, or monks live, work, and pray.*

In the snowy mountains of Switzerland there was a large monastery, where holy men worked and prayed. They praised God through their prayer, but they also praised God by using their talents.

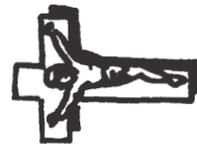
One day, travelers from Ireland arrived. Some of them decided to stay at this wonderful place. One was a young man named Tutilo. He was very smart, but he had many other talents from God, too.

Tutilo could paint colorful pictures. He carved statues. He made amazing things from

gold. He also wrote poems and music. His music was beautiful. Soon, most of the music the holy men used in their prayers was written by Tutilo.

Then, monks in other monasteries wanted to use Tutilo's music too. They would need music books. Since there were no computers or copy machines then, each music book was written by hand. Carefully, with ink and special pens, they wrote every page of music. Then they decorated the books with paintings in bright colors too. The music, the printing, and the paintings were all ways they praised God. And when the beautiful books went off to other monasteries, the men there could sing the music Tutilo wrote, and the songs of praise of God went on and on for years and years.

DRAW



**Saint
Tutilo,
pray for us!**

Everyone Has Rules

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 15, Kindergarten

Lesson 15 Goal

- Your child will understand that God gave us rules to follow so that we will live in peace and with love for him and others.

Key Points

- Everyone must follow rules.
- God gives us rules so we can be safe and happy.



Parent Reflection

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–26) serve as a basic guideline for the rules of godly living. Christ said all of the commandments relate to love of God and love of others. The first three Commandments relate to loving God. The First Commandment is an admonition to put God above all other things in our lives. The Second Commandment reminds us to treat God’s name with honor and respect and avoid bringing disrespect to God’s name by taking false oaths or uttering blasphemy. The Third Commandment reminds us to keep the Sabbath day holy.

The Fourth through Tenth Commandments relate to loving others. The Fourth Commandment calls us to honor our parents, as well as to treat each person as an individual with inherent dignity, created in God’s image. Through the Fifth Commandment, Jesus points out that we cannot be the people God created us to be while we create barriers between ourselves and others, by feeding our anger or refusing to forgive.

The Sixth and Ninth Commandments state that the root of sinful sexual behavior is the objectification of the body, looking at ourselves or others as “things” to be used, rather than beings created by God. The Seventh and Tenth Commandments say that we should be happy with what we have, knowing that God has blessed each of us in many ways. Finally, the Eighth Commandment calls us to live in and bear witness to the truth and to build one another up rather than injure the reputation of others.

Reflection Question

How can you be a blessing to others?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #15
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #15 and #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Today, we are going to say a simple but important prayer. We are going to pray for people we love. You can pray for someone you love who is sick, or because he or she is kind to you. There are many reasons to pray for people. You can even thank God for someone’s smile! After we each have a turn, we will say, ‘Lord, hear our prayer.’”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Lead by saying the first prayer. For example: “*Lord, we ask you to watch over our family.*” (Response: “*Lord, hear our prayer.*”) Then alternate adding prayers with your

child. Then continue with the following:

“And for all our unspoken prayers, we pray:”

Together: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Discovering

God’s Good Rules. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Ten Commandments.

Ask your child, “Which of these rules do you keep?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. God’s Rules. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and have your child describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Family Rules. Help your child recall that everybody has rules, because rules help keep us safe and happy. Next, share some of the family

rules, such as helping with chores, feeding the dog, cleaning, sharing toys, prayer before eating. Give your child a copy of Activity Master 15. Invite him or her to draw a picture in each “room” of the house that shows how he or she follows the family’s rules.

3. The Communion of Saints: Moses. Show your child the picture of Moses on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Moses to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “What big job did God give to Moses?” (*to lead the people out of Egypt*)
- ▶ “How did Moses manage to do this big job?” (*with God’s help*)
- ▶ “What does this story tell you about God?”

Have your child write and draw about Moses using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

“God our Father, thank you for giving the Ten Commandments. Your rules help us to be happy. They help us live good lives. May we always do what you want us to do. Amen.”

Moses

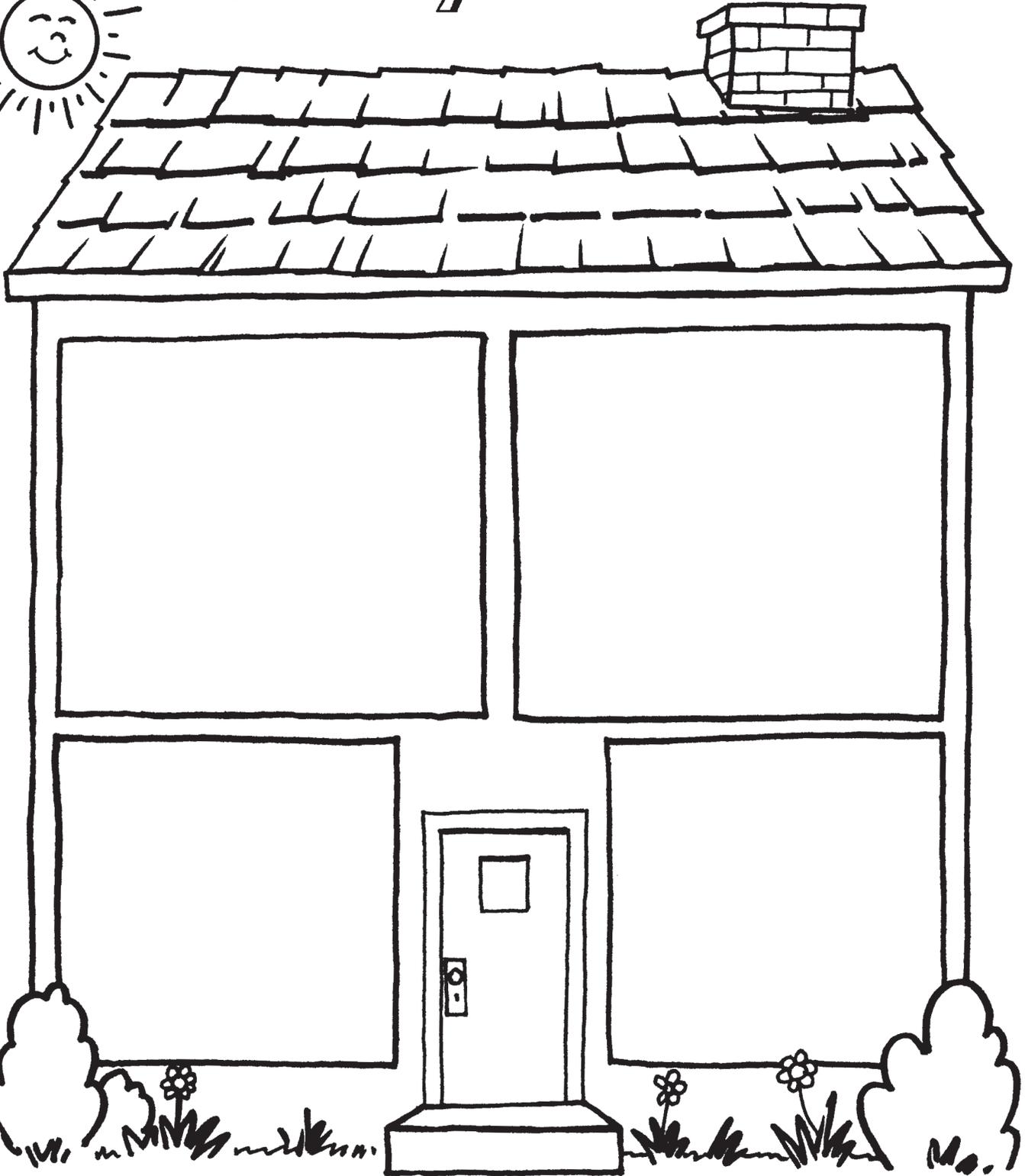
A Big Job

Moses was a special man who could hear God’s voice. God chose Moses to lead God’s people out of Egypt and into a land he would give them.

“What if the Pharaoh-king says we cannot leave? What if the Israelites won’t follow me?” Moses said.

“I will be with you,” God said. God used Moses to lead his people to the Promised Land. It was a very big job, but with God’s help, Moses did it.

Family Rules



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Name _____

DRAW



**Moses,
pray for us!**

God Blesses Us

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 16, Kindergarten

Lesson 16 Goal

- Your child will understand what the words *blessed* and *blessing* mean. They will learn how to be a blessing to others, and how to receive a blessing.

Key Points

- Jesus taught about times when we are especially blessed by God.
- The lesson about blessings that Jesus taught on the mountain is called the Beatitudes.



Parent Reflection

Children are familiar with the prayers before meals referred to as “blessings.” We say, “bless you” when someone sneezes. When we ask God’s blessing on a situation or person, we are acknowledging that only holiness can be bestowed by God. God can bless, and through godly actions and prayerful petitions we can be instruments of God’s blessings to others.

The Beatitudes proclaim the salvation brought about through the Kingdom of God. In them, Jesus teaches the attributes and virtues that should be cultivated in those who follow him. They sum up the way of Christ, the only way that leads to eternal beatitude, communion with God.

Beatitude comes from the Latin *beatus*, which means blessed or *happy*. The Beatitudes are mentioned in the Gospel according to Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the Gospel according to Luke in the Sermon on the Plain. Jesus explained in his sermon(s) how to give and receive blessings. There is the element of surprise that in sickness, humility, and persecution there is a promise of reward in the Kingdom of God. With God’s help, and an earnest desire to follow the teachings from the Beatitudes, we can find the Kingdom of God in our heart.

Reflection Question

How can you be a blessing to others?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- safety scissors
- small paper plate
- hole punch
- yarn

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “When Jesus tells us we are blessed, it is something to hope for isn’t it? What does blessed mean? (*Allow time for your child to respond.*) To be blessed is to be ‘favored by God.’ What does favored mean? (*Allow time for your child to respond.*) It means to be treated special and to be made happy. So if you are blessed, you are happy! God is smiling at you! Let’s tell God thank you for smiling at us and blessing us!”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead:

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Parent: Thank you, God!

