



Family Letter on Unit 1

The Mystery of the Church

Probing Life's Mysteries

We live with mysteries each day. Many of them are natural mysteries that are known only through God's help. Our faith contains many mysteries that we can probe only partially with our limited intellects. Jesus offers us a personal relationship with him that allows us to see the truths of our faith with some clarity. As parents, we can bring our child into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Your teen is beginning Unit 1 *The Mystery of the Church*. It is designed to help young teens identify with Jesus in his Church. The focus of this unit can help young teens to understand the following:

- the unity in the Church that Jesus founded
- the sanctity offered through the Holy Spirit
- the fidelity to apostolic teaching
- the strength needed for a lifelong journey of faith as a Catholic

Seeing with Jesus

Jesus, through his person, words, and works, reveals to us the mystery of the Church. Scripture gives us the images Jesus used to describe the Church, such as the vine, the sheepfold, and one body in Christ. Jesus challenges us to become more like these images as we grow in our understanding of the Church.

Responding to the Mystery

We find the Holy Spirit wherever we gather in Jesus' name to pray and to serve. It is this spirit that gives us the strength to grow. The Spirit continues Jesus' priestly, prophetic, and servant roles. By our lives, we witness to the four Marks of the Church: one, holy, catholic and apostolic. We respond by being Christ's witnesses in the world.

Growing in Christian Responsibility

When your teen sees you seeking guidance in prayer, serving others by giving your time, and expressing your faith in worship, he or she sees a role model for faith development. The teen years can be a time of rejecting rules and laws. Your witness of an adult Catholic living the faith with joy is extremely important.

Focusing on Unity

The members of a family are united with one another. As a family, discuss the following qualities. Check the qualities you wish to develop.

- listening to others
- forgiving one another
- caring for one another's needs

Witnessing to Holiness

Discuss ways your family can be of service to those who are poor and in need. Make a list of ways to do this and put each family member in charge of a different activity.

Growing into a Catholic Adult

Consider how your family might practice the following to help your teen grow into a Catholic adult.

1. Have family discussions of current events and of how the Church is responding to them.
2. Subscribe to Catholic periodicals and discuss some of the articles as a family.
3. Plan a family activity in which you help at a soup kitchen, food pantry, or shelter for people who are homeless.
4. Ask each member of the family to take part in your family's contribution to the parish.

Visit www.ChristOurLife.org/family for more family resources.