The Mystery of the Church

Have your child read aloud the title of his or her book and the Unit 1 title and Scripture quotation on page 1. Say: This year our focus of study is the Church. In Unit 1, we will explore the Church as a mystery as we learn about its origins and early stages. We will also reflect on the importance of prayer in the Church and in our lives.

Have your child read aloud the Family Feature on page 2 and plan a time to share its contents with other family members. Then begin Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 1 A Community of Disciples

Centering

Together brainstorm a list of movies, TV shows, and novels that fit the category of mystery. Describe what you both like best about mysteries.

Say: These types of mysteries are presented to be solved. According to biblical tradition, a mystery is not something to be solved. A mystery is something to be experienced or entered into but something that we cannot fully understand.

Say: With this book and with the help of the Holy Spirit, you will begin your journey into one of the greatest mysteries of our faith: the Church.

Sharing PAGE 3

Read aloud the chapter title and ask your child to think about the three questions at the top of page 3. Share your own memories with your child. Have your child read aloud the next two paragraphs.

Have your child complete the activity What the Church Is and Is Not.

Sharing PAGE 4

Have your child read silently The People of God on page 4. Ask: How is the Church both divine and human? (It is a human society in which God is present.) Say: As a human society, the Church is not perfect.

Have your child read aloud Who Is Jesus to You? Say: Jesus established the Church to extend his life and mission to people everywhere. Through the Church, Jesus continues to love, teach, and heal.
Sharing  PAGES 5–6
✦ Have your child read aloud Images of the Church on page 5 and respond to the questions.
✦ Have your child read silently How Jesus Saw It on pages 5 and 6. Invite your child to read aloud the three Scripture passages in his or her Bible. Allow time for your child to work on the activities independently.
✦ Lead your child in prayer using A Moment with Jesus.

Sharing  PAGE 7
✦ Introduce the concept of Mary as being a clear image of Jesus. Say: Mary was a clear image of her son, Jesus. Examining her life will tell us about Jesus and help us see how we should live. She is also an image of the Church.
✦ Have your child read aloud Mary: The Best Image on page 7. Ask: How is Mary’s relationship to Jesus an example for us? (Her closeness to Jesus and openness to doing what he wanted are what we strive for.) Why is Mary the best image of the Church? (She showed us what it is like to be a perfect follower of Christ.)
✦ Have your child complete the activity Full of Grace.

Sharing  PAGE 8
✦ Have your child read silently The Sanctifier on page 8. Say: As the power of the Spirit formed Jesus in Mary, so the Spirit can form Jesus in us. With the Spirit to help us, we can be Christ for the world.
✦ Have your child read aloud the directions for the activities and complete them independently. Ask: Why is Saint Joseph a good patron for the Church? (He was Jesus’ father on earth. He continues to care for the Body of Christ.)

Acting  PAGES 9–10
✦ Read the Chapter 1 Summary on page 9 together. Then have your child complete the Review Activities on page 10 independently. When he or she is done, go through his or her work and review any incorrect answers.
✦ Encourage your child to follow Mary’s advice. Say: Mothers are good at giving advice. Mary’s last words in Scripture are good advice. She says, “Do whatever he tells you.” [John 2:5] Now reflect silently on something that Jesus might be telling you to do today.
✦ Lead your child in prayer. Say: Pray silently the Prayer to the Holy Spirit on the inside front cover of your book.
Gather and Go Forth  PAGES 11–12

INSPIRE
✦ Read aloud the text and the Scripture in the sidebar on page 11. Say:
  As Catholics, we proclaim the Gospel of Christ with one heart and
  one voice.

PROCLAIM
✦ Read aloud the Know and Proclaim text and the chart. Ask: **What does it mean to be Jesus’ disciple?** (to follow Jesus and live per his teachings)
✦ Read aloud the question and answers in Test Your Catholic Knowledge. Have your child answer the question and ask: **How did Mary show her belief in Jesus?** (by being faithful to God; by standing with Jesus during his life and Crucifixion)
✦ Read aloud A Catholic to Know on page 12. Ask: **How does Saint Hedwig inspire you to follow Jesus?** (By using my words and actions to share his teachings with others.)
✦ Read aloud the Witness and Share introductory text. Then read aloud each faith statement in My Way to Faith, pausing to allow time for your child to reflect on each one.
✦ Read aloud the Share Your Faith directions and have your child complete the activity.

