



The Early Church

Begin

Read aloud the unit title. **Say:** *The people we will read about in this unit can be considered pioneers.* **Ask:** *What is a pioneer?* (the first person in a group to do something new) *What qualities might a pioneer have?* (Possible answers: courage, determination) Discuss real-life pioneers and their accomplishments. **Say:** *Like all pioneers, the Christians we will learn about in this unit faced challenges. They were able to overcome these challenges because they were filled with faith and listened to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.*

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 1. **Say:** *Peter and Andrew took a risk when they chose to follow Jesus. They left behind everything they knew.* **Ask:** *Why were they willing to take such a risk?* (Possible answer: They recognized that Jesus was special.) Point out the vocabulary word *Messiah*. **Say:** *Jesus was anointed—chosen—by God to save all humanity.*

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saint Relates. **Ask:** *How have you been called to respond to Jesus' invitation to serve others?* (Possible answers: by helping a neighbor with yard work, by speaking up for someone who was being teased)

Turn to page 2. Have your child read aloud the title Peter in Scripture and the first two paragraphs. **Say:** *The Transfiguration had a significant effect on the three disciples. Once they experienced God's glory revealed through Jesus, they were inspired to share their experience with others.* Point out the word *Gentiles* and discuss its definition. **Say:** *As Christians we are Gentiles.*

Read aloud A Human Being and Martyred for His Faith. Read aloud John 21:15–19 from your Bible. **Ask:** *Who are Jesus' sheep?* (his followers) *How can we feed them?* (Possible answers: help people in need, preach the Gospel) Have a discussion about martyrs.

Have your child read aloud Past Meets Present. Emphasize that the pope does not lead the Church by himself. **Say:** *The pope exercises his leadership under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in conjunction with the bishops who are also responsible for leading the Church.* Have your child read aloud the directions in A New Name. Discuss words that best describe your child's personality and faith. Have your child complete the activity independently.

With your child add Peter's feast day, June 29, to your calendar. Reflect on the qualities that Peter needed as the first pope, such as strength, dedication, leadership, and an open heart.

Jesus' Message

Engage: Page 3

- ▶ Together think of ways different types of modern media, such as TV, radio, and the Internet, can be used to preach the Gospel message. Develop a jingle or catchy phrase that can be used for a "Preach the Gospel" campaign using one of these mediums.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we're going to learn about Saint Peter, who preached the Good News to others through his words and actions.* Explain that we can read Saint Peter's words in the two New Testament letters that are attributed to him.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 4–5

- ▶ Draw a two-column chart with the headings *Name* and *Meaning*. **Say:** *We have many names for Jesus, each of which expresses something important about him.* List names of Jesus and explain what each one tells us about him, such as Christ, "anointed one"; Emmanuel, "God with us"; and Jesus, "God saves."
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title *Preaching the Gospel* and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *What do you think it is that God wants us to know?* (Possible answer: Jesus is the source of our Salvation.) **Say:** *God fulfilled his plan of Salvation by sending Jesus, our Redeemer, to reconcile people with himself.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *Ready for Confirmation*. Point out that for many of us, our commitment to follow Christ and his way of life was first made for us by our parents and godparents. **Say:** *As we prepare to celebrate Confirmation, we reflect on whether we are ready to make this commitment for ourselves freely.*
- ▶ Read aloud *The Our Father* on page 5. Remind your child that the Beatitudes were given to us by Jesus so that we can live happy lives. Read aloud from the Bible Matthew 6:9–14. **Ask:** *How does the Lord's Prayer relate to the Gospel message of love?* (Possible answer: The Lord's Prayer contains the heart of the Golden Rule—to love God and to love our neighbors.) Explain that God enters into conversation with us through prayers and other forms of Revelation, including Scripture, the sacraments, and ordinary events in our lives. Then emphasize that because we are children of God, we have a responsibility to care for one another's needs.
- ▶ **Ask:** *How can you help build up God's kingdom on earth?* (Possible answers: volunteer at a food pantry or clothing shelter, help an elderly neighbor with his or her yard work.) Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 6–7

- ▶ Discuss how aspects of nature, such as water, wind, and fire, are necessary to life but can also destroy it. Point out that these elements are often used as symbols in Scripture because they speak to us on many levels, both literally and figuratively.

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *Why were the disciples afraid?* (They were fearful that those who had killed Jesus would try to kill them as well.) Point out that the Holy Spirit, sent by Jesus, gave the disciples strength. **Say:** *Jesus also sends us the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to live as Jesus' disciples.*
- ▶ Continue reading aloud the section Pentecost. Ask your child to read aloud the definition of the word *Pentecost* in the Glossary and then define it using his or her own words.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Say:** *One definition of prayer is that it is an act by which we raise our minds and hearts to God.* Remind your child that prayer is a conversation that requires both listening and speaking.
- ▶ Read aloud Filled with the Spirit. Emphasize that the Holy Spirit that filled the disciples is the same Spirit that fills us today.
- ▶ Read aloud The Church on page 7. **Ask:** *What do you think it means to say that the Church is a visible society that is both human and divine?* (Possible answer: The Church is a community made up of people who love and honor God, follow the example of Jesus, and are strengthened by the Holy Spirit.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Point out that even the earliest disciples were sometimes filled with fear.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 8–9

- ▶ Read aloud the title and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *How do Christians enter into a close relationship with Jesus and with one another?* (through Baptism)
- ▶ Assign the Reader part and the Sides 1 and 2 parts to your child. Pray together a Prayer of Celebration. **Say:** *Let us remember that we can always call on the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to live as disciples in the world.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 9. Invite your child to brainstorm examples of voices that demand attention. **Ask:** *Which of these voices ask the most of us, and which ask the least of us?* (Possible answers: Parents and teachers ask the most; texts, TV, and the media ask the least.) *Which voices do you spend the most time listening to?* (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Whose Voice Do I Listen To? Remind your child that the voice of God is always listening to us and that it is up to us to take the time to listen.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud A Clear Voice and complete the activity independently. **Say:** *By taking time for prayer, we sharpen our ability to hear God's voice.*

