

# Home-Learning Guide

The *Finding God* for Junior High Home-Learning Guide provides you with an opportunity to work with your junior-high child to grow together in faith. Whether you are doing home catechesis with your children or are seeking to be more deeply involved in their faith growth, the Home-Learning Guide will give you the tools you need.

The Home-Learning Guide can assist you if you find yourself in one of the following situations:

- In cooperation with your parish director of religious education, you have chosen to work on *Finding God* for junior high lessons with your child at home as part of the parish religious education program.
- Because of travel, illness, or injury, your child misses parish religious education sessions, and you wish to work with him or her at home in the interim.

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## GOING THROUGH A CHAPTER WITH YOUR JUNIOR-HIGH CHILD

By following the step-by-step process outlined below, you can go through the chapters of your junior high child's book, helping him or her to grow in faith. Follow these simple steps:

**Begin each unit** by inviting your child to read aloud the two-page introduction that describes the focus of the unit.

**In each chapter**, follow these four simple steps:

### Step One: ENGAGE (the first page of the chapter)

Before beginning, review the information on the charts that follow, which tells you what to help your child know or do on each page. Set aside space for this important time. Work together on the first page of the chapter, inviting your child into conversation about aspects of his or her life that are connected to the theme of the chapter. Have your child complete the activity at the bottom of this page.

### Step Two: EXPLORE (the second through the sixth or seventh page of each chapter)

Work with your child on the four or five pages of this section. Take turns reading aloud the two main articles in each chapter. Occasionally, invite your child to read an article quietly. Have your child highlight or underline key words and phrases that you wish to emphasize. Keep in mind the information from the charts that tells you what to help your child know or do on each page. When you are finished with the two main articles, go back and read the Sidebars and TidBytes (shorter features) throughout the chapter. Take time to look at the artwork, illustrations, and photographs and to talk about how they connect with the content on the page.

### Step Three: REFLECT (the seventh or eighth page of each chapter)

Invite your child to prepare for reflective prayer with you. Slowly read the text on the prayer page(s), pausing after each sentence and praying along with your child. Encourage your child to imagine himself or herself in God's presence and to talk with God as one would talk with a friend. Allow some quiet time for both of you to do this. Together, take a minute or two at the end of the reflection to spend some silent time with God.

### Step Four: RESPOND (the ninth page of each chapter)

Work with your child to read and complete the What's What?, Say What?, So What?, Now What?, and Here's What the Catholic Church Teaches features. These features help you and your child to review the main points of the chapter and invite your child to consider how he or she can apply what was learned to daily living. Be sure to have your child locate in the Glossary the definitions of the words listed under Say What? Since the 10th page of each chapter is an activity page for working in groups, you can skip this page.

**End each unit** by working together with your child on the Faith in Action feature (two pages at the end of each unit) to explore ways of putting into practice what was learned in the unit.

# Unit 4: The Sacraments, Chapter I

## Following Jesus: Celebrating Salvation

Luke's Gospel, written for a Gentile Christian audience, includes an Infancy Narrative with a strong flavor of the Old Testament without ever quoting it. Luke situates Jesus' birth in the Roman Empire that is familiar to his readers. In chapters 1 and 2, we are introduced to a Savior who is rooted in God's promises to Israel but destined for the salvation of the whole world.

At the Annunciation, when Mary asked, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" Gabriel answered that it will happen by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 1:34–35) Mary responded to the angel's announcement with the obedience of faith, certain that nothing will be impossible with God. Giving her consent to God's word, Mary became the mother of Jesus. She is also truly the Mother of God since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, who is God himself.

In order for Mary to freely assent to her calling, it was necessary that she be born full of God's grace. Through the centuries the Church has become increasingly aware that Mary was redeemed from the moment of her conception and preserved from original sin. That is what Pope Pius IX defined in 1854 when he proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

### ENGAGE

On page 173, help your child

- relate personal celebrations to celebrating salvation.

### EXPLORE

On pages 174–179, help your child

- describe the origins of the Christmas crèche.
- describe how Luke's Infancy Narrative announces salvation for all people.
- summarize Luke's description of the Annunciation and explain why Mary is considered the first disciple.
- explain what sacramentals are and why they are important to Catholics.
- explain the origins of the Rosary.
- define *Infancy Narrative*, *Annunciation*, *original sin*, and *Immaculate Conception*.

### REFLECT

On page 180, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

### RESPOND

On page 181, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.