TRANSFORM
✦ Say: **Think about how the example of your life and witness can make a difference in your community.**
✦ Challenge your child to work for peace and social justice. Say: **You can improve a situation in your community by being involved.** For example, you can identify an empty lot in your neighborhood and write a petition to the alderman to see if it can be converted into a community garden.
CHAPTER 2  Tracing Our Roots

Centering  PAGE 13
✦ Page through a family photo album and tell stories connected to the pictures. Ask: Why do we keep photo albums? (to remember people in our families; to keep a history of the family)
✦ Have your child read aloud the chapter title and work through the opening activity on page 13. Share stories related to your child’s responses.
✦ Have your child read aloud Your Spiritual Roots. Ask: When did you inherit your spiritual history? (at Baptism) What is it called? (salvation history) Direct your child to underline the definition of salvation history in his or her book.
✦ Say: The Bible—the Old and New Testaments—provides us with the fascinating history of God’s people.

Sharing  PAGE 14
✦ Have your child read aloud the directions for A Genealogy of Faith on page 14 and complete it independently. Check your child’s answers.

Sharing  PAGE 15
✦ Have your child read aloud The Master Plan on page 15. Ask: How was God’s plan of salvation fully revealed? (in the life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus)
✦ Ask: What is God’s plan for us? (to free us from sin and death, redeem us, and make it possible for us to share in eternal life—eternal happiness) How is this plan carried out in us? (through Baptism and faith in the risen Jesus; through the Holy Spirit)
✦ Ask: What are some qualities of a holy person? (kindness, compassion, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, love, gratitude) Do any of these describe you? Tell your child the qualities you see in him or her.
✦ Ask: Where can you find the written story of God’s plan of salvation? (the Bible)
✦ Have your child read silently The Book. Say: The word Bible means “the book.” What part of the Bible do both Jewish and Christian people believe is inspired? (Old Testament) What is it about? (God’s relationship with the Jewish people before Jesus came)
✦ Ask: What do the inspired Christian Scriptures reveal? (the life and message of Jesus Christ; the beginning and growth of his Church) What books in the New Testament are you familiar with?
✦ Say: As we will see, God also reveals truths to the Church in another way.
Have your child read aloud A Living Faith. Ask: **What do we mean by Tradition?** (beliefs taught by the Church that have been passed down by word, by custom, and by example) Have your child underline this definition in his or her book.

Say: **Tradition is passed down through the Church’s prayers, liturgy, writings, and talks, and by the way we live.**

Without looking in a Bible, together brainstorm a list of famous biblical characters. Then select a well-known story, such as David and Goliath, and challenge your child to locate it in his or her Bible in under a minute. (1 Samuel 17) Explain that, as followers of Jesus, it is important for us to become familiar with the Bible.

Have your child complete Favorite Scripture Stories independently. Ask your child to share his or her answers.

Have your child assemble the Scripture Prayer Booklet in the back of his or her book. Tell your child that in the Bible, God speaks lovingly to his children. Explain that one of the best ways to pray is by using Scripture. Suggest keeping the booklet in a place where your child will use it.

Have your child complete the first activity in the prayer booklet.

**Sharing**  PAGE 16

Lead your child in prayer using A Moment with Jesus on page 16. Allow sufficient time for your child to pray quietly, using his or her Bible to locate a story in one of the Gospels. After a few minutes, invite your child to move on to the next activity.

Have your child read silently Your Spiritual Family. Ask: **What do we call all the members of the Church?** (the Communion of Saints) **What three groups does it include?** (those in heaven, in Purgatory, and on earth)

Say: **Purgatory is a process of being completely purified of sinfulness and selfishness, so that we can be one with God. People who die unworthy to behold God gladly endure the pain of this purification because it leads to eternal life with God. Our prayers and sacrifices can help those in Purgatory, and the souls in Purgatory can pray for us.**

Have your child read aloud On the Move. Ask: **Why are we called a pilgrim people?** (We are on the way to the Father.)