Respond: Page 10

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the activity. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help finding the answers to the questions.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Discuss ways to be a disciple of Jesus' and have your child complete the activity. Encourage him or her to follow through with the ideas during the week. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

The Church Grows

Engage: Page 11

- ▶ Start your session by shouting out *Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!* Point out that this is a true statement, but shouting it at people might not be an effective way to encourage them to grow with Jesus. Discuss ways to spread the Gospel message positively.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn how the words and actions of some of Jesus' early followers helped encourage others to join the Church.* Point out that the work of these early disciples helped the Church grow.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 12–13

- ▶ Have a brief discussion in which you and your child present opposing views about a subject that interests you both. After the discussion, **ask:** *What might be some ground rules for having a successful discussion in which both sides disagree?* (Possible answers: Both sides listen to each other. Both sides respect each other.) **Say:** *We are going to read how Church leaders met to discuss an issue that was dividing the early Church.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Apostle to the Gentiles and the first five paragraphs. Remind your child that many of Jesus' early followers were Jews and that as the Church grew, Paul began to preach the Gospel message to Gentiles, or non-Jews. **Ask:** *What was Paul's attitude toward Christians at first?* (He led the persecution against them in Jerusalem. He thought that they were unfaithful to the Law.) Ask your child to retell the story of Paul's conversion.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the last five paragraphs on page 13. **Ask:** *What was Paul's essential message?* (In Jesus Christ, God has given Salvation to all who believe.) Explain that grace is the gift of God, given to us without our meriting it. **Say:** *Grace is the Holy Spirit alive in us. It gives us the strength to live out our vocation.*
- ▶ Explain that Paul's belief that Gentiles and Jews were equal members of the Church caused controversy among Jesus' early followers. Point out the term *Council of Jerusalem*. **Ask:** *What did the Church leaders decide during the Council of Jerusalem?* (Gentiles would not have to become Jews first to be able to practice the Christian faith.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Spread the Good News and complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 14–15

- ▶ Share stories from movies or literature in which characters have experiences that change their lives. **Say:** *Now we are going to read how a vision that Peter experienced changed the course of his life.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title Proclaiming Jesus to the World and the first section. **Ask:** *What did Peter realize the meaning of the vision was after he was sought out by Cornelius's servants?* (While for a Jew it was unlawful to associate or visit with Gentiles, God told Peter not to call anyone profane or unclean.)

- ▶ Read aloud The Holy Spirit Descends on Cornelius. **Say:** *When the Gentiles began speaking in tongues and glorifying God, Peter's interpretation of his vision was reaffirmed. He became even more certain that God wanted the Church to be open to Gentiles and Jews alike.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Council of Jerusalem on page 15. **Say:** *Church leaders were so sure of their decision that they wanted everyone in the Church to know about it. That is why they sent Paul and Barnabas to announce it to others.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. **Say:** *We commemorate the Passover meal every time the Mass is celebrated.* **Ask:** *Why might we say that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our lives?* (Possible answer: In the Eucharist, we receive the Body and Blood of the risen Christ, which give us the strength to live as Jesus' disciples in the world today. The Eucharist is the summit of our lives because receiving it is the most important thing we do as Catholics.) **Say:** *The gift of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is the most important gift we have received from God.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 16–17

- ▶ Read aloud the title The Law of Love and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *How do we give witness to the unity of the Christian community?* (Possible answer: by performing selfless acts of love that help others open their hearts to God's presence)
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Leader part and pray the prayer together. Invite your child to share any insights he or she had while reflecting on the two questions that were part of the prayer. Conclude by praying together the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? **Say:** *Think of all the different communities to which you belong.* **Ask:** *What is common among all of them?* (Possible answer: The members all care for one another.) *How would you define the term community?* (Possible answer: It is a group of people who help one another.) Point out that when we join a community, we commit ourselves to respecting the members of that community.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud A Place Where I Belong. Point out that being named—as at Baptism—is one of the most powerful ways we know that we belong to a community. Discuss how your child's name was selected.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud We Belong and complete the activity independently.

Respond: Page 18

- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the crossword puzzle independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Remind your child that when we share the love of the Holy Spirit with others, we grow in our relationship with God and with the Church. Have your child complete the activity independently. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Witnesses to the Faith

Engage: Page 19

- ▶ Together brainstorm well-known slogans such as “Just do it.” Explain that organizations use slogans as ways to express their identity. **Say:** *As Jesus’ followers, we need to have a clear understanding of our Christian identity so that when we face challenging situations, we know what we believe.* Invite your child to make up slogans that identify who we are as Jesus’ followers.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn about early Christians who witnessed to the faith by becoming martyrs.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 20–21

- ▶ Discuss ways that your family and other families you know celebrate birthdays. **Ask:** *Why do we often celebrate birthdays in special ways?* (Possible answer: to celebrate the life of a person) **Say:** *We continue to celebrate the lives of the early Christian martyrs through feast days.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title The Martyrs and the Communion of Saints and the first four paragraphs. Point out the vocabulary word. **Say:** *By refusing to worship false gods, the Christians remained true to their faith and practiced the First Commandment.* **Ask:** *Why might we say that the sacrifice of the martyrs was good for the Church?* (Through their deaths, the martyrs witnessed to the truth of the Gospel message and encouraged other Christians to remain true to the faith.)
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the next two paragraphs. Remind your child that everyone who believes in Jesus and follows his teachings is a member of the Communion of Saints. Emphasize that the Communion of Saints reminds us that we are never alone in our faith.
- ▶ Read aloud Honoring the Martyrs on page 21. **Say:** *When we venerate someone, we show that person honor and respect.* **Ask:** *Why did the Christians venerate the martyrs?* (to ensure that the memories of the martyrs’ witness to the faith would not be forgotten)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Ready for Confirmation feature. Point out that we can always pray to the members of the Communion of Saints to give us the courage to practice our faith.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 22–23