## Celebrating Church: Entering into New Life

In the liturgy of the Church, Christ's Paschal Mystery is made present. Because of the centrality of the Paschal Mystery, the Church's liturgical year is centered on the feast of Easter. The rest of our liturgical cycle grows from this feast and celebrates the unfolding of the Paschal Mystery in Jesus' life. That unfolding continues throughout the liturgical year in the celebration of feasts that recall the lives of Mary and the saints. Through all these celebrations, we are connected with the continuous worship of God in heaven.

Through the Sacraments of Christian Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—we enter into the Paschal Mystery of Jesus. Initiation into the Church begins with Baptism, is strengthened through Confirmation, and is completed in the Eucharist. The Second Vatican Council restored the catechumenate for adults, a process of formation with distinct steps leading to the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation. Today the Christian initiation of adults (including anyone seven years of age and older) begins with their entry into the catechumenate and reaches its culmination in a single celebration of all three Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

### ENGAGE

On page 173, help your child

- relate his or her understanding of going on a journey to the journey with Jesus to new life.

### EXPLORE

On pages 174–179, help your child

- express an understanding of the Paschal Mystery as the center of Catholic life.
- explain that we enter into the Paschal Mystery of Jesus through the sacraments.
- explain what happens when we celebrate Mass.
- describe the process of Christian Initiation in the early Church.
- explain what happens at the Easter Vigil.
- explain what the liturgical year refers to and how it was developed.
- define *catechumen*.

### REFLECT

On page 180, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

### RESPOND

On page 181, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.

## Unit 4: The Sacraments, Chapter 2

### Following Jesus: Celebrating the Sacraments

Chapter 15 of Luke’s Gospel consists of three parables about the joy of recovering what was lost and the celebration of that recovery. The parables emphasize the fact that God is merciful to us when we go astray. He actively seeks us out. When we return, the call is not for strict justice but for celebration. We are called to reach out to those who are lost and to celebrate when they return to the community. The sense of rejoicing and celebrating is central to being a sacramental Church.

Sacraments are signs that point to another reality. The signs, such as pouring of water, breaking bread, and sharing a cup are taken from our everyday life to remind us of the sanctifying presence of God. The sacraments of the Church make present the salvation brought by Christ. Three sacraments initiate us into the Church—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Two heal us—Penance and Anointing of the Sick. Two serve the community—Matrimony and Holy Orders. The Church is the universal sacrament of salvation. Jesus’ humanity is also a sacrament because he is the visible presence of the invisible God.

#### ENGAGE

On page 183, help your child

- relate a personal experience of being lost with the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 184–188, help your child

- summarize the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son and identify the common theme found in all three.
- summarize how Luke describes the journey of Jesus.
- name the seven sacraments and describe how and why they are important for our lives.
- explain what it means to call the Catholic Church a sacramental church.
- identify the three Sacraments of Initiation that bring us into the Church and help us grow as members.
- define *sacrament*.

#### REFLECT

On pages 189–190, help your child

- pray reflectively on God’s presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 191, help your child

- identify ways to act on God’s invitation in everyday living.

### Celebrating Church: Initiated into Grace

Baptism is the source of new life in Christ from which the entire Christian life springs. Adults who are preparing to be baptized enter the catechumenate and are introduced to the life of faith, liturgy, and charity through catechesis and a series of sacred rites. Likewise, the Church has always baptized infants, who are tainted by original sin and need the rebirth of Baptism.

Baptism is necessary for the salvation of people to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the opportunity to ask for this sacrament. The Holy Spirit, in a way known only to God, offers the possibility of achieving union with God to all who seek the truth and do the will of God as he or she understands it. As for children who have died without Baptism, the Church entrusts them to the mercy of God.

The Sacrament of Confirmation brings an increase and a deepening of baptismal grace, unites us more firmly to Christ and the Church, and increases the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in us. Like Baptism, Confirmation is received only once, because it imprints on us an indelible spiritual mark.

#### ENGAGE

On page 183, help your child

- relate school orientation to being initiated into the Church.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 184–189, help your child

- identify Baptism as the sacrament through which we enter the Church.
- explain the symbolism of water in Baptism.
- describe the Sacrament of Confirmation as an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and a deepening of baptismal grace.
- explain how Pentecost impacted the disciples.
- explain why Baptism is necessary for salvation.
- express an understanding that those who die without having the chance to be baptized are still cared for by our loving God.
- define *Gifts of the Holy Spirit*.

#### REFLECT

On page 190, help your child

- pray reflectively on God’s presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 191, help your child

- identify ways to act on God’s invitation in everyday living.