**Acting**  PAGES 17–18

Read the Chapter 2 Summary on page 17 together. Then have your child complete the Review Activities on page 18 independently. When he or she is done, go through his or her work and review any incorrect answers.

Encourage your child to read a verse from the Bible every night before he or she goes to bed. Tell your child the quotation “A person whose Bible is falling apart probably isn’t,” and ask what it means.
Gather and Go Forth  PAGES 19–20

INSPIRE
Read aloud the text and the Scripture in the sidebar on page 19. Say: The apostles show us what to do with the gifts we have been given by God.

PROCLAIM
Read aloud the Know and Proclaim text and the chart. Ask: How do we learn more about our faith? (by reading the Bible; attending Mass; learning about the lives of the saints; learning about devotions)
Read aloud the question and answers in Test Your Catholic Knowledge. Have your child answer the question and ask: Who are some of your ancestors in faith? (Possible answers: saints; holy men and women)
Read aloud A Catholic to Know on page 20. Say: Saint Teresa is one of our many ancestors in faith to whom we can look as an example for how to follow Jesus.
Read aloud the Witness and Share introductory text. Then read aloud each faith statement in My Way to Faith, pausing to allow time for your child to reflect on each one.
Read aloud the Share Your Faith directions and have your child complete the activity.

TRANSFORM
Say: Look again at the saint’s trait that you wrote in Share Your Faith. Ask: How will imitating that trait help bring you closer to God?
Ask your child to write a prayer asking his or her saint to intercede on his or her behalf.
CHAPTER 3 A Closer Look

Centering
✦ Say: You have looked at salvation history, the story of God’s loving relationship with us. Today you will study one of the high points of that story—the coming of the Spirit. You will learn how the Spirit shapes the new People of God, the Church.
✦ Have your child slowly read aloud Acts of the Apostles 2:32–33 from the Bible. Pause for a moment after the reading to allow your child to reflect silently.

Sharing PAGE 21
✦ Have your child read aloud the chapter title and the first paragraph on page 21. Then have him or her work independently to complete the activity Who Helped You Grow? Say: The Church experienced growth too, and that one person helped it grow more than anyone else.
✦ Have your child read aloud How the Church Got Started. Ask: What event is the Christian faith based on? (Resurrection) Say: Circle the word in your books.
✦ Ask: Who shaped the Church and helped it grow after Jesus ascended? (the Holy Spirit) Say: Circle these words too.
✦ Have your child read aloud A Spirit-Filled Church and Acts of the Apostles 2:38 from the Bible. Direct your child to complete the activity independently and share the summary of Peter’s message. (Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.)

Sharing PAGES 22–24
✦ Have your child read aloud The Church Is Made Known on page 22. Ask: What were the four ways that the Christian communities were one? (in their belief in Jesus and his teachings, in the Eucharist, in prayer, and in their love for one another)
✦ Say: When people stand together as one, they are exhibiting solidarity.
✦ Have your child read aloud Past and Present and complete the activity. Ask your child to share his or her answers.
✦ Have your child read aloud Guided by the Spirit. Ask: How did the Spirit help the first Christians? (The Spirit poured out on them the power to witness, to heal, and to work wonders in Jesus’ name. The Spirit enlightened them about the life and teachings of Jesus.)
✦ Ask: How does the Spirit help the Church today? (The Spirit still gives us new insights into truth and helps us grow.)
Have your child create a designer label. Give him or her a small rectangular strip of paper. Say: **Come up with a symbol that represents you and perhaps a word or two that sums up who you are.** Ask: **Was this easy or difficult? Why?** Have your child share his or her label and then connect the activity to the models of the Church. Say: **Your label probably doesn't tell half of who you are, but it's a start. Today we are going to learn about models of the Church that will help us better understand it.**

Have your child read aloud the first two paragraphs of Models of the Church. Then have your child read silently the sections describing the models on pages 22–24.