Child: Thank you, God!

Parent: Thank you for blessing us.

Child: Thank you for blessing us.

Parent: Thank you for favoring us.

Child: Thank you for favoring us.

Parent: Thank you for smiling at us.

Child: Thank you for smiling at us.

Discovering

The Beatitudes. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Beatitudes.

Ask your child, “How has God blessed you in your life?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. You Are Blessed. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. “I Am Blessed” Medal. Invite your child to draw a happy face on one side of the paper plate. Have him or her color the eyes and mouth. Punch two holes at the top of the plate and help your child thread it with yarn. Write, “God smiles

at me. I Am Blessed!" along the bottom of the plate. Have him or her wear the happy face as a medal.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Clare of Assisi. Show your child the picture of Saint Clare of Assisi on the Family Activity page and read about her. Then read more about Saint Clare to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ "How did Saint Clare and her sisters live?" (*a life of poverty; by begging*)
- ▶ "Were they happy or sad?" (*happy*)
- ▶ "How can we bless God like Clare did?" (*by doing what God wants us to do*)

Have your child write and draw about Saint Clare using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Dear Jesus,

If we counted all of our blessings, we would be counting and counting. We know how much you love us, and it makes us happy! Thank you! May we be a blessing to other people, too. Amen.

Saint Clare of Assisi

Following the Will of God

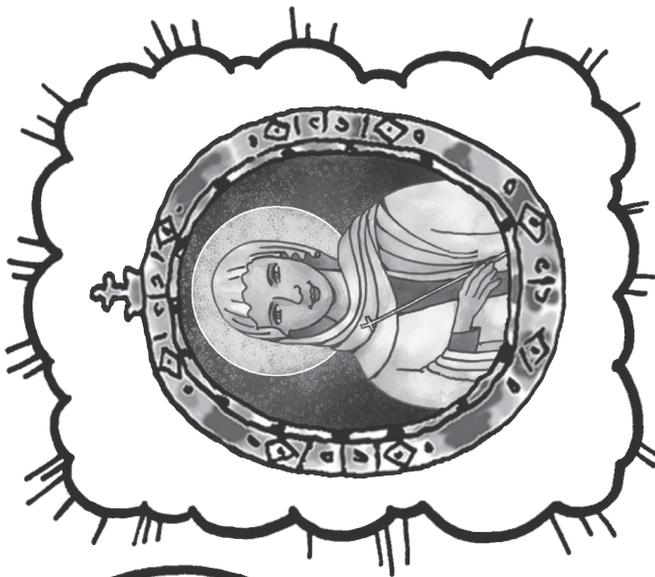
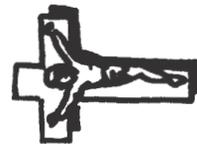
Clare was one of the first followers of Saint Francis of Assisi. She led a group of women who wished to lead a life of poverty and prayer. Clare asked the Pope to allow her sisters to live entirely by begging! Despite her poverty, Clare lived happily.

The townspeople of Assisi loved Clare. Twice, when enemies threatened Assisi, the people brought Clare, holding in her hands the Blessed

Sacrament, to the city walls. Both times the enemies fled. She was a blessing to God and to her neighbors!

We can learn from Clare to listen to the Holy Spirit and always follow the will of God. Her joy to live without the need of lots of money and things and her desire to want peace is something we should try to follow.

DRAW



**Saint
Clare of Assisi,
pray for us!**

Showing Kindness

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 17, Kindergarten

Lesson 17 Goal

- Your child will learn that being kind means reaching out to other people when they need us. He or she will explore concrete ways to be kind.

Key Points

- We should be kind to others in the things we say and do.
- We should look for ways to help those in need.



Parent Reflection

In the most vivid image Jesus gives us of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31–46), the criteria by which people are judged is the kindness they have shown others, because it is evidence that they know Christ. Those who have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, clothed the naked, visited the sick or imprisoned, and welcomed the stranger are welcomed into heaven. But those who have not done so are told they never knew Jesus. For if we truly accept God's mercy and kindness towards us, we will show mercy and kindness towards others.

When we show mercy and act in kindness for someone else, we are becoming an image of the kind and merciful God for them. As we become more loving in our own actions, we truly know Christ, for knowing him means more than believing in him. Above all, Jesus' life was about loving self-sacrifice. He gave of himself in many different ways, and then in the most complete way through his death on the Cross.

The Christian way of life requires us to discipline ourselves, and to allow God to discipline us through the working of his grace in us.

Reflection Question

How have God and others shown kindness and mercy to me? How do I show mercy to others?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- safety scissors
- craft sticks
- glue
- yarn pieces (assorted colors)

- assorted material scraps
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Today we are going to talk about kindness and helping others. First, we will pray, telling Jesus of the kindnesses we will do. At first I will say a way we can be kind, and together we will say, ‘Jesus, show me how to help others.’ Now we will pray.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Parent: *Jesus, our loving brother and God, I will try to smile at someone today.*

Together: *Jesus, show me how to help others.*

Parent: *Jesus, our loving brother and God, I will try to help at home today.*

Together: *Jesus, show me how to help others.*

Discovering

Help One Another. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about helping one another.

Ask your child, “How can you encourage others?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Who Is Showing Encouragement? Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Help-Those-in-Need Puppets. Invite your child to make stick puppets to show ways to help those in need. Have your child draw a face on the tip of a craft stick and glue pieces of yarn and fabric on as hair and clothes. Using the puppets, talk and act out ways that people can help those in need.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. Show your child the picture of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux on the Family Activity page and read about her. Then read more about Saint Thérèse to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ “What are some of the little ways Thérèse worked at being a saint?” (*She was patient with other people; she showed her love by doing jobs like washing dishes and cooking in a loving way; by doing small acts of kindnesses.*)

▶ “Think about the things you do every day. How can you show kindness through these little events?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Thérèse using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Parent: *Jesus, our loving brother and God, I will try to _____ today.* (Invite your child to think of one kind act to do today.)

Together: *This little act I do will help somebody and will help me grow in love. Amen.*

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

The Little Kindnesses

When Thérèse was a little girl, she played with her dog. She loved pretend tea parties. Thérèse also learned to read.

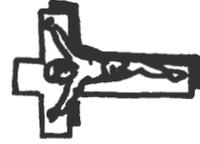
Sometimes she screamed when she didn't get her way. But when she was being silly, she made her family laugh. Every night she said her prayers.

Thérèse also loved Jesus. She decided to become a saint. As she got a bit older, Thérèse realized she could work on becoming a saint in little ways. She learned to be patient with other people if they were in a bad mood or angry with

her. She tried to show her love for people and God when she was doing boring jobs like washing dishes. When she cooked or sewed, she did these things in a loving way. She did small acts of kindnesses, even when others were unkind to her. She didn't do these things so that people would like her, but because she loved Jesus.

Thérèse was not able to do great things, like become a president or an astronaut. Yet, because she loved Jesus and by her kindnesses, she became a saint—a very great saint! Today, Saint Thérèse is known and loved by people all around the world!

DRAW



**Saint
Thérèse of
Lisieux,
pray for us!**

God Forgives

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 18, Kindergarten

Lesson 18 Goal

- Your child will explore the concept of forgiveness and how God's great love for us makes us want to please him even more.

Key Points

- God forgives us when we do wrong things.
- God will help us do better if we ask for his help.



Parent Reflection

Scripture offers us many examples of forgiveness and reconciliation. In Luke 7:36–50, we read that while Jesus is dining at the house of a Pharisee, a woman known by others to be very sinful (probably a prostitute) enters the house. She is weeping and washes Jesus' feet with her tears. She then anoints his feet with expensive, sweet-smelling oil. The Pharisee is very troubled by the woman's presence and is particularly appalled that Jesus is allowing such a sinful woman to touch him. Jesus answers this concern with a parable about a creditor who forgives a large debt, saying that those who have been forgiven much will show great love. Jesus teaches that no sin is too large to be forgiven. We can always bring our failures to God.

Because God has shown us love and mercy, we should also be willing to love and show mercy to one another. In the Lord's Prayer, we ask God to "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Our ability to receive God's gift of forgiveness depends in part on our openness to share that gift with others.

Reflection Question

Who do I need to forgive? Whom have I forgiven?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #17
- safety scissors
- drawing paper

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #17 and #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Jesus talks about forgiving. What does it mean to forgive someone? When someone has hurt your feelings, what do you do?” (*Possible responses: deciding in your heart that you can still be friends, no longer feeling angry, stop thinking about what happened, being glad you are still friends*)

Say, “When Jesus talks about forgiving, he tells us that God always forgives us when we do something wrong and are sorry. Can you think of a prayer that has the word forgive in it? We pray this prayer here sometimes, and you may have heard it at Mass too. It is called the Lord’s Prayer. Sometimes it is also called the Our Father. It is the prayer that Jesus himself taught his friends. In it, we ask God to forgive us when we do something wrong. And God always, does! In the Lord’s Prayer, we say a word that seems hard to understand. The word is trespass. It means when somebody does something wrong. In the Lord’s Prayer, we ask God to forgive us our ‘trespasses,’ or in

other words, we ask God to forgive us in the same way we forgive others for what they have done wrong to us.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Say, “Now let’s take a minute to pray quietly, just in our hearts. Think of something you did that was wrong. Then quietly remember that God forgives you and always, always will. (Allow a short silence) Now we will pray the Lord’s Prayer. You can listen or pray aloud with me. Listen for the place where we pray about God forgiving us.”

Together, pray the Lord’s Prayer.

Discovering

The Prodigal Son. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Prodigal Son.

Ask your child, “When do you forgive others? When have you been forgiven?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. What's the Order? Turn to the drawing in the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Forgiveness Story Puzzle. Give your child a copy of Activity Master #17 and help him or her read the words written on the heart. Invite your child to color the puzzle, cut it out, and see if he or she can put the pieces back together to make a heart.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Anthony of Padua. Show your child the picture of Saint Anthony of Padua on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Anthony to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

► "How can Saint Anthony's message of being kind and honest help you?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint Anthony using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray for your parish with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray the Our Father aloud with your child.