## Unit 4: The Sacraments, Chapter 3

### Following Jesus: Celebrating Baptism

Luke tells us in the Acts of the Apostles that on the day of Pentecost, 3,000 people were baptized. They entered into the People of God and were united to Christ, who gave his life for us. In Baptism, original sin and all personal sins are forgiven. Baptism makes us adoptive children of the Father, members of the Body of Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit. Baptism imprints on us a permanent spiritual sign, and for that reason Baptism can only be received once.

The Acts of the Apostles begins with a description of the Ascension of Jesus, which marks the definitive entrance of Jesus' humanity into God's presence, where he sits at God's right hand. The Acts of the Apostles then describes the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the formation of the first Christian community in Jerusalem. Chapter 9 tells the story of Paul's conversion. The remainder of the Acts of the Apostles concentrates on the mission to the Gentiles and Paul's missionary travels. The Acts of the Apostles ends with Paul's arrival in Rome.

#### ENGAGE

On page 193, help your child

- relate the experience of change that comes from belonging to a group to the experience of change through repentance and Baptism.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 194–199, help your child

- summarize the story of Pentecost and Peter's message to the crowd.
- describe how Baptism impacts our lives.
- explain what drew people to Baptism in the early years of the Church.
- relate the concepts of water, community, and the Word to the experience of Baptism in the early Church.
- summarize the story of Paul's conversion.
- describe the significance of Jerusalem and Rome in Luke's Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles.
- summarize the story of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple.
- define *Acts of the Apostles* and *Ascension*.

#### REFLECT

On page 200, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 201, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.

### Celebrating Church: Celebrating Jesus' Presence

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. In the Eucharist, which means "thanksgiving," the Church expresses gratitude to God for all that he has accomplished through the creation, redemption, and sanctification of the world. The Eucharist is also the memorial of Christ's Passover, making present the sacrifice Christ offered once and for all on the cross.

In the Mass, the Body and Blood together with the soul and divinity of Jesus Christ are really and substantially contained in the eucharistic bread and wine. We call this the Real Presence of Jesus, and we call the change of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of the risen Jesus Christ transubstantiation.

The Eucharist restores lost strength, wipes away venial sin, and strengthens us against committing mortal sin in the future. By uniting us so completely to Christ, the Eucharist separates us from sin, strengthens our charity, and commits us to the poor.

#### ENGAGE

On page 193, help your child

- relate our need for nutritional food to our need for spiritual nourishment.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 194–199, help your child

- identify the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Christian life.
- describe what Jesus did at the Last Supper.
- express an understanding of Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist.
- express an understanding of the Mass as thanksgiving, sacrifice, and memorial.
- identify Martin Luther and John Calvin as people who challenged the Church's understanding of Real Presence.
- describe how to mentally prepare themselves to receive Holy Communion.
- define *Eucharist* and *transubstantiation*.

#### REFLECT

On page 200, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 201, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.

## Unit 4: The Sacraments, Chapter 4

### Following Jesus: Celebrating Life in the Spirit

Luke's Gospel tells the story of the boy Jesus in the Temple. Luke is teaching us that although Jesus is the child of Mary and Joseph, he is also the Son of God, and he has a special mission to carry out the work of his heavenly Father. The story portrays Jesus at age 12, the same age as many young Catholics today who are beginning their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Luke presents the young Jesus as a model of a person who is becoming more independent and yet remains obedient to his parents.

In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke tells the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. It is that same Holy Spirit that we receive at Baptism and who strengthens us in Confirmation. Confirmation makes us more aware of our mission as followers of Jesus and helps us witness to the Christian faith in words and deeds. Like Baptism, Confirmation imprints an indelible spiritual mark on us. For that reason, it can only be received once. In the Rite of Confirmation, the bishop, the usual minister of the sacrament, makes the Sign of the Cross with chrism on the forehead of the person being confirmed and says, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

#### ENGAGE

On page 203, help your child

- relate daydreaming to the Holy Spirit inspiring us to dream God's dream.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 204–208, help your child

- summarize the story of Jesus being found in the Temple by Mary and Joseph.
- explain what it means to follow the Fourth Commandment.
- describe Jesus' mission.
- summarize the story of Pentecost.
- explain what happens to us in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- identify ways Jesus showed us the Kingdom of God.
- describe how Jesus practiced the cardinal virtues.
- define *Pentecost* and *rite*.

#### REFLECT

On pages 209–210, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 211, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.