- ▶ Write these situations on note cards and place them facedown: *when I am not feeling well, when I want to learn how to play a new game, when I don’t understand my schoolwork.* Ask your child to turn over each card and together brainstorm to whom he or she might turn to for help in each situation. **Say:** *We can always turn to the example of the martyrs and other people within the Communion of Saints for help living as disciples.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title The Early Martyrs and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *What did the Apostles appoint deacons to do?* (oversee the daily distribution of alms) Name organizations in your parish that help people in need by distributing alms.
- ▶ Read aloud Saint Stephen. Emphasize that Stephen had been preaching the Gospel. **Ask:** *What did Stephen model through his last words?* (Possible answer: forgiveness)

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Together look online at images of stained-glass windows that depict scenes from Scripture. Ask your child to explain how the windows can be used to teach others about the Catholic faith.
- ▶ Read aloud the section Saint Polycarp on page 23. **Ask:** *Why was Polycarp condemned to death?* (He would not turn his back on Jesus. He would not say that the Roman emperor is lord.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Saints Perpetua and Felicity. Explain that a catechumen is any unbaptized person who is in the process of becoming Catholic. **Ask:** *What can we do when we are tempted to stray from our convictions?* (Possible answers: practice the virtues, pray for strength, follow the example of the martyrs)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 24–25

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. **Say:** *We can take courage in the example of the martyrs when we feel persecuted or misunderstood because of our religious beliefs.*
- ▶ **Say:** *We are going to pray a litany, a prayer in which the leader prays aloud an invocation. In this Litany of the Saints, we'll respond to the first three and the last two invocations by repeating the phrase.* Pray aloud each invocation and give your child a moment to respond. Conclude by praying *Amen*.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph and the title in Where Do I Fit In? on page 25. Write the sentence *Exercise is good for you.* **Ask:** *How do you know this is true?* (Possible answers: I feel better after I do it. Doctors tell us it is true.) **Say:** *We often take at face value the things we are told by authorities. As we grow, God gives us a desire to find out about important things on our own.*
- ▶ Together read aloud What Do I Stand For? Point out that regardless of whether people always agree with one another, we need to take time to find out as much about one another's opinions as we can. **Say:** *When we do this, we can express our opinions with conviction and help others form sound opinions of their own.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud A Journey of Faith and complete the activity independently.

Respond: Page 26

- ▶ Read aloud the directions. Remind your child to use the page references to help him or her look for details. Have your child complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? **Say:** *Remember, not only can we follow the example of other people, but we can also set examples for the people in our lives.* Have your child complete the activity and then pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

The Catechumenate in the Early Church

Engage: Page 27

- ▶ Discuss feelings that someone might experience on the first day at a new school.
Say: *To help us navigate, we often turn to others.* **Ask:** *What can we do to help people who want to become Catholic?* (Possible answer: pray for them)
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we will learn about how people became Christian in the early Church. We will also learn about the Sacraments of Initiation, through which we are welcomed into the Church.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 28–29

- ▶ Display various membership cards and discuss the responsibilities and benefits of belonging to groups. **Say:** *Anyone can join the Church. The responsibilities that come with being a member are to believe in Jesus and to follow his teachings.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title Joining the Early Church and the first four paragraphs. Write the word *catechumen* and underline the letters *echu*. **Say:** *This part of the word is related to the word echo. As catechumens learn about Church teachings and practices, they allow the Word of God to echo in their hearts.* Emphasize that we allow God's Word to echo in our hearts whenever we take time to pray, reflect on the Scriptures, and celebrate the sacraments.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud The Sacraments of Initiation. Point out that in the early Church, the Sacraments of Initiation were celebrated at the same time. **Ask:** *How can we make the Church present in places and circumstances where it can be nourishment for the life of all people?* (Possible answer: We can make the Church present by standing up for people who are oppressed or victimized.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature on page 29. Explain that in Baptism by full immersion, the person being baptized walks into the baptismal font, and his or her head is lowered into the water three times, once as each Person of the Trinity is named. Draw attention to the photo. **Say:** *In this church the baptismal font, which is located near the church entrance, allows for Baptism by full immersion.* Point out which method of Baptism your parish routinely uses.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 30–31

- ▶ Display a bottle of water, a loaf of bread, and a jar of olive oil. Together brainstorm all the ways these items can be used. **Say:** *As Catholics we use these items in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title The Sacraments of Initiation and the section Baptism. Draw attention to the word *justice*. **Say:** *Justice is the virtue that guides us to give to God and to others what is due to them.* Point out that even after Baptism, people can sin by using the gift of free will to turn away from God. **Say:** *We share the grace we have received through Baptism every time we perform actions that build up God's kingdom.*

- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Draw attention to the last sentence. **Say:** *Ultimately, grace and Salvation are mysteries. Even as we strive to understand them, we must be careful not to “play God” and decide for ourselves who is or is not saved.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the section Confirmation on page 31. **Ask:** *What rites are used during the Sacrament of Confirmation? (anointing the forehead with oil, the words “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit,” laying on of hands)*
- ▶ Read aloud the section Eucharist. **Say:** *The Eucharist is the fullest sign of God’s Revelation. It also signifies what we strive for: complete union with God, which gives us the strength and desire to be Christ’s Body and Blood for others.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Ready for Confirmation feature. **Say:** *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit that we receive in Confirmation transform us. They strengthen our desire to share the Gospel message with others through our words and actions.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 32–33

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. Discuss the different types of promises we might make, such as making a promise, pledging an oath, or taking a vow. **Say:** *If we do not keep our promises, people might think that we are not trustworthy.*
- ▶ Have your child read Our Baptismal Promises and reflect silently. **Say:** *When you have a difficult time keeping your baptismal promises, you can talk to Jesus. He will help you stay true to your beliefs.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 33. **Ask:** *What are your best talents? With what communities do you share these talents?* Point out that our talents are gifts from God and that he wants us to share these gifts with others to build up his kingdom.
- ▶ Together read aloud Giving and Receiving in Community. Share stories about people or groups you both know who have served the Church as missionaries. Then invite your child to describe times when he or she observed or participated in customs that were not his or her own. **Ask:** *How did you feel about this experience?* (Possible answers: interested, curious) **Say:** *The many cultures that make up the human community are like different colors that make up a beautiful palette.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Gifts to Share and complete the activity independently.