Have your child choose one model to study. Say: **Think of an example of how the model appears in the Church today. Design a symbol for the model out of paper. Prepare a report on the model. Include the symbol, the Scripture quotation that appears at the start of your model's section, an explanation of the model, and the modern example.** After sufficient time, have your child present his or her report.

**Sharing** PAGE 24

- Have your child read aloud A Moment with Jesus on page 24. Allow sufficient time for your child to spend a prayerful moment with Jesus.

- Have your child read aloud The Domestic Church. After your child completes the activity, have him or her share the answers.

- Ask your child to match each description to a model of the Church. Say: **proclaiming the Good News** (herald); **following Jesus in all situations** (community of disciples); **working to make the world a better place** (servant); **hierarchy** (institution); **a sign of the divine** (sacrament); **people who love and support one another** (mystical communion); **Tradition** (institution); **loving one another in action** (servant); **people united in following Jesus** (mystical communion); **the presence and action of God** (sacrament); **enjoying one another’s company** (mystical communion)

**Acting** PAGES 25–26

- Have your child glue the designer label in his or her reflection notebook.

- Invite your child to write a petition to the Holy Spirit. Say: **The petition should ask the Spirit to help the Church live out its model in a specific way.** (that we may be a more loving community by getting to know one another better) Invite your child to offer his or her petition.

- Read the Chapter 3 Summary on page 25 together. Then have your child complete the Review Activities on page 26 independently. When he or she is done, go through his or her work and review any incorrect answers.
**Gather and Go Forth**  PAGES 27–28

**INSPIRE**
- Read aloud the text and the Scripture in the sidebar on page 27. Say: The covenant that God made with the Israelites is our covenant too. We are called to work for justice for all of God’s people.

**PROCLAIM**
- Read aloud the Know and Proclaim text and the chart. Ask: How do we recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in our home? (We treat each other with respect.)
- Read aloud the question and answers in Test Your Catholic Knowledge. Have your child answer the question and say: Models of the Church help us understand how the Church works.
- Read aloud A Catholic to Know on page 28. Say: Saint Robert Bellarmine was a scholar whose role was to defend the Church during a turbulent time in its history.
- Read aloud the Witness and Share introductory text. Then read aloud each faith statement in My Way to Faith, pausing to allow time for your child to reflect on each one.
- Read aloud the Share Your Faith directions and have your child complete the activity.

**TRANSFORM**
- Challenge your child to volunteer with a parish ministry or service agency. Say: You can be the hands and feet of Christ for others and make an important difference in their lives.
- Pray aloud the Act of Love on the inside back cover of your child’s book.
CHAPTER 4  A People of Prayer

Centering
✦ Say: You saw that the Spirit came to the disciples while they were at prayer. You also saw that oneness in prayer was one of the characteristics of the early community.
✦ Say: Today you will explore how the Church, the People of God, is a people of prayer.
✦ Ask: What was the most dangerous experience you have ever had? What did you do at the crucial moment?
✦ Say: People often pray when they are in difficult or dangerous circumstances. Ask: Why?

Sharing  PAGE 29
✦ Have your child read aloud the chapter title and the first four paragraphs on page 29.
✦ Have your child read silently and complete Prayer Is . . . Discuss your child’s answers. Say: The Church defines prayer as lifting the mind and heart of God. Prayer is a response to God, a conversation with God, listening to God, praising God, thanking God, or asking God for help.
✦ Ask: What do you usually talk about with your friends? Why do you feel comfortable with a friend even when you are both silent?
✦ Say: Since Jesus is your best friend, you communicate with him in prayer just as you communicate with a friend. You may talk about your experiences and share your confidences, or you may be silent.