Saint Anthony of Padua

Changing People with Words

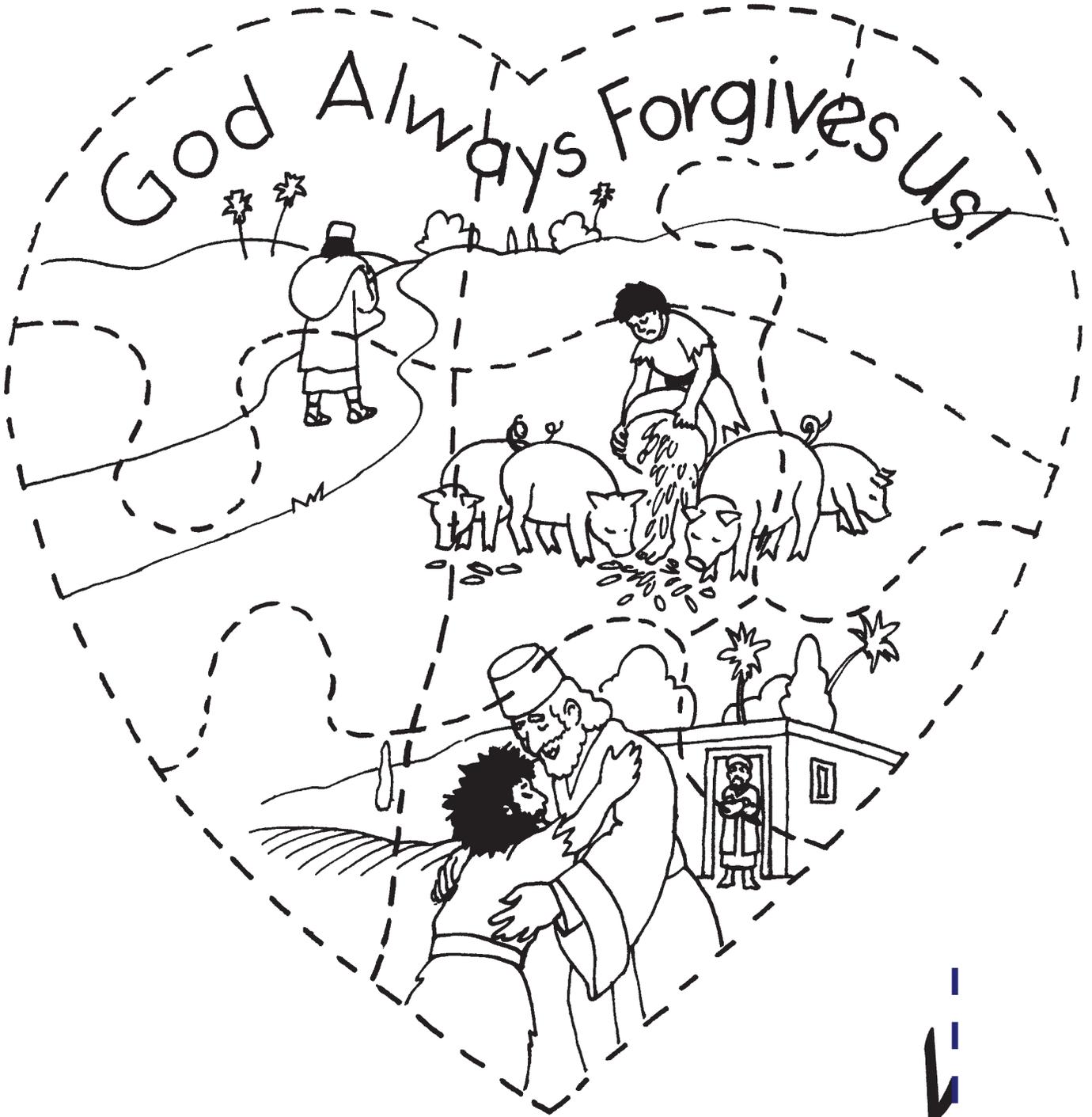
Anthony was a friar, which is a special type of priest. He worked in a small hospital, lived simply, prayed, and studied the Bible.

One day, Anthony sat in a church with many others for a special ceremony. When the person who was going to speak never came, Anthony was asked to speak. Of course, everyone knew Anthony wasn't prepared for this. But when Anthony began speaking, he was terrific! He did such a great job that Saint Francis, the man in charge of all of the friars, sent him a letter telling Anthony that his new job was to teach.

Anthony traveled to many places. When he came to a town, people stayed all night in the church so they wouldn't miss his talk the next morning. Stores closed for all the townspeople so that they could listen to him. After Anthony finished, the listeners were so touched by his words, they went to others that they had angered, asking forgiveness. People who had stolen things brought them back, saying they were sorry. If someone had told a lie, that person admitted it, and asked to be forgiven.

Anthony's words were his gift from God, and these words changed people.

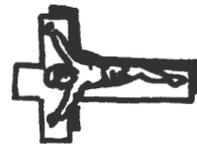
God Always Forgives Us!



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DRAW



**Saint
Anthony
of Padua,
pray for us!**

Seasons of the Church

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 19, Kindergarten

Lesson 19 Goal

- Your child will focus on the seasons of the Liturgical Year and will identify these seasons through the major celebrations on our Church calendar.

Key Points

- Just like nature has seasons, there are seasons, or different times of year, in the Church.
- The Church uses colors to mark the seasons of the Church year.



Parent Reflection

As a Church, we re-experience the events of salvation history as we celebrate the cycle of the Liturgical Year. In Advent, we experience the promise of the Light to come. The Christmas Season is a time of joy, light, and hope. Ordinary Time makes up the bulk of our Church year. It is a joyful time (we still sing the “*Gloria*,” and “*Alleluia*” at Mass), but without the high intensity of Christmas and Easter. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints are honored during the Liturgical Year to show that the earth is united with the liturgy of Heaven (CCC, 1195).

During Lent, we are called to reflect upon our lives, repent of our sins, and purify ourselves through sacrifice. It is a “dark” time that foreshadows the suffering and death of Christ. But there is light at the end of Lent.

The Easter Vigil that begins the new season of the Church Year is all about light. The Vigil liturgy begins in darkness; we then light “the new fire” as we remember Jesus our light, a light that could not be extinguished by the power of sin and death, a light that forever shines through the Church. It is fitting that in this celebration of the Resurrection of Christ, we celebrate the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), welcoming those who have been called to join the Catholic Church. It is a sign of the new life our Church has through Christ.

Finally, it is important to note that Sunday is the principal day for the celebration of the Eucharist. Going to Mass on Sunday is so important that it is the foundation of the whole Church year.

Reflection Question

In what way does the cycle of the Church year parallel the experiences of my own life?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- safety scissors
- tissue paper (purple, white, green, and red)
- one piece of 9" x 12" black construction paper
- two 10" x 13" sheets of clear contact paper
- tablecloths or colored construction paper for the prayer table (purple, white or gold, green, red)
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created

by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Cut several 1" x 1" squares of tissue paper in purple, white, green, and red and set them aside. Fold the construction paper in half like a card. Carefully cut a cross-shaped form from the paper and set it aside. Discard the cross shape and keep the "frame." Cut two 10" x 13" sheets of clear contact paper.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: "Now that we are in this prayerful space let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God."

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, "Today we are going to do something different with our prayer table. We have several cloths for the table. Each one is a different color. We use these colors at different times of the year to help us think about different times in Jesus' life. Just this once, we are going to use all the tablecloths, one on top of the other, so we can see all the special colors."

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and

of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

"(Child's name), take this purple cloth and spread it on our prayer table. We use it at two different times of the year, called Advent and Lent. Next, please take this white cloth, which we use for Christmas and Easter, and spread it on our table. Sometimes for these special feasts, we use gold instead of white. Now, please take this green cloth, which we use for Ordinary Time, and spread it on our prayer table. Finally, please take this red cloth, which we use for Pentecost and when we remember the Holy Spirit and on certain days when we honor Jesus and the saints. Please spread it on our prayer table."

Let us pray. Thank you, Jesus, for your Church and the beautiful seasons. Amen.

Discovering

We Share and Learn. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about seasons and celebrations.

Ask your child, "Which Church season do you like best? Why?"

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. The Church Has Seasons. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Liturgical Colors Stained Glass Cross. Help your child place one sheet of clear contact paper, sticky-side up, on the table. Together, place the construction paper frame directly on the contact paper. Cover the "cross" frame with the colored tissue paper. Be sure the opening is completely covered with the colored tissue paper. Place the other sticky sheet directly on top of the

other to seal in the tissue paper and cross frame. Trim off the extra contact paper at the edges. Talk about the liturgical colors and their meaning as you complete this craft with your child.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Brendan. Show your child the picture of Saint Brendan on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read Saint Brendan's biography to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ "How did Saint Brendan honor special feasts and seasons of the Church year?"

▶ "How does our family celebrate each of the Church seasons?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint Brendan using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Dear Jesus, Thank you for our Liturgical Year. Bless everyone and keep us safe. Amen.

Saint Brendan

Celebrating the Feasts of the Church Year

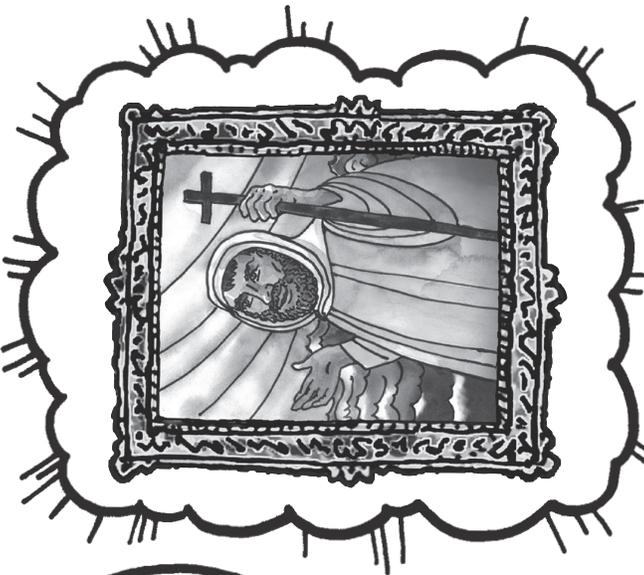
Long ago in Ireland, a child called Brendan was born. He grew up to be a hard worker and a good leader. Brendan became a prayerful priest.