Respond: Page 34

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and answer the questions independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? After your child completes the activity, **say:** *When we preach the Gospel message, we grow in our relationship with God, and we share his grace with others.* Conclude by praying together the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Celebrating Ordinary Time

Engage: Page 35

- ▶ Say aloud the word *ordinary*. Invite your child to name words he or she associates with this word. Point out that words can have multiple meanings. **Say:** *In this context the word ordinary comes from the word ordinal, and it means "counted time."*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Celebrating Ordinary Time and the sentences in the blue box. Discuss the questions. Then read aloud the page. **Say:** *In this session we will learn how we can celebrate Ordinary Time in ways that will help us grow in our relationship with God and the Church.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 36–37

- ▶ Display a memento, such as a photo, that reminds you of an important person in your life. Share why that memento helps you remember the person. **Say:** *We are going to learn about relics, which are physical reminders that help us remember the saints.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title Saints Show Us the Way and the first three paragraphs. **Ask:** *What is one thing we do during Ordinary Time?* (reflect on Jesus' call to discipleship and how we can best use our gifts to respond to this call) *What can we do to help us reflect?* (pray, celebrate the sacraments, read Scripture)
- ▶ To help your child understand the differences among the types of relics, draw a two-by-three-cell chart. In the left column, list the three types of relics. Then together list in the right column examples of objects that represent each type of relic.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Emphasize that Catholics do not worship Mary, the saints, or physical objects. **Say:** *To worship anyone or anything other than God is a sin against the First Commandment.* Point out that we turn to Mary and the saints as examples of how to live and that we ask them to intercede on our behalf.
- ▶ Together read aloud Saints and Feast Days. Explain that while the Church has a universal liturgical calendar for major feast days, each diocese may have a slightly different calendar that includes important local celebrations. Name any local feasts that are celebrated in your parish or diocese.
- ▶ Point out that as members of the Communion of Saints, we celebrate our joys through the Church's feast days and that we support one another in living as Jesus' disciples.
- ▶ Read aloud the section Models of Discipleship on page 37. Give your child time to complete the activity.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 38–39

- ▶ Display various images of Mary. **Ask:** *What do these images tell us about Mary?* (Possible answers: She is a prayerful person. She practiced the virtue of humility. She is Jesus' mother.)

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title Turn to Mary and the first two paragraphs. Explain that the grace Mary received to remain obedient to God is the same grace that we receive through Baptism. **Say:** *Like Mary, our lives are a pilgrimage of faith. God calls us to grow in our relationship with him, and he has given us the gift of faith to help us do so.*
- ▶ Read aloud the Ready for Confirmation feature. **Ask:** *When do we first make a commitment to our Catholic faith?* (at Baptism) Explain that one way for us to respond to the gift of grace is to thank God in prayer.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Devotion to Mary on page 39. Emphasize that all the good that comes to us through Mary actually comes from God the Father. **Ask:** *Why does Mary have a special place in the life of the Church?* (She is the mother of our Savior, and she is a person of great virtue and holiness.) Explain that the words of the *Magnificat* are the words Mary used to greet her cousin, Elizabeth, after John the Baptist leapt for joy in Elizabeth's womb.
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Point out in the painting the symbolic images that are mentioned. **Ask:** *In addition to the symbols that were mentioned in the text, what else does this painting tell us about Mary?*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 40–41

- ▶ Read aloud the title Praying with Mary and the paragraphs in the left column. Remind your child that we can always pray to Mary and the saints. Point out that we do not worship them but turn to them for guidance and ask them to pray to God on our behalf.
- ▶ Pray aloud the *Magnificat* together. Then **say:** *Quietly pray the reflection to yourself.* After giving your child time to reflect, pray aloud the Hail Mary.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? on page 41. Point out that humans are sensory beings and that we tend to collect physical objects that remind us of our identity. Explain that the Church does the same thing.
- ▶ Together read aloud What Good Are Relics? **Ask:** *How are Church relics similar to personal ones?* (Possible answers: They remind us that we are not alone. They remind us of God's love.) Discuss any relics in your church.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud A Living Reminder and then complete the activity independently. Encourage him or her to share the experience with you.

Respond: Page 42

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and the terms. Remind him or her to use the page references to help find correct answers as he or she completes the activity independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Have your child complete the activity. Remind him or her to reflect on the lives of the saints during the next week. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



We Belong

Begin

Read aloud the unit title. **Say:** *Imagine that a visitor from another planet wanted to move to our town.* **Ask:** *What rules would that person need to follow to be a successful member of our community?* Together make a list of rules. Explain that in this unit, your child will learn what it means to be a member of the Catholic Church. **Say:** *As members of the Church, we have both rights and responsibilities that help us live out Jesus' teachings. Today we're going to learn about two saints who established communities for men and women.* Point out that the members of these communities followed a specific set of rules that helped them live as disciples.

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 45. **Say:** *Think of a time when you were scared, stressed out, tired, or hungry. Try to recall what your instincts pushed you to do.* **Ask:** *Why might it be easy to forget about God during hard times?* (Possible answer: because we are worried about our basic needs) **Say:** *Why is it crucial for us to remember God during hard times?* (Possible answer: Only God can save us and comfort us.)

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saints Relate. **Say:** *We are like Saint Benedict and Saint Scholastica when we choose to participate in communities whose members nourish one another and build up God's kingdom by performing acts of service.*

Turn to page 46. Have your child read aloud the section Forming a New Community. **Ask:** *Why did Benedict move to the cave on Mount Subiaco?* (He became discouraged by the immoral lives that many people around him in Rome were living.) *What did he do while he lived there?* (fasted and prayed so that he could better discern what God was asking of him) *Why did other men join him?* (They were interested in a more contemplative way of life.) *Why was it important for the monks to live together in community?* (Possible answer: so that they could support one another in their life of prayer and manual labor)

Read aloud Saint Scholastica. Share your own stories of being reunited with family members, such as at holiday reunions with cousins who live at a distance.