Sharing  PAGE 30
✦ Have your child read aloud Prayer: A Must on page 30. Ask: What is prayer compared to? (breathing) How is Jesus our model for prayer? (He prayed traditional Jewish prayers, meal prayers, the Psalms, and the Shema twice a day. He prayed in the synagogues and in the Temple, and before major events in his life.)
✦ Have your child read aloud Jesus’ Words on Prayer. Ask: What keywords can you think of to summarize Jesus’ teaching on prayer? (persevere, unselfish, try it, ask, Father)
✦ Have your child read silently Great Prayers, continuing on page 31. Ask: What attitude made Mary a woman of prayer? (her listening attitude) Say: Describe what you think a listening heart is like.
✦ Say: When we pray, it’s good if we don’t do all the talking. We should spend time listening to what God says to us. Ask: What saint do you admire most and why? Prayer can make you a saint too.
Sharing  PAGES 31–32
✦ Have your child read silently The Prayer of the Church on pages 31–32. Ask: What is the greatest prayer of the Church? (Mass) What are the four types of prayer in Mass? (adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, petition or supplication) Say: You can remember these by the word pact. Its letters are the first letter of each type of prayer. Through prayer, you strengthen the pact you entered into with God at Baptism.

Sharing  PAGES 32–33
✦ Say: Priests are obligated to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. As more lay people pray the Liturgy of the Hours, it is becoming the prayer of the People of God.
✦ Have your child read silently Night Prayer on page 32.
✦ Ask: Which types of prayers are included in the Our Father? (adoration—“hallowed be thy name”; contrition—“forgive us”; petition—“give us this day our daily bread,” “lead us not into temptation”)
✦ Lead your child through Praying the Liturgy of the Hours on pages 32–33.

Sharing  PAGE 34
✦ Have your child read aloud and complete Prayer Times on page 34. Say: Schedule times for prayer and write them in your reflection notebook.
✦ Have your child read aloud Prayer Places and discuss his or her favorite place to pray.
✦ Have your child read aloud the first paragraph of Never Give Up! Say: Prayer is like a friendship: It takes time and effort. In any friendship, we can lose interest, but the important thing is persistent love and care.
✦ Discuss answers you would both give to the people in the stories.
✦ Ask: How does God answer our prayers? (through other people, through something that happens to us)
✦ Have your child read aloud Ora et Labora. Emphasize the relationship between prayer and work.

Acting  PAGES 35–36
✦ Have your child write a short prayer, a psalm verse, or words of Jesus. Encourage your child to post it in his or her room as a reminder to pray.
✦ Read the Chapter 4 Summary on page 35 together, then have your child complete the review on page 36 independently.
Gather and Go Forth  PAGES 37–38

INSPIRE
♦ Read aloud the text and the Scripture in the sidebar on page 37. Say: **Prayer is having a conversation with God.**

PROCLAIM
♦ Read aloud the Know and Proclaim text and the chart. Say: **There is no right or wrong way to pray.**
♦ Read aloud the question and answers in Test Your Catholic Knowledge. Have your child answer the question and say: **The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray.**
♦ Read aloud A Catholic to Know on page 38. Say: **John Vianney invited people into a closer relationship with God through prayer. God calls us to do the same.**
♦ Read aloud the Witness and Share introductory text. Then read aloud each faith statement in My Way to Faith, pausing to allow time for your child to reflect on each one.
♦ Read aloud the Share Your Faith directions and have your child complete the activity.

TRANSFORM
♦ Ask your child to identify someone or something for which he or she would like to pray. Direct your child to write these intentions on colored strips of paper and fashion a paper prayer chain to hang in your home.
♦ Say: **We are a people of prayer. We ask for God’s blessing, we express thanks, and we ask for help, not only for ourselves but for the whole world.**
CHAPTER 5 A People of Service

Centering PAGE 39

✦ Say: In this lesson, you will reflect on one basic way that we build Christ’s Church: service.

✦ Have your child read aloud the chapter title and the first paragraph on page 39.

✦ Say: The famous Cathedral of Notre Dame in Chartres, France, has 176 stained-glass windows and more than 2,000 stone figures. It was the work of many people. Skilled and unskilled laborers worked together. Jobs included traveling to raise money, quarrying stone and transporting it, lending carts and tools, stonecutting, making stained glass, and doing carpentry work.

✦ Say: Because everyone wanted a beautiful church that would praise God and remind people of his love, they all shared their gifts. Everyone’s contribution was welcomed and needed. This cathedral became the church building at which the bishop officially resided. It also became the center of town, where worship, as well as other community events, took place.