There were no cars, trains, or planes when Brendan lived, but he was an amazing traveler. He and his brother priests built a wooden frame for a boat. One sail was put up, and supplies packed. They got into the boat, leaving Ireland for several years. In that little boat, they may have traveled to Iceland, Greenland, and perhaps even to North America!

It seems these sailors landed on an island within the week before Easter. A holy man lived there, who shared a meal with them to celebrate the day called Holy Thursday. During the Easter season, they arrived at a place called Paradise Island, staying there until Pentecost. Afterwards they sailed again, not stopping for months, until Christmas, which they celebrated on the island of Ailbe.

For five years, they traveled, but always returned to their special places to celebrate the feasts of the Church year.

DRAW



**Saint
Brendan,
pray for us!**

We Celebrate with the Saints

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 20, Kindergarten

Lesson 20 Goal

- Your child will learn that saints are members of the Christian family who have lived before us and given us good examples to follow.

Key Points

- All those united to God in Heaven are saints.
- All the saints pray for us.



Parent Reflection

In a certain sense the “Church” and the “Communion of Saints” are one and the same (CCC, 946). For the Church is the people of God, both the living and those who have died in Christ. The “oneness” of the Church is so powerful that even time and death do not separate its members. We are forever united to those who have come before us and those who will come after us in the faith.

According to the *Catechism*, our brothers and sisters who have died and are now united more closely with Christ offer prayers for us to the Father (CCC, 956). While we can certainly approach God directly, it makes sense to offer prayers to the saints because they are able to see things from a perspective that is freer from selfish interests and material concerns. “The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

Mary, the Mother of Jesus is honored above all other saints. This is consistent with her foretelling that all generations would call her blessed (Luke 1:48). The reasons Mary is so honored are numerous. First and foremost, as Mother of Christ, she is Mother of God, for Jesus is fully God and fully human. As the Mother of Christ, Mary is also our mother, for we are all part of Christ’s body, the Church.

Reflection Question

Who is my favorite saint? Why?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- ❑ Family Activity Sheet
- ❑ crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- ❑ one large shoe or Christmas stocking
- ❑ plastic or chocolate gold coins (you may also use real coins)

- ❑ Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- ❑ Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Today we will be talking about saints, our heroes in Heaven. They are part of God’s family, just as we are. There are many, many saints. We can ask them to pray for us, and we can pray with them. Right now, we will say a prayer called a “litany.” I will start the prayer and together we will say, “Pray for us!”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Parent: *Saint Elizabeth Seton,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Martin de Porres,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Thérèse,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Francis,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Joseph,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Mary, Mother of God,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *All saints, our family in Heaven,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Do you have something or someone you especially want to pray for with the saints? (Encourage your child to name petitions or people.)

Together: *Amen.*

Discovering

All Saints Prayer. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the saints.

Ask your child, “Who are some saints you want to be like?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. How Can I Be Like a Saint? Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Saint Nicholas's Stocking. With your child, toss coins into the stocking or shoe like Saint Nicholas did (refer to The Communion of Saints Story on page 4 of this lesson). A prize, such as a candy cane, can be awarded for coins land in the stocking or shoe.

3. The Communion of Saints: All Saints. Show your child the Saint of the Week picture on the Family Activity page and read about them. Then read more about the saints to your child (see page 4).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “How can we be more like the saints?”
- ▶ “Which of the saints you have just heard about will you be like this week?”

Have your child write and draw about The Communion of Saints using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray for your parish with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Today we learned about people who are called—what? (Pause.) Saints! Our heroes in Heaven. They are part of God's family. Who else is part of God's family? (Everyone.) We all are! Right! Now let's close with our litany prayer once again. Again, we will ask the saints to pray for us.

Parent: *Saint Elizabeth Seton,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Martin de Porres,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Thérèse,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Francis,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Saint Joseph,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *Mary, Mother of God,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

Parent: *All saints, our family in Heaven,*
Together: *Pray for us!*

All Saints

The Communion of Saints

Tell your child about the feast day called All Saints' Day, on which we honor all the saints in Heaven. Explain that you will read a story about a few of these saints.

Saints are people who did God's work in the world. Now they are in Heaven. They are children of God, and so are we. They are our sisters and brothers, and they can be our heroes too. They can show us how to do God's work in the world. The saints show us that there are many, many different ways to do this.

Saint Anthony of Egypt lived all by himself for years and years, praying, thinking, and gardening.

Saint Nicholas helped poor people by secretly placing coins in their empty shoes or stockings while they were asleep. Saint Nicholas is also known as Santa Claus!

Saint Thérèse showed love for God in her "little way" to holiness.

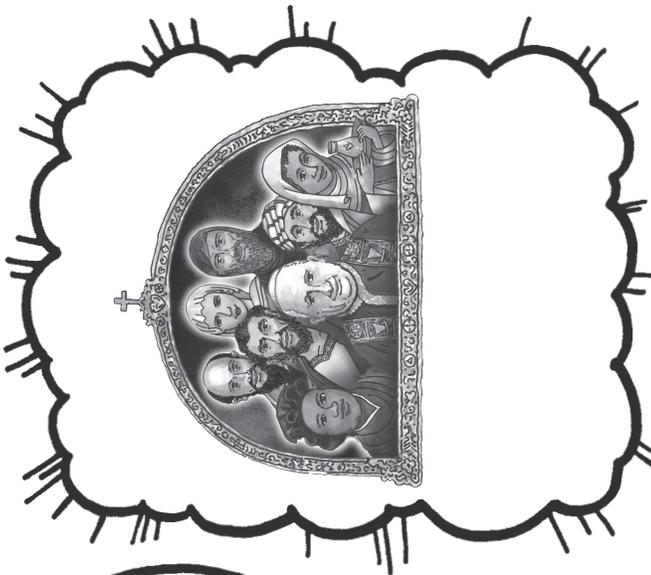
Saint John Bosco prayed with children. He played football with them and also taught and sang with groups of children. He met with grown-ups that could help poor children, and taught others to be good teachers.

Saints Elizabeth Seton opened schools where children can get a good education and learn about God.

Saint Joseph was Jesus' foster father who helped Mary care for him.

Saints' lived in deserts, forests, caves, and castles. There were tall saints, short saints, and everything-in-between saints! But no matter who they were, they all loved God.

DRAW



**All Holy
Men and Women,
pray for us!**

Getting Ready for Jesus

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 21, Kindergarten

Lesson 21 Goal

- Your child will explore the concept of preparing for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Key Points

- Saint John the Baptist taught people and told them to get ready for Jesus.
- We should make ourselves ready to hear Jesus—in Mass, at home, and in the world.



Parent Reflection

We have many distractions in our daily lives, from material concerns to media noise, to the hectic schedules we often keep in our families. It's important to take time to slow down, quiet down, and make our lives ready to hear the voice of our Savior. Here are some steps we can take to accomplish this:

- Spend a few moments each day in quiet reflection, prayerfully asking God to prepare you for what he would have you hear.
- Before attending Mass, read and reflect on the readings that will be proclaimed (you can find the readings online at usccb.org/bible). Ask yourself what God wants you to hear that day. It may be something in the music, a line from Scripture, something from the homily, or a thought that comes to you as you pray after Communion.
- Celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. This sacrament is a source of grace to overcome all sin and anything that might stand between us and God.
- Ask God to help make you aware of anything that needs to be done to help you prepare to fully receive Jesus. Are there relationships that need to be repaired?

Making ourselves ready for Jesus takes some time and effort, but it's worth it. He will surely speak to us if we are ready to listen.

Reflection Question

What more can I do to help make myself ready for Jesus?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- adult scissors (adult use only)
- yellow yarn or yellow paper
- felt
- glue
- toilet paper roll
- wooden clothespin
- soft instrumental music or appropriate Advent music
- music player
- candle or Advent wreath

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Precut the toilet paper roll in half, lengthwise.
- Cut one 4" x 2" felt square to make a blanket
- Cut several yellow pieces of yarn to resemble hay.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “For four thousand years, many people waited for Jesus to be born. Mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, great-grandparents, and great-great-great-great-grandparents hoped and waited for the one that God would send. It is said that they waited in darkness. This doesn’t mean it was always dark where they lived. It means a world without Jesus in it seemed sad and lonely. We will pretend to feel this darkness.” (Darken the room.)

“We were born after Jesus came, but still each

year, we wait for Christmas, when we celebrate that God the Father did send Jesus. This waiting time is called Advent. For our Advent prayer today, we will wait in silence. We will listen to music, look at our candle, and pray quietly to ourselves.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Begin playing soft instrumental music or Advent music. Model this stillness prayer until you sense your child getting anxious. Stop or lower the music and conclude with the following: “*Lord, our hearts wait patiently for you. We wait in joyful hope for your coming. Amen.*”

Discovering

Jesus Is Coming. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Saint John the Baptist's message.

Ask your child, "How can we prepare for Jesus' arrival?"