With your child, add Benedict's feast day, March 21, and Scholastica's feast day, February 10, to your calendar. Celebrate their lives by learning more about Benedictine monasteries and identifying how you can follow the example set by Benedictine monks and nuns.

We Believe

Engage: Page 47

- ▶ Give your child a few moments to reflect on how a person models Christian discipleship. Provide art materials and ask your child to make a card thanking this person for the examples that he or she sets in your child's faith story. Encourage your child to give or send the card to the intended recipient.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *As Catholics we belong to a family of faith that has a particular story. In this session we are going to learn about decisions made by early Church leaders that have continued to shape our faith story.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 48–49

- ▶ Play the game 20 Questions. Pick an item in the room and have your child guess what the item is by asking no more than 20 yes/no questions. **Say:** *You used clues to try to solve a mystery. In this article we are going to learn how disciples in the early Church used clues to understand the Incarnation.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title The Early Ecumenical Councils, the first paragraph, and the section The Council of Nicaea. **Ask:** *What teaching did the bishops affirm at the Council of Nicaea?* (that Jesus is consubstantial with the Father, that Jesus Christ is God from all eternity, that Jesus was not created)
- ▶ Read aloud the Council of Constantinople. Point out the word *Trinity*. Draw a triangle, and label each point with one of the Persons of the Trinity. Use this image to emphasize that the Three Persons of the Trinity are connected as one being. Remind your child that the Nicene Creed is the Profession of Faith that we pray together during Mass.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Council of Ephesus on page 49. Emphasize that God entered the world in the Person of Jesus through Mary's willingness to say yes to God.
- ▶ Together read aloud The Council of Chalcedon and An Important Question. Point out that Eutyches believed that Jesus' divine nature negated his human nature. **Ask:** *What did the bishops teach at the Council of Chalcedon?* (that Jesus shares a divine nature with his Father in Heaven and that he also shares a human nature with the human family)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Explain that a basilica is a Church that has received special honor and is often a pilgrimage location.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 50–51

- ▶ **Say:** *A mission statement is an overview of an organization's purpose and core beliefs.* Display and read aloud mission statements from various organizations. Invite your child to write a personal mission statement. **Say:** *Now we're going to learn about the Nicene Creed, a statement that summarizes the beliefs of the Church.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title Professing Our Faith and the first paragraph. **Say:** *After Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, many people became Christians.*

- ▶ Read aloud The Nicene Creed. **Say:** *Here the word Person refers to the three different ways that we, in our limited state, can understand and relate to God.* Point out that we celebrate Jesus' Incarnation at Christmas and that the most important celebration of Jesus' Paschal Mystery happens during Holy Week.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character on page 51. Explain that when we pray aloud the Nicene Creed, we profess from our heart our belief, or faith, in the Church and its teachings.
- ▶ Read aloud Ready for Confirmation. **Ask:** *How can we live out our personal commitment to God?* (Possible answers: pray, attend Mass, celebrate the sacraments, follow Jesus' example) Explain that when we renew our baptismal promises by saying "I do," we are making a public declaration of our faith.
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 272 in the back of the book. Pray aloud the Nicene Creed together. Explain that a statement of faith is a sentence or phrase that expresses a central belief of our faith. Name some of the statements of faith that are part of the Nicene Creed. Give your child time to complete the activity I Believe.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 52–53

- ▶ Read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. Tell your child that the word *Amen* means "so be it" or "truly."
- ▶ Explain that some of our communal prayers, such as the Nicene Creed, can also be used during our personal prayer time. Begin praying aloud the Creed together. Ask your child to pray aloud each reflection and allow time to pray silently before praying the next part of the Creed.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 53. **Ask:** *Who are you?* (Possible answers: I am a son. I am a basketball player. I am a musician.) **Say:** *As you continue to grow into adulthood, one of your biggest responsibilities will be to discover your identity. As a member of the Church, you have a head start.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Who Am I and What Do I Believe? **Ask:** *How does the author describe some of the things he did as a teenager?* (stupid, not me) Point out that it is important to pay attention to this feeling because if we ignore it, the feeling will eventually go away. **Say:** *When we listen to this feeling, we are listening to our conscience.*
- ▶ Invite your child to complete the activity and share his or her personal identity symbol and its meaning with you.

Respond: Page 54

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the activity. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help completing each sentence.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? After your child completes the activity, encourage him or her to follow through with the ideas during the week. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



Praise God in Worship

Engage: Page 55

- ▶ Have your child make a calendar for the past week and write some of the activities he or she did each day. **Say:** *Let's think about this. If you gave this calendar to someone who did not know you, what might this person think your priorities were?* Then read aloud Matthew 6:19–21. **Ask:** *What does this passage teach us about the treasure of time?* (Possible answer: We should use our time to do things that build up God's kingdom.)
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn about someone who used his time to follow Jesus. His life of prayerful service provides an example that we can follow.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 56–57

- ▶ Display a wrapped package that contains a symbol of a gift you share with others. Ask your child to open the gift. **Say:** *Each of us has received gifts from God that we are called to share with others.* Invite your child to share the gifts he or she has received from God and tell how these gifts can be used to serve others.
- ▶ Read aloud the title Saint Gregory the Great and the first five paragraphs. **Ask:** *What did Gregory want to do instead of becoming pope?* (He wanted to remain a monk at Saint Andrew.) **Ask:** *Ultimately, what did Gregory decide to do?* (follow God's will for him) State that Gregory's life demonstrates why it is important to spend time listening to God in prayer. **Say:** *Doing so helps us discover what God is asking of us.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Life in the Church. **Ask:** *How might we believe that the Holy Spirit animated Gregory the Great's life?* (Possible answer: He sold most of his land and donated the proceeds to people who were poor.)
- ▶ Read aloud Gregory's Influence on the Liturgy on page 57. Explain that while the Mass is the most commonly celebrated liturgy, any public celebration of our faith could be considered a liturgy.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Ask:** *What was so great about these two popes?* (Possible answer: They used their authority to help others.) Explain that sometimes people with authority use their power to glorify themselves.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 58–59