### Celebrating Church: Healed in Jesus

During the first centuries of the Church, Christians who committed serious sins after their Baptism had to do public penance before they could receive absolution. During the seventh century Irish missionaries took the practice of private confessions to Europe, celebrating the sacrament as it is today, in private between penitent and priest. Mortal sins (actions of a serious nature, done with full knowledge and done deliberately) must be confessed in the Sacrament of Penance. Venial sins (actions of a less serious nature or done without full knowledge or complete consent) can be forgiven through contrition, prayer, good actions, and by receiving the Eucharist. Because venial sins can lead to mortal sins, we should regularly confess these as well.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick continues the healing ministry of Jesus. It is a sacrament for people who are in danger of death from sickness or old age, uniting them to the passion of Christ and giving them courage and the peace to endure their sufferings in a Christian manner. Anointing can restore health or prepare the person for passing over to eternal life.

#### ENGAGE

On page 203, help your child

- relate the experience of getting a second chance to reconciliation.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 204–208, help your child

- describe Penance as the sacrament in which we receive God's grace to turn away from sin.
- differentiate between mortal and venial sin.
- explain how Jesus heals through the Anointing of the Sick.
- describe the effects of anointing on those who are sick and suffering.
- recognize the formula of absolution for the Sacrament of Penance.
- express an understanding of the power of prayer.
- define *absolution*, *mortal sin*, *Order of Penitents*, and *venial sin*.

#### REFLECT

On pages 209–210, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 211, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.

## Unit 4: The Sacraments, Chapter 5

### Following Jesus: Celebrating the Eucharist

The Eucharist is the heart and summit of the Church's life. Christ himself, through the ministry of the priest, offers the eucharistic sacrifice and is truly present under the species of bread and wine. Sunday, the Lord's Day, is the principal day for the celebration of the Eucharist because it is the day of the Resurrection. It is the day we gather for liturgical celebration, the day to spend time with our family, and the day of joy and rest from work. Sunday is the foundation and center of the entire liturgical year.

Luke's story of the two disciples walking to Emmaus offers a perfect summary of the meaning of the Eucharist. The story takes place on Easter, the preeminent day to celebrate the Eucharist. When Jesus joins the disciples on the road, they do not recognize him. Jesus recounts stories from Scripture, helping them understand what they had just experienced in Jerusalem. It is only when Jesus breaks the bread during their meal that they recognize him. He then disappears, and their response is to return to Jerusalem and spread the good news. In every Eucharist we also meet Jesus in the Word and in the breaking of the bread. Our response should be to go forth to spread the good news of salvation.

#### ENGAGE

On page 213, help your child

- relate the concept of satisfying our hungers to the Eucharist.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 214–218, help your child

- describe what happened at the Last Supper according to Luke's Gospel.
- explain when and why we celebrate the Eucharist.
- summarize the Emmaus story and explain how we can relate to the two disciples in the story.
- name the three steps in the process of initiation into the Catholic Church.
- name ways that Jesus feeds people.
- explain how and why Luke uses the images of the way and the journey in his Gospel.
- define *Last Supper* and *Resurrection*.

#### REFLECT

On pages 219–220, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 221, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.

### Celebrating Church: Serving in Jesus' Name

In the ordained priest's service to the Church, it is Christ himself who is present both as head of his Body and as high priest offering sacrifice to God. The fullness of the priesthood is found in the bishop, who is ordained to sanctify, teach, and guide the people of his diocese. Priests, under the authority of the bishop, share in this ministry of sanctifying, teaching, and guiding. Deacons are ordained to serve the needs of the Church.

In the mutual love between a man and a woman, we find an image of the unfailing love with which God loves us. Scripture affirms that man and woman were created for each other. In marriage they become one flesh, an indissoluble union that only death can end. In the Sacrament of Matrimony, the spouses are the ministers and confer the sacrament on each other by expressing their consent before a witness of the Church. This consent must be an act of each of the contracting parties, free of coercion or fear. If this freedom is lacking, the marriage is invalid. The Church uses the process of annulment to determine that certain circumstances at the time of the marriage ceremony prevented it from being the Sacrament of Matrimony.

#### ENGAGE

On page 213, help your child

- relate personal commitments to the commitments made by priests and by married couples.

#### EXPLORE

On pages 214–219, help your child

- explain that through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, Christ is present to his Church as head of his Body.
- describe how we all participate in the priesthood of Jesus Christ.
- describe the role of deacons and priests.
- describe Matrimony as the sacrament through which a man and a woman enter into a lifetime commitment.
- explain how marriage is a vocation.
- define *annulment*.

#### REFLECT

On page 220, help your child

- pray reflectively on God's presence, his invitation, and our response.

#### RESPOND

On page 221, help your child

- identify ways to act on God's invitation in everyday living.