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Advent Calendar. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Prepare a Place for Jesus. Have your child draw a face on the tip of the clothespin to make a face depicting Baby Jesus, then invite him or her to wrap "Jesus" on the felt "blanket" and glue in place. Say that you will set this aside until Christmas. Give your child one half of a toilet paper roll and have him or her decorate it as a manger for Jesus. Next, give your child several pieces of yarn or yellow paper to create hay. Invite your child to place one piece of yarn in the manger whenever he or she does a good deed throughout Advent. Place the Jesus clothespin in or near your manger on Christmas morning.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint John the Baptist. Show your child the picture of Saint John the Baptist on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint John the Baptist to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ "When John grew up, how did he become a 'prophet and go before the Lord to prepare his way'?" (*He told people to get ready for the coming of Jesus.*)

▶ "How can you get ready for Jesus?" (*by being still and quiet and also by doing what Jesus asks*)

Have your child write and draw about Saint John the Baptist using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray the Hail Mary with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Children are excited during Advent. Grownups are excited during Advent. Just like the baby did when he leaped for joy in his mother, and just like Elizabeth did when she greeted Mary and the baby Jesus, we look forward to meeting Jesus at Christmas!

Invite your child to repeat each line of the Hail Mary after you.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.*

Saint John the Baptist

Ready for Jesus

When reading this story, point out that the baby named John that you will read about grew up to be John the Baptist, who worked to get people ready for the coming of Jesus.

Elizabeth and Zechariah were holy people. They had one great sadness: they had no children. They prayed, asking God to bless them with a child.

One day, the Angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah! This scared him! Gabriel said, "Don't be afraid. God is giving you and Elizabeth a baby boy. Name him John. He will be great because he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even when he is a baby!"

Now Zechariah was having a hard time believing all this, and he began questioning Gabriel. Gabriel said, "God sent me to tell you this great news. Since you doubt my words, you will not speak until the baby is born." Poor Zecha-

riah! He had the most exciting news of his life and he couldn't tell anyone!

When Elizabeth was close to having the baby, her cousin visited her. The cousin was Mary, who was expecting Baby Jesus! Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit so she knew that Mary was carrying God's son.

And so did the unborn baby John! He made a big movement inside his mother.

"Blessed are you, Mary, and blessed is your baby!" Elizabeth cried. "And how happy my baby is! He jumped for joy inside of me!"

After Mary went home, Elizabeth soon had baby John. Suddenly, Zechariah was able to speak. This is what he said.

"Blessed be the Lord! You, my child, will be a prophet and you will go before the Lord to prepare his way."

DRAW



**Saint
John the
Baptist,
pray for us!**

All Creation Welcomes Jesus

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 22, Kindergarten

Lesson 22 Goal

- Your child will learn that all creation welcomed Jesus at birth. He or she will also learn that we must love and respect all of God's Creation.

Key Points

- We celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas.
- Jesus was born in a stable where animals lived. This is another sign that God expects us to care for his creatures and all creation.



Parent Reflection

In this lesson, we reflect on Jesus' humble birth in a stable. God's willingness for his Son to be born in the lowly conditions of a place where animals are housed and fed reflects first his solidarity with all of humanity—for Christ came to earth as the poorest of the poor, a helpless little child born in the midst of such disarray. That we know the rest of this story of how that child of such humble birth becomes a man who teaches, heals, gives his very life for us, and overcomes even death—should give us great hope. Jesus is still with us, and God will bring victory through Christ to each one of us who is humble enough to become like that vulnerable, trusting child before him.

Jesus' birth among stable animals also raises these humble creatures he has created to a new level of dignity. We serve a God who is not too great to be among his Creation, for he finds it good. For this reason, we are called to be good stewards of the earth and the animals he has made.

In the spirit of Saint Francis, let us honor our God by showing kindness to his created beings.

Reflection Question

What does Jesus' great humility, shown through the circumstances of his birth, mean to me? How does this call me to humility before others?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- safety scissors
- small box that can be decorated
- small bow or ribbon
- sheet of paper
- Christmas stickers to decorate the box

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint’s pages from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “God, our Creator, made all living things on earth, from the tiniest bugs to the tallest trees. And God wants us to take care of them. Taking good care of Creation is called being good stewards of the earth. Today we will say a prayer praising God for all the wonderful animals he made, and we will ask God to teach us how to be good stewards of the animals and all the earth. We will also thank God for the gift of Jesus. The Birth of Jesus is another way that God shows how much he loves us.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Parent: *Blessed be God for creating ele-*

phants, alligators and ostriches!

Child: *Teach us, Lord, to be good stewards.,*

Parent: *Blessed be God for creating lions, llamas, and ladybugs!*

Child: *Teach us, Lord, to be good stewards.*

Parent: *Blessed be God for creating rabbits, roosters, and raccoons!*

Child: *Teach us, Lord, to be good stewards.*

Parent: *Blessed be God for creating dogs, donkeys, and dragonflies!*

Child: *Teach us, Lord, to be good stewards.*

If time permits, invite your child to call out names of other animals and continue the litany.

Parent: *Blessed are you, God, for creating all creatures big and small. Blessed are you for sending your only Son, Jesus, into the world.*

Together: *Amen.*

Discovering

The Christmas Story. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Jesus’ birth.

Ask your child, “Where were you born?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. The Animals Welcome Baby Jesus. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Gifts for Baby Jesus. Give your child a sheet of paper and ask him or her to draw a gift that he or she will give Baby Jesus. Discuss that Jesus does not need a new bike or a video game or other material goods. Tell your child that we give to Jesus when we are kind to others; give examples (e.g., the gift can be a drawing of the child helping at home). Once the drawing is finished, help your child fold the paper and place it in the box. Have him or her decorate the box with markers, stickers, and a bow. (Refer to this activity when teaching Lesson 23.)

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Martin de Porres. Show your child the picture of Saint Martin de Porres on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Martin to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ "Who did Saint Martin de Porres care for?"
- ▶ "How can you help someone in need?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint Martin de Porres using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Dear Jesus, we love you and we praise you. Thank you for coming into this world to bring us goodness and love. Blessed are you, God, for creating all creatures big and small. Blessed are you for sending your only Son, Jesus, into the world. Amen.

Saint Martin de Porres

Care of God's Creatures

Martin was born in Lima, Peru. His father was Spanish, and his mother was a freed black slave from Panama.

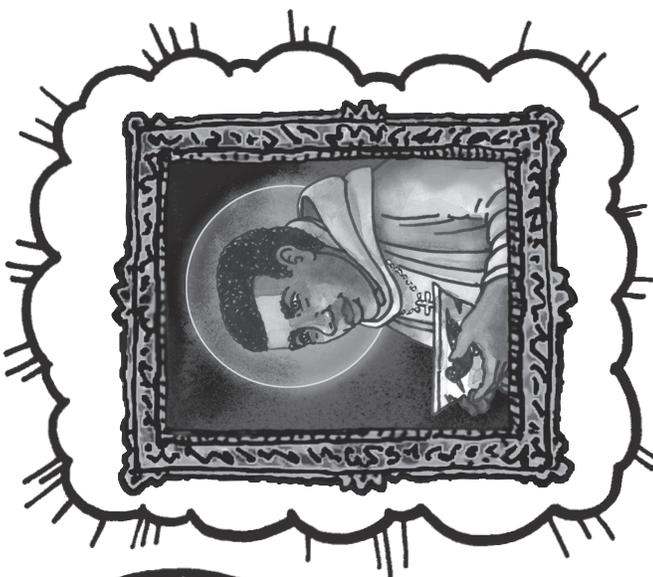
Martin became a Dominican brother and spent his life doing simple good works for those in need. He went throughout the city, caring for those who were sick and poor. Young Martin was kind to people and animals. Because he loved

God very much, he saw that the simplest work gave honor to God if it served others.

Let's pray a special prayer asking Saint Martin to help us.

Let us pray. Saint Martin, help us do good for those in need. Give us strength to follow your example and to live for others. Amen.

DRAW



**Saint
Martin
de Porres,
pray for us!**

Gifts for Baby Jesus

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 23, Kindergarten

Lesson 23 Goal

- Your child will become better acquainted with the Nativity story (with particular focus on the visitation of the Magi) and will be introduced to the idea that Jesus came for all human-kind.

Key Points

- The Magi came from far away to bring gifts for Baby Jesus.
- Jesus came for all people.



Parent Reflection

Scripture tells us the story of the three “wise men” who came from the east, following an astronomical phenomenon that their tradition told them would announce the birth of a new king (Matthew 2:1–11). The three wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh may seem to us to be unusual gifts for a baby. All three were quite rare and expensive in Jesus’ time, but these gifts carry an even deeper meaning. The gift of gold, often reserved for kings and those in the highest places of honor, was a sign that Jesus truly was king, though not of an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly one. The gift of frankincense, most often associated with prayer and religious ceremony, was a sign that he would be a priest—one who led the people in worship to God, the great High Priest, to be more precise. The gift of myrrh was a sign of Jesus’ impending sacrifice of himself. Myrrh was used to anoint bodies for burial, and this gift shows us that from the very beginning of Jesus’ life on earth, it was God’s plan for him to give his whole self in love to us—even if it meant death on a cross. These three priceless, rare, and unusual gifts were for the one who was born King, Priest, and Sacrificial Lamb.

Reflection Question

What gifts do I offer Jesus in my own life?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #20
- adult scissors (adult use only)
- tissue paper
- glue
- string or yarn
- hole puncher

- globe or world map
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #20 (included with this lesson).
- Precut the tissue paper using Activity Master #20 as a pattern for the star.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Sometimes we call Jesus ‘Emmanuel.’ That means God-with-us. Jesus was born so that he could be “God-with-us.” Not just us in this room, but all of us, everybody who has ever lived or lives on earth.”

Pick up the globe and hold it on your lap (or point to the map).

Say, “This is a wonderful and joyful gift for all the people of the world! Let’s say a thank you prayer with children of other places in the world. I’ll spin the globe (point on the map) and you touch the spinning globe (map). Wherever your finger ends up [when the globe stops spinning], will be the country we will pray with.”

Spin the globe slowly and encourage a prayerful attitude (or have your child point to different

parts on the map). The child stops the globe. Read the name of the country aloud.

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Parent: *Dear Jesus, with the children of (name of country),*

Together: *we thank you for being “God-with-us.”*

Allow your child several opportunities to choose a country and pray the response.