- ▶ Play a recording of "O, Come, All Ye Faithful." Invite your child to sing along. **Ask:** *What can we do to show Jesus adoration?* (Possible answer: pray before the Blessed Sacrament) **Say:** *In this article we are going to learn about how to adore God and how we are called to do so.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title Called to Worship God and the first paragraph. **Say:** *Adoration is a form of prayer in which we are fully present to God.*
- ▶ Turn to page 264 and read aloud the First Commandment. Then read aloud the section The First Commandment. **Ask:** *What does the First Commandment teach us?* (We are called to believe in, hope in, and love God above all else.)

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Explain that during adoration, we are shown Jesus in the Eucharist so that we can adore God for the gift of Salvation we receive through the Paschal Mystery.
- ▶ Read aloud the Second and Third Commandments on page 264. Then have your child read aloud the sections about the Second and Third Commandments on page 59.
Ask: *How can we respect God's name?* (by not using it, or the names of Mary and the saints, in ways that dishonor them) *What can our family do to observe the Third Commandment?* (Possible answers: attend Mass together, watch a movie or play a game together)
- ▶ Read aloud Our Relationships with Others. Emphasize that through his words and actions, Jesus taught us how to put the Ten Commandments into practice.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Keeping the Commandments. Work together to complete the activity.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 60–61

- ▶ Read aloud the title How Awesome Is Your Name and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *How do you work to conserve the natural resources we have been given by God?* (Possible answer: by turning off the water when I brush my teeth)
- ▶ Pray aloud A Psalm as Prayer together. Invite your child to reflect on the wonders of creation that he or she has seen.
- ▶ Share song lyrics you once misunderstood and how you felt when you discovered what the words really were. Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? on page 61. **Say:** *The teachings, practices, and rituals of the Church are like song lyrics. Let's read how one little girl learned to sing her faith.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud What Shapes Us? Invite your child to describe similar moments in his or her faith life and tell what basic message was learned. Then have your child identify contrary messages that come from our consumerist culture.
Ask: *How can we help ourselves be shaped by the faith messages rather than by these contrary messages?* Discuss your child's response.
- ▶ Have your child complete A Message of Faith independently. Encourage him or her to share the response with you.

Respond: Page 62

- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child write the answers to the questions independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Have your child complete the activity and be mindful of his or her response during the week. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Monasteries and Communities

Engage: Page 63

- ▶ **Ask:** *Why do we follow rules?* (Possible answer: to help us live together peacefully) Together make a list of rules that you both think can help people live together peacefully.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn about the monastic movement in the early Church. Living and working in a community can be challenging, but it can also be rewarding.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 64–65

- ▶ Sit together in a dark room. **Ask:** *What can you see? How does the darkness make you feel?* (Possible response: anxious) Turn on a flashlight. Discuss how the light makes you feel better because it is easier to see your surroundings. **Say:** *In this article we are going to learn how the Church served as a beacon of light during the Dark Ages.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title A Response to the Dark Ages and the first three paragraphs. **Ask:** *Where can people turn for help when they are facing difficult situations?* (Possible answers: family, friends, charitable institutions, the Church) Point out that just as it does today, the Church served as a source of comfort for people during the Dark Ages. **Ask:** *How did the Church serve as a beacon of light during this time period?* (Church leaders worked to preach the Gospel to invading tribes, heal people who were sick, and reestablish society. Bishops served as civic leaders and protected the people from dishonest tax collectors.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Say:** *The word rule comes from the Latin word regula, which means “guidepost,” or “a source of direction when one is lost.”*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud The Rule of Saint Benedict. **Ask:** *Why did Benedict write his Rule?* (Possible answer: to remind the monks to seek God in prayer, silence, work, and service to guests and one another) *How did Benedictine monks serve the Church?* (offering shelter to travelers and pilgrims, feeding those who were hungry, healing those who were sick, keeping historical records)
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature on page 65. **Say:** *Visual art expresses something that we cannot express in words. As we see here, people often go to extraordinary lengths to save and preserve art.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the section A New Rule. Invite your child to complete the activity independently and share his or her response with you.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 66–67

- ▶ Together look through newspapers or magazines for ads that reinforce the notion of immediate gratification. **Ask:** *What is an example of a way that we can give up instant gratification to achieve lasting joy?* (Possible answer: refrain from buying the latest video game to save money for college)

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title The Evangelical Counsels and the first six paragraphs. **Ask:** *How can we live out the virtues of poverty, chastity, and obedience? (We can live out the virtue of poverty by donating part of our allowance to charity. We can live out the virtue of chastity by refraining from sexual relationships. We can live out the virtue of obedience by respecting those who are responsible for our care.)*
- ▶ Read aloud Strengthened by the Counsels. Point out that during physical labor, monks and nuns practiced meditation by reflecting on God's presence in the world and the gifts he has given us. **Say:** *We can meditate throughout our day as well. One of the greatest contributions that Saint Ignatius of Loyola made to the Church is his spirituality, which reminds us to look for God in the world around us.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Past Meets Present. Point to the word *monasticism*. **Say:** *Long before Saint Benedict founded his first monastery, people lived together in religious communities. This movement is known as monasticism.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.
- ▶ Remind your child that we are all called to practice the evangelical counsels. Take time to summarize ways we can live out each one.