✦ Have your child complete the activity under the first paragraph. Invite your child to share his or her answers and then read aloud the concluding paragraph.

Sharing PAGES 40–42

✦ Have your child read silently Building of Stone on page 40. Invite your child to summarize the story in his or her own words.

✦ Have your child read aloud Building a Cathedral. Allow sufficient time for your child to answer the questions. Then discuss the answers.

✦ Have your child read aloud Living Stones. Ask: How is the Catholic Church different from the cathedral at Chartres? (It is not made of stone and glass but of people who are chosen by the Father and gathered together in Christ through the Spirit.)

✦ Ask: How are the Catholic Church and the cathedral alike? (All people are welcome, all are bound by faith, all want to praise God and remember his love.)

✦ Ask your child to write the name of a person he or she knows who is outstanding at serving others. Invite your child to share thoughts about this person and to tell how he or she serves. Have your child list three special qualities of this person.

✦ Have your child read silently Be a Builder on page 41. Ask: How can you build up the Church? (by sharing the mission of Christ) What is the mission of Christ? (to spread the Kingdom of God through witness, worship, and service)
Write witness and service. Explain that this type of witness means to set an example for others to follow.

Ask: How did Jesus witness? (He prayed and did the Father’s will. At the Last Supper and on the Cross, he gave his life for us.)

Ask: How did Jesus serve the people? (healed those who were sick, raised some who were dead, assisted those who were poor, welcomed sinners)

Have your child read silently Building in Love. Then have your child read aloud Romans 12:6–8 and 1 Corinthians 12:7–11 to find lists of charismatic gifts.

Have your child read silently Recognizing Your Gifts. Have your child write the answers to the questions in his or her reflection notebook. You might play instrumental music as your child works. Tell your child to ask God in silent prayer to help him or her know and use their gifts.

Have your child complete the activity Two Job Descriptions on page 42. Check the answers when he or she is finished with the activity.

Invite your child to read aloud A Moment with Jesus.

Read aloud You Make a Difference.

Reviewing PAGES 43–45

Read the Chapter 5 Summary on page 43 together. Then have your child complete the Review Activities on page 44 independently. When he or she is done, go through his or her work and review any incorrect answers.

Have your child complete the Unit 1 Review on page 45 independently.

Celebrating PAGES 46–47

Invite your child to participate prayerfully in the celebration Called to Be Church on pages 46–47.

Go over the directions ahead of time to decide which parts each of you will read aloud and prepare a recording of songs to play at the parts marked Opening Song and Closing Song.

Acting PAGE 48

Show pictures of the interiors and exteriors of various styles of church buildings. Then have your child write a report on a medieval cathedral and build a model of it from clay, cardboard, or building blocks.

Have your child complete the last page of the Unit Review on page 48.

Suggest that your child make a resolution to set aside five minutes each evening to read Scripture to deepen his or her spiritual life.
Gather and Go Forth  PAGES 49–50

INSPIRE

♣ Read aloud the text and the Scripture in the sidebar on page 49. Ask: How can you use your talents to proclaim the Good News of Jesus?

PROCLAIM

♣ Read aloud the Know and Proclaim text and the chart. Ask: How does blessing yourself proclaim your faith to others? (It is a sign to others of my beliefs.)

♣ Read aloud the question and answers in Test Your Catholic Knowledge. Have your child answer the question and say: Inviting others to join our community of disciples is the primary focus of our Church. As a baptized Catholic, you have been called to evangelize.

♣ Read aloud A Catholic to Know on page 50. Say: Lawrence, like most people, liked a good joke and he liked to laugh. Being serious about our faith does not prohibit us from sharing fun with one another.

♣ Read aloud the Witness and Share introductory text. Then read aloud each faith statement in My Way to Faith, pausing to allow time for your child to reflect on each one.

♣ Read aloud the Share Your Faith directions and have your child complete the activity.

TRANSFORM

♣ Ask: How can your example of doing something for others without expectation of reward make a difference?

♣ Have your child find on the internet the Prayer of Generosity from Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Pray it together.