Discovering

Three Special Visitors. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Magi

Ask your child, “What gift would you give Jesus?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. The Magi Bring Gifts for Baby Jesus. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Star of Bethlehem. Give your child a copy of the Activity Master #20. Invite him or her to glue the precut square tissue paper onto their star. Punch a hole on the top of the star and lace string or yarn for hanging as an ornament.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Lucy. Show your child the picture of Saint Lucy on the Family Activity page and read about her. Then

read more about Saint Lucy to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- “What does the name Lucy mean?” (*light*)
- “How can you be a light to others?”
- “What is your favorite part of the story?” Why?

Have your child write and draw about Saint Lucy using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Dear Jesus, with the children of the whole world we thank you for being “God-with-us.” Amen.

Saint Lucy

Bringing the Light

A very long time ago, before a lot of people knew about Jesus, a young woman named Lucy loved Jesus very much. It took courage to be a Christian, a follower of Jesus. At that time, there were many people who did not like Christians and how they lived. Sadly because of this, Lucy died when she was just a teenager.

Many years passed, but people remembered Lucy, her kindness, her bravery, and her love of

Jesus. Over these years, people thought of wonderful ways to celebrate Lucy. Her name means “light,” so on her feast day, they light candles in the dark early morning. These “Lucy candles” show us that Lucy helps us know Jesus, the Light of the World. Through the dark, they walk with the candles. Then they sing, eat treats, and enjoy their morning together as the days get closer to the birthday of Jesus, the Light of the World.

DRAW



**Saint
Lucy,
pray for us!**

Jesus Is Welcomed

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 24, Kindergarten

Lesson 24 Goal

- Your child will learn about the story of Palm Sunday.

Key Points

- Jesus was welcomed as he entered the city of Jerusalem.
- The people called out “Hosanna!” to Jesus. We sing this in Mass today.



Parent Reflection

The Hebrew word *hosanna* literally means “please save” or “save now.” The Jewish people had been under Roman captivity for many years, and they expected that their long-awaited Messiah would be the leader of a revolution that would end their oppression. Jesus was coming to bring another kind of salvation, and a different brand of peace—salvation of souls and peace in the hearts of the people.

The warm and raucous welcome Jesus received as he entered Jerusalem would be a stark contrast to what would take place later that week, as the people called for his crucifixion. Though he was Messiah and Savior, he was not what the people expected.

In our own lives, it is sometimes easy to verbally express our welcome of Jesus, and even to be enthusiastic about it. However, when following Jesus means something different than we expected, or when he doesn’t save us from those things we wanted saving from, our willingness to welcome him may change. Attachment to our own selfish desires can present a barrier to true welcome of Jesus.

It is important for us to remember that God knows us better than we know ourselves. Let us trust in this God of hope, and welcome Jesus with our whole hearts, as we sing, “Hosanna!”

Reflection Question

In which places in my life do I have yet to welcome Jesus?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- green tagboard
- adult scissors (adult use only)
- glue stick
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather to-

gether a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Cut 4" palm branches and 18" stems from green tag board.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: "Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God."

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, "Today, you will lead the prayer. We call this kind of prayer a spontaneous prayer. This means that you are talking to God in your own words. Whatever you want to pray for will be our prayer. Perhaps you will thank God, or ask him for something. Maybe you need to tell Jesus something. You may want to pray for another person or to give praise to Jesus."

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Have your child start the prayer. Guide him or her as needed for this spontaneous prayer to Jesus.

Discovering

Jesus Enters Jerusalem. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Jesus' welcome.

Ask your child, "How would you greet Jesus to your town?"

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Welcome, Jesus! Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Palm Branches. Invite your child to glue the "palm leaves" onto the "stems" to create a palm branch. Review the story from Discovering and talk about Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Philip.

Show your child the picture of Saint Philip on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Philip to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ “How did Philip help the man know about Jesus?” (*He explained the Scriptures to him.*)

▶ “The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip. In what ways does the Holy Spirit speak to us?” (*Possible response: when we feel strongly that we should do something that is good, that might be the Holy Spirit speaking to us.*)

Have your child write and draw about Saint Philip using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Hosanna in the highest,

Hosanna in the highest,

Hosanna, hosanna

Hosanna in the highest!

Dear Jesus, May we follow your example today and always. Help us to remember you are always with us. Amen.

Saint Philip

On the Road to Gaza

Philip, one of Jesus' Apostles, was teaching people about Jesus in a place called Samaria. An angel came to him saying, “Go south on the road to Gaza.” Philip did as the angel said.

As Philip was walking, a chariot-wagon passed him. In it rode a man from the country of Ethiopia. He had an important job for the queen, and he had just come from Jerusalem. He was reading as his chariot moved along.

The Holy Spirit came to Philip and said, “Go and join up with that chariot.” Philip started to run. When he caught up, he realized the Ethiopian man was reading from the Bible. Philip said, “Do you understand what you are reading?” The man answered, “I need someone to teach me. Please get in!”

So together they read from the Bible. The

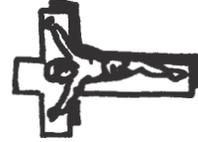
man asked questions, and soon Philip was explaining everything that the Scriptures said about Jesus.

The man listened carefully and liked what he heard. As they traveled, they passed by some water. “I want to be baptized!” the man said. They got out of the chariot and went to the water. Philip baptized the man. When they came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit took Philip away! The man could not see him any more.

Later, Philip went to other places, and everywhere he taught, many, many people came to know and love Jesus.

The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip. When we feel strongly that we should do something that is good, that might be the Holy Spirit speaking to us.

DRAW



**Saint
Philip,
pray for us!**

Jesus Dies

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 25, Kindergarten

Lesson 25 Goal

- Your child will introduce the children to the Passion story.

Key Points

- Some people did not understand who Jesus was. They hurt and killed him.
- This was not the end of the story—Jesus told his friends that death would not win.



Parent Reflection

The Crucifixion sometimes presents a troubling paradox for Christians. How could a God who is Love demand the sacrifice of his Son on a cross? Why did it take death on the Cross to restore humanity?

In order to redeem humanity, God gives himself in love, coming as a human being. In his letter to the Philippians, Saint Paul writes, “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross” (2:5–8).

Jesus shows his love for us in his complete gift of self, and we are called to follow his example by giving of ourselves in love to God and to others. Sacrificial love takes many forms, and we have many opportunities to “die to ourselves” if we look for them. It may consist in swallowing our pride and being patient or helping someone unexpectedly. Even the smallest sacrifices, when done with love, are pleasing to God.

Reflection Question

What are some ways in which I may need to “die to myself”?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- quiet, meditative music
- music player
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the

saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Sometimes the best way to pray is to just sit quietly and think about Jesus.”

Begin to play the quiet, meditative music that you selected. Invite your child to close his or her eyes. Continue with the following guided meditation.

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Say, “Imagine that you are sitting on a couch and Jesus is sitting next to you. He is smiling at you and you are talking. What do you tell him? Can you feel that Jesus loves you very much? I will sit quietly now and also pray this way.”

Model quiet prayer but be attentive for signals that your child is getting restless.

When that happens, turn the music very low and pray the following:

“Thank you, God our Father, for loving us so much! Please be with us as we learn and live and love today. Amen.”

Discovering

When Jesus Died. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Good Friday.

Say, “Today we will hear a story from Sacred Scripture. It’s a very important story. We will hear that some people did not understand who Jesus was. They hurt and killed him. This is a sad part of the story, but it is not the whole story. Months earlier, Jesus told his friends that death could not win! Another day, we will hear the rest of the story and see that Jesus was right—death does not win!”

Ask your child, “Why did the people want Jesus to die?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Jesus Dies for Us. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the drawing activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Jesus' Cross. Invite your child to glue the craft sticks together to make a cross. As an option, your child can also draw the corpus (body) on the cross. Talk about the crucifixion, but tell your child that there will be a happy ending to the story.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint John the Apostle. Show your child the picture of Saint John the Apostle on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint John to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ "What was John's job before Jesus called him to be his follower?" (*a fisherman*)
- ▶ "What is special about Saint John the Apostle?" (*He was with Jesus all along and was with him when he died.*)

▶ "What did you like best about the story about Saint John the Apostle?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint John the Apostle using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Say, "Here is a little prayer that I will say and you can pray along in your heart."

Jesus,

In good times,

In bad times,

In all times,

You are with us, and we thank you!

Amen.

John the Apostle

Close to Jesus

John sat in the boat, now pulled up on shore. His brother James, their father Zebedee, and John were all fixing their fishing nets, which had torn.

Three men walked towards the boat. John saw two were fishermen, Peter and Andrew, who were also brothers. Who was the third man?

It was Jesus. That may have been the first time that John and James had ever seen Jesus, but when Jesus called to them, they listened. He asked them to be his followers. They threw down their fishing nets, climbed out of the boat, and went off with Jesus.

From then on, John stayed close to Jesus. He saw huge crowds following Jesus. He saw Jesus

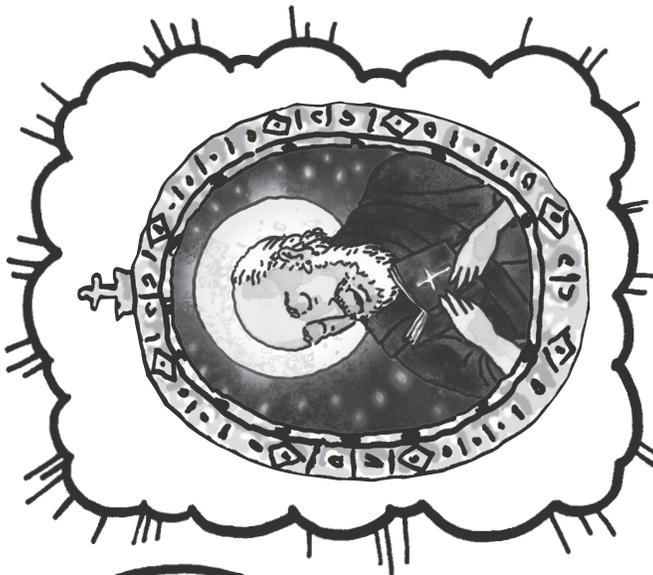
healing people. There he understood Jesus' love for children and all people. John saw Jesus bring a little girl who had died back to life! He saw Jesus on a mountaintop, speaking with holy men who had lived long ago!