Reflect: Pages 68–69

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. **Say:** *As Jesus' followers we are called to heal broken relationships rather than walking away from them.*
- ▶ **Say:** *Take a moment to center yourself. Open your heart to God's presence. Together pray aloud the prayer. Say: Take a moment to pray a short prayer, asking God to bring healing to a broken relationship that you might be experiencing.* After giving your child time to pray silently, conclude by praying together the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Ask your child to recall a small disagreement or difference of opinion he or she has experienced in the last few days. Discuss how the disagreement was resolved. **Ask:** *How might the disagreement have been a gift from God in disguise? (Possible answer: It gave me a chance to be generous and understanding.)* Read aloud the introductory paragraph and the title in Where Do I Fit In? on page 69.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Why Do We Need Community? **Ask:** *Why is it difficult for us to prefer someone else's fulfillment over our own? (Possible answer: Our society tells us that it is more important to be concerned with our needs than the needs of other people.)*
- ▶ Have your child complete the activity Called to Community independently. Invite your child to share his or her response.

Respond: Page 70

- ▶ Read aloud the directions. Remind your child to read all the choices before choosing one. Have him or her complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? **Say:** *Practicing the virtues of poverty, chastity, and obedience helps us build up God's kingdom and live together peacefully.* Have your child complete the activity and then together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Sent on a Mission

Engage: Page 71

- ▶ Discuss experiences you have both had where you shared exciting news with someone. Point out why you were excited to share the news and how other people responded to the news. **Say:** *A benefit of living in a community is having people who support us when times are tough. We also have others with whom we can share our good news.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to reflect on how our relationship with Jesus fills us with joy and how we are called to share that joy with others by serving as missionaries.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 72–73

- ▶ If possible, play a recording of the theme song from *Mission: Impossible*. **Say:** *In Mission: Impossible, the agents were sent to complete tasks that many thought could not be done. As Jesus' followers we are also sent on a mission—to spread the Gospel message.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title The Church's Mission and the first three paragraphs. **Say:** *The word mission comes from a Latin word meaning "to send."* **Ask:** *What did Church leaders send the early missionaries to do? (leave their homes and share the Gospel with people who lived beyond the boundaries of the empire)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. **Ask:** *What does the Sacrament of Confirmation call us to do? (spread the Gospel, be missionaries in our own lives) What are a few concrete examples of how we can be missionaries? (Possible answers: help a neighbor with yard work, speak up for those who are oppressed)*
- ▶ Read aloud Respond to the Call. Point out that people who stand up for the truth are often persecuted. Research contemporary missionaries who are persecuted for standing up for what is right.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Past Meets Present on page 73. Explain that during his life, Jesus sent women and men to spread his message. Read aloud the story of the Samaritan women at the well [John 4:4–42] or the story of Mary Magdalene [John 20:11–18].
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 74–75

- ▶ Play a game where you both sit six feet away from a wall and see who can roll a ball closest to the wall without touching the wall. **Say:** *This game required a gentle touch. Now we're going to learn about spreading the Gospel to others, which often requires a gentle touch as well.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title Called to Spread the Good News and the first three paragraphs. Point out that the theme of the New Evangelization is that all of us are called to share the Gospel with others. **Say:** *Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI developed the New Evangelization as a response to our contemporary culture, which often rejects Christian values.*



- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Say:** *This picture reminds us that Jesus is always with us.* Point out that when we engage in acts of evangelization, we help others recognize Jesus' presence in the world around them.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Live Faith-Filled Lives. Ask: *What is the message we spread when we give in to temptations?* (Possible answers: that our faith is not important to us, that societal values are more important than Christian values) Explain that the Church calls us to respect people's religious freedom because it recognizes that each religious tradition reveals some ray of truth. Share your experiences of interacting with people from other religious traditions. **Say:** *By remaining true to our own faith and treating people of other traditions with respect, we spread the Good News.*
- ▶ Read aloud the section A Modern Missionary on page 75. Give your child time to complete the activity and invite him or her to share the answers with you.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 76–77

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. Explain that there are different types of meditation and that Christian meditation is always focused on God.
- ▶ **Say:** *Find a comfortable position and quiet yourself for prayer.* Invite your child to pray aloud the first paragraph of the section Meditation of a Missionary. Pause briefly, then pray aloud the quotation from Pope John Paul II's message. Read aloud the next sentence and the questions that follow. Pause after each question to give your child time to reflect. Then pray aloud the final paragraph. Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What is the butterfly effect?* (a small change in one place that has a ripple effect and makes very large changes elsewhere) **Say:** *Our actions in the world are like this effect. One small word or deed can have a life-changing impact on someone we hardly know.* Have your child read aloud the introductory paragraph.
- ▶ Together read aloud Who Has Carried the Message of Jesus to Me? **Say:** *Mrs. Brennan doesn't know it, but by teaching an ordinary lesson about one of Jesus' miracles, she ended up touching the heart and mind of someone many years later.* **Ask:** *What else accounts for the power of Mrs. Brennan's action?* (Possible answers: Christ himself, the miracle of the Good News)
- ▶ Have your child complete the activity independently and encourage him or her to put the idea into action in the coming days.

Respond: Page 78

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the crossword puzzle.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Give your child time to complete the activity. **Say:** *When we serve as missionaries, we set an example for how others can follow Jesus' teachings.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Celebrating Advent and Christmas

Engage: Page 79

- ▶ Together make a list of items you would need for a family party. **Ask:** *How does preparing for the event make it more meaningful?* (Possible answer: The preparation raises our anticipation for the event.)
- ▶ Read aloud the title Celebrating Advent and Christmas and the sentences in the blue box. Discuss the questions. Then read aloud the page. **Ask:** *What can we do to prepare the way of the Lord?* (Possible answer: Proclaim the Gospel message.) *What is the Incarnation?* (God becoming man in the Person of Jesus) Display a liturgical calendar and point out the seasons of Advent and Christmas.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 80–81