He had been with Jesus all along. And he was with him when Jesus was dying. With him were Jesus' mother, Mary, and some other of Jesus' friends.

Jesus spoke. He asked Mary to treat John as her son now, and John to treat her as his mother. John stayed with Mary from then on.

What John didn't know at the time was that the story of Jesus was not over!

DRAW



**Saint
John,
pray for us!**

Jesus Is Alive

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 26, Kindergarten

Lesson 26 Goal

- Your child will learn that Jesus is alive, and he came back to visit with his friends.

Key Points

- On the Sunday after he died, Jesus was alive again. Death could not hold him!
- Jesus came back and visited with his friends.



Parent Reflection

Hope of Resurrection is not only important for the next life, but also for the present one. When we unite ourselves with the Paschal Mystery through the Sacrament of Baptism, we die to sin, are “buried” in the water, and “raised up” to walk a new life in Christ. The “Resurrection hope” we are given at Baptism remains with us throughout our lives. When we feel that our situation has grown so dire that it seems we should just give up, the Resurrection gives us hope that all is not lost. Each time we experience failure, we can remind ourselves that Christ has already won our final victory—he has overcome death itself. Therefore, there is nothing we cannot bear if Christ is beside us (Philippians 4:13).

In the story of Christ’s reunion with his disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35), Jesus “had been known to them in the breaking of the bread” (vs. 35). Likewise, the Resurrected Jesus is with us today in the most complete way in the Eucharist. In this holy meal, Jesus offers himself to us—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. Through our reception of the Eucharist, Jesus lives in us, and we are charged with taking him out into the world around us, carrying the hope we have in Christ to others.

Reflection Question

How is Jesus alive in me as I go about my life at home, at work, and in the community?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #22
- adult scissors (adult use only)
- 8.5" x 11" white paper
- 6 oz. disposable plastic cup
- craft stick (or tongue depressor)
- glue or tape

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #22 (included with this lesson).
- Using the point of the scissors, make a small slit on the base of the cup.
- Carefully slide the craft stick in the base of the cup to make a hole, then remove the stick and set it aside.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “Jesus is the Light of the World and he is with us once again! Today we celebrate Easter. Death could not hold Jesus! He has risen from the dead and is alive! Let us rejoice!”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“We will pray by naming people and things that rejoice that Jesus is alive. We will say, ‘Alleluia!’ together.”

Parent: *All you children near and far, rejoice!*

Together: *Alleluia!*

Parent: *All you hills and mountains, rejoice!*

Together: *Alleluia!*

Parent: *All you tiny blades of grass and tall trees, rejoice!*

Together: *Alleluia!*

Parent: *All you angels and saints, rejoice!*

Together: *Alleluia!*

Discovering

Jesus Is Risen! Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Emmaus Story.

Ask your child, “Is Jesus still with us?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Jesus Is Risen! Alleluia! Turn to the main

activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Resurrection Cups. Have your child cut and color Mary Magdalene, Mary, and the Angel from Activity Master #22 and glue or tape them to the outside of the cup. Next, have your child color the picture of Jesus from Activity Master #22 and tape the front and back of the picture to a craft stick, folding the picture as indicated. Have him or her place the craft stick with the picture of Jesus in the cup and insert the other end of the stick through the precut hole in the base of the cup. You may want to sing “Alleluia!” as they move the picture of Jesus out of the “tomb.”

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Peter. Show your child the picture of Saint Peter on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then

read more about Saint Peter to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ “How do you think the man felt after he was healed?”
- ▶ “Saint Peter said that it was through Jesus that he had helped the man heal. How can we help others in the name of Jesus?”

Have your child write and draw about Saint Peter using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Jesus, you died for our sins and rose from the dead. Help us to always know you are with us. Alleluia!

Saint Peter

Leading in Jesus’ Name

After Jesus had risen from the dead and gone back to Heaven, Peter became the leader of the Apostles on earth.

One day, Peter and John were going to the Temple for prayer. There was a man sitting at the gate. He had never in his life been able to walk. At that time, not walking meant he could not have a job either. Each day, someone carried him to the gate, where he begged for money.

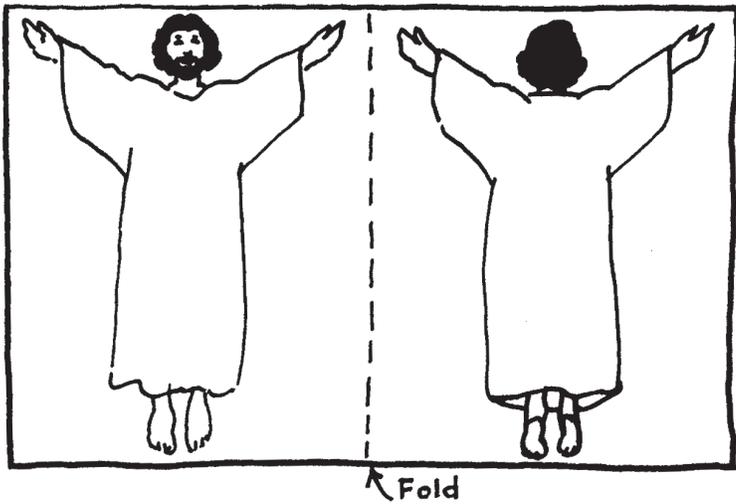
As Peter and John got closer, the man asked them if they would give him money. Peter said, “I have neither silver nor gold, but in the name of Jesus, get up and walk.” Peter reached down

and took the man’s hand. Right away, his ankles and feet grew strong, for the first time ever!

He stood! He walked! He leaped! He could do all those things! He went into the Temple with Peter and John, walking, jumping and praising God.

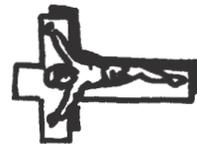
Of course, people saw and heard this. They realized that Peter had cured this man and were amazed. How had Peter done this? Peter spoke to them, explaining that it was through Jesus that Peter had helped the man heal.

Because of this, thousands of people came to believe in Jesus.



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DRAW



**Saint
Peter,
pray for us!**

I Am with You Always

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 27, Kindergarten

Lesson 27 Goal

- Your child will be introduced to some of the ways Jesus is with us in the Church, the world, and in our own hearts.

Key Points

- Jesus left the earth and went into Heaven, but he promised his friends that he would always be with them.
- Jesus is with us in God's Word, through the actions of the priest at Mass, in the people gathered at church, and especially in the Holy Eucharist.



Parent Reflection

From the account given in the book of Acts (1:6–12), we might assume the disciples were momentarily too stunned by what they had seen as Jesus ascended into Heaven to say or do anything. They remained “gazing up toward Heaven” (vs. 10), and then were greeted by two angels, who said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward Heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into Heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into Heaven” (vs. 11). What did the angels mean? Certainly Jesus described his return in the last days after “tribulation,” saying “they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory” (Mark 13:26), but Jesus also returns to be with us in a very real way through the actions of the priest at Mass and, in particular, through the celebration of the Eucharist, which is Christ's own Body and Blood (I Corinthians 11:23–29).

Jesus also continues to be with us in other, albeit less complete ways. For example, he is with us in the Scripture, and particularly in the Gospels, which contain his own words and teachings. He is with us in the Church itself, which is the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:27). Jesus is with us in the poor and needy. Christ so identifies with the poor and the most vulnerable that he tells us when we see them, we see him (see Matthew 25:31–46).

Jesus also lives with us in our own hearts. Scripture tells us, “God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in him” (I John 4:16b). As we show love to others, we help to make Christ more present in the world around us.

Reflection Question

Where and when have I especially felt the presence of Jesus?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #23
- safety scissors
- white paper plate
- glue stick or tape

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #23 (included with this lesson).

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “When we light a candle during prayer or in church, we are saying that we know Jesus is with us in the world. When we read what Jesus says in Sacred Scripture, Jesus is with us then too. When we say a prayer when we are all alone, we sometimes can feel that Jesus is with us, and showing us his love. Isn’t it wonderful, knowing Jesus is with us? Let’s pray to thank him.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Say, “Think about a time when you knew Jesus was with you. When you think of a time, say it out loud and together we will all answer, ‘Thank you, Jesus for being with us.’”

Encourage your child to contribute, and then lead the response.

Parent and Child: *Thank you, Jesus for being with us.*

Thank you, Jesus, for your love. Please bless us today as we learn about you. Teach us to be loving too. Amen.

Discovering

The Ascension. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the Ascension.

Ask your child, “What job did Jesus give the disciples?” (*To tell everyone the good news*)

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Jesus Is with Us. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. "I Am with You Always" Spiraling

Cloud. Have your child color and cut out the picture of Jesus (Activity Master #23) and set it aside. Show him or her how to cut a spiral from a paper plate to create a spiraling "cloud." Tape or glue the picture of Jesus to the center of the spiral. Remind your child of the story of the Ascension.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Dominic Savio.

Show your child the picture of Saint Dominic Savio on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint Dominic to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

- ▶ "What is one way Saint Dominic helped others?" (*by helping them stop fighting*)
- ▶ "How can we be more like Saint Dominic?" (*by being kind, by helping others, by doing the best that we can at school*)

Have your child write and draw about Saint Dominic Savio using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Parent: "Jesus, thank you for being with us through many people: our families, our Church, and our world."

Together: Thank you, Jesus, for being with us.

Parent: Jesus, thank you for being with us through Sacred Scripture.

Together: Thank you, Jesus, for being with us.

Parent: Jesus, thank you for being with us in the Eucharist.

Together: Thank you, Jesus, for being with us.

Parent: Jesus, thank you for being with us in our hearts.

Together: Thank you, Jesus, for being with us.

Saint Dominic Savio

Jesus Is Always with You

When Dominic was only five years old, he knew he loved Jesus. When he was seven, he made rules for his life! One was to receive the Eucharist often. Another was that Jesus and Mary would be his best friends.

He kept those rules. Still, like all people, Dominic got angry sometimes, but he was able to stop before he said or did anything in anger.

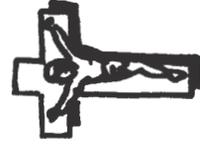
He helped others with their anger, too. One day at school, two boys yelled at each other. They got so angry they decided to fight by throwing rocks at one another! They could have been badly hurt, but because they were so an-

gry, they didn't care. Dominic cared though. He stood between them. Both boys liked Dominic, and didn't want to hurt him. Dominic told them that Jesus forgave his enemies and they should too. The two boys stopped fighting.

Dominic went to a school run by a good priest named John Bosco. When Dominic needed some advice on how to live his life, Father John told him, "Always be cheerful. Do your jobs and school work the best that you can. Show others how to act in a good way. And, remember that Jesus is always with you and wants you to be happy." Dominic never forgot that. He always felt Jesus was with him.



DRAW



St. Dominic Savio

**Saint
Dominic Savio,
pray for us!**

The Spirit of Love

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 28, Kindergarten

Lesson 28 Goal

- Your child will be encouraged to listen to the Holy Spirit and to pray to him.

Key Points

- When Jesus went back to Heaven with the Father, God sent the Holy Spirit to live with us.
- The Holy Spirit helps us show love to God and one another.



Parent Reflection

In the Sacrament of Confirmation, we experience an important extension of our Baptism, and the Confirmation liturgy begins with a renewal of baptismal promises. From the time of the Apostles, the Church has used the sign of laying on of hands to impart the gift of the Holy Spirit that completes Baptism (Acts 8:15–17). Generally, it is the bishop, the successor of the Apostles, who presides over Confirmation and lays hands on those to be confirmed. He anoints them with Chrism and says, “Be sealed with the Holy Spirit.” The spiritual seal to which these words refer is a permanent mark on the soul that signifies a total belonging to Christ, eternal enrollment in his service, and promise of divine protection (CCC, 1296).

Confirmation increases and deepens the grace first received at Baptism (CCC, 1303). It enables us to better approach God as Father, strengthens our bond with Christ, “increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us,” binds us more closely with the Church, and “gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action.”

Through the Holy Spirit’s work within us and the grace God gives us in the sacraments, we grow in our love for God and others and, consequently, in virtuous behavior. It is a formation of the heart, rooted in love, directed by God.

Reflection Question

What is my awareness of the Holy Spirit’s work in my life?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Activity Master #25
- safety scissors
- hole punch
- 9" paper plate
- 15" red string or yarn
- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the

saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Masters #2 and #25 (included with this lesson)
- Cut a 15" piece of red string.
- Using Activity Master #25, trace the dove shape on the paper plate and punch a hole on the beak.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: "Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God."

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, "The dove is a symbol for us to understand the Holy Spirit. When John the Baptist baptized Jesus, God sent the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove so that John could see it. The Holy Spirit is with us now. The Holy Spirit is always with us! When you are angry with someone and want to be friends again, ask the Holy Spirit to help you. If you want to learn something, ask the Holy Spirit to help. When you feel lots of love for someone, the Holy Spirit is with you, helping you love!"

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

"Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your spirit and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. Amen."

Discovering

Pentecost. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Ask your child, "What is the Holy Spirit like?"

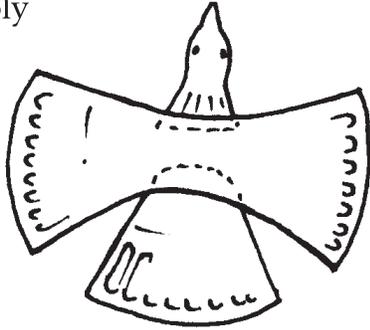
Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Spirit Search. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. The Spirit of Love Holy Spirit Flyers. Give your child Activity Master #25. Invite him or her to cut and color the dove as shown. Help him or her tie the 15" piece of string on the dove's beak. Help your child make the dove "fly" by holding the string that is attached to the dove's beak and moving carefully around the room. Talk with your child about how the Holy Spirit is always with us, even though we can't see him. Remind your child of different ways the Holy Spirit helps us (e.g., to be loving, to learn, to know and love God).



3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Bartholomew/Nathaniel. Show your child the picture of Saint Bartholomew the Family Activity page

and read about him. Then read more about Saint Bartholomew/Nathaniel to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ "While Nathaniel was remembering the time he first met Jesus, what happened in the room?" (*The Holy Spirit was going to rest on each of Jesus' friends.*)

▶ "How are you a follower of Jesus?"

Have your child write and draw about Saint Bartholomew using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray to the Holy Spirit with your child.

Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child:

"Holy Spirit, show us your love. Help us to love one another. Amen."

Saint Bartholomew/Nathaniel

Meeting Jesus

Note: The names of Bartholomew and Nathaniel are mentioned in the New Testament in such a way that some scholars believe these are two names for the same person. Bartholomew may possibly be a type of surname, since it connects him with his father.

Nathaniel was with Peter, John, and the others in a room. Jesus had died, risen from the dead, and had gone to Heaven. Nathaniel thought back to when he had first met Jesus.

His friend Philip approached him, excited about someone he had met the day before. On that day, Philip had gone with his friends Andrew and Peter, and met someone named Jesus.

Philip said, "We have found the one that Moses and the prophets wrote about. It is Jesus of Nazareth."

Now Nathaniel lived in a place where most people did not like those who came from the town of Nazareth. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Nathaniel asked.

"Come and see." Philip said, and off they

went. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming. "Here is a good man," Jesus said to him.

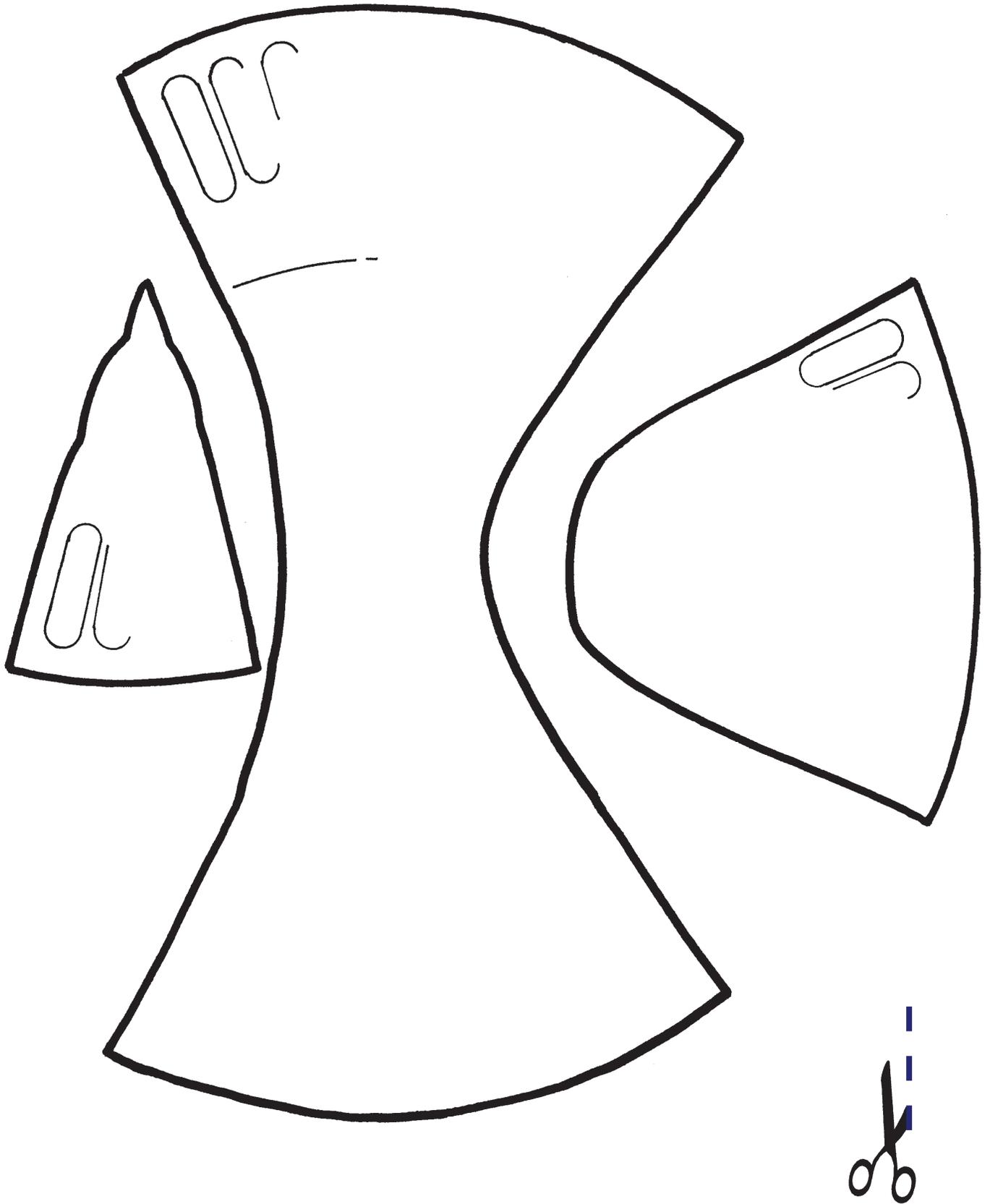
"Where did you get to know me?" Nathaniel asked.

"I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you," Jesus answered.

Nathaniel answered, "Teacher, you are the Son of God." If Jesus was surprised at this, he didn't sound like it. He replied, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these."

After that, Nathaniel became a follower of Jesus.

Back in the room, he was praying with the others, when he heard the sound of a great wind...



DRAW



**Saint
Bartholomew/
Nathaniel,
pray for us!**