- ▶ Discuss Advent traditions celebrated by your family and your parish. **Ask:** *How do these traditions help us prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth?* (Possible answers: They help us focus on the real meaning of the Advent and Christmas seasons. They encourage us to reflect on what Jesus' birth means to us today.)
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title A Time to Prepare and the first three paragraphs. **Ask:** *How was Advent first celebrated in the Church?* (Local communities followed various traditions to help prepare them to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas.) Draw your child's attention to the word *apologists*. **Say:** *An apologist is anyone who defends the faith through his or her words and actions.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Say:** *In this case, doctor is an honorary title given to someone who has made significant contributions to our understanding of who God is.*
- ▶ Together read aloud O Antiphons on page 81. Point out that Catholic rituals include numerous antiphons, such as the antiphons used during the Liturgy of the Hours. **Say:** *This form of prayer includes Scripture readings, hymns, and writings from the early Fathers of the Church.* Read aloud the lyrics of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" and point out each of the O Antiphons.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Ready for Confirmation feature. Give your child writing supplies and then **say:** *Take a few moments to write questions you can use to help you reflect on who Jesus is and what his coming to earth means to you.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 82–83

- ▶ Display various images of angels. **Say:** *Throughout history God has relied on angels to deliver messages to people. He also relies on heralds—all those who announce his Good News through their words and actions.*

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title God's Messengers and the first two paragraphs. Remind your child that the Christmas season begins with Mass on Christmas Eve and goes through the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord in early January. Read aloud the story of the Annunciation. [Luke 1:26–38] **Ask:** *What message did the herald Gabriel deliver?* (that Mary was going to become Jesus' mother)
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Ask:** *What are the townspeople doing to celebrate Jesus' birth?* (Possible answer: They are offering gifts to Jesus.)
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the sections Biblical Heralds and Saintly Heralds on page 83. Explain that we prepare the way of the Lord every time we perform acts that build up God's kingdom.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud We Are Heralds. Give him or her time to reflect silently on how to live out the virtues of simplicity, poverty, and humility.
- ▶ Read aloud the Our Catholic Character feature.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 84–85

- ▶ Read aloud the title God's Greatest Gift and the paragraphs in the left column. Point out that the prayer on this page is a form of *lectio divina*, a reflective way of praying with Scripture.
- ▶ Lead your child in the prayer Who Do you Say That I Am? Pause as appropriate to give your child time to reflect on the Scripture passage and the questions. Conclude by praying together the closing prayer.
- ▶ Ask your child to name his or her favorite childhood storybooks and share the memories associated with them. **Ask:** *Did the joy you experience come from the pages of the book itself or from somewhere else?* (Possible answer: It came from the pages of the book together with memories of reading it with a loved one.) **Say:** *The joy of God is the same. He is in the Gospel stories because Jesus is the Son of God.* Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? on page 85.
- ▶ Together read aloud Where's God? **Ask:** *How was God present even in the man's negative response?* (Possible answers: The comment caused the author to feel more strongly her own conviction that God is everywhere. It increased her desire to share this news with others. It led to the writing of this article.)
- ▶ Invite your child to complete the activity God Is Present independently.

Respond: Page 86

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions. Remind him or her to use the page references to help find the correct matches as he or she completes the activity independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Allow time for your child to complete his or her prayer. **Say:** *Prayer is one way for us to prepare our minds and hearts for Jesus' coming.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



We Worship

Begin

Read aloud the unit title. Work together to write a definition of the word *worship*. Then compare your definition with the definition in the Glossary. **Say:** *In this unit we will explore how worshipping together as a community helps us grow in our relationship with God.*

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 89. Explain that Thomas Aquinas's family was not opposed to all religious orders; they were only opposed to Thomas joining the Dominicans. **Say:** *In Thomas Aquinas's time, the Dominican community was new. It was considered by many to be too unconventional.* Point out that the early Dominicans supported themselves by begging for food and clothing. **Say:** *This is not the life that Thomas's wealthy parents had in mind for him.*

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saint Relates. Point out the contributions that Saint Thomas Aquinas has made to the Church. **Say:** *God blessed Thomas Aquinas with many gifts. In response, Thomas Aquinas chose to share these gifts with the Church.* Give your child a moment to reflect on the gifts he or she has received from God and how these gifts can be shared with the Church. Discuss the ideas.

Turn to page 90. Invite your child to read aloud Writer and Teacher. **Say:** *Thomas Aquinas poured his heart and soul into his work, which included writing the Summa Theologiae.* Emphasize that Aquinas's writings demonstrate that the truths revealed by God can be understood through the use of human reasoning.

Ask your child to write the word *transubstantiation*. **Say:** *Transubstantiation is a long word that we don't often use in conversation. The first part, trans, means "to change." The root of the second part of the word refers to substance.* Point out that through the words of consecration, the substance of the bread and wine change into the Body and Blood of the risen Christ that we receive in Holy Communion.

Read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. **Say:** *The role of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is to ensure that the Church remains faithful to the truths that have been revealed by God.*

With your child, add Thomas Aquinas's feast day, January 28, to your calendar. Celebrate his life by playing a recording of *O Salutaris* or *Pange Lingua*. Remind your child that these hymns written by Thomas Aquinas can help us grow in our relationship with God and our appreciation of the Eucharist.

The Church and Society

Engage: Page 91

- ▶ Display images that groups might use to identify themselves, such as team logos. Discuss how these logos help others identify each group. **Ask:** *What images might we use to help others identify us as Catholics?* (Possible answers: Bible, cross, crucifix)
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn about contributions the Church made to the world during the Middle Ages. We're also going to learn about the Marks of the Church. These are attitudes and behaviors that help us identify the Church and its members.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 92–93

- ▶ Write this phrase: *beginning, _____, end.* **Ask:** *What word is missing? (middle) In our study of Church history, what might we consider the beginning?* (Possible answers: Jesus' birth, the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost) **Say:** *In this session we will look at a "middle" point in Church history.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title The Middle Ages and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *Why did the bishops work to establish the Truce of God?* (Possible answer: to remind people that God wants us to treat our neighbors as ourselves)
- ▶ Read aloud the sections The Split Between East and West and Cities and Universities. Emphasize that while the split between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church continues to exist, leaders of both Churches are working toward reconciliation. Point out that few people could read and write in the Middle Ages. **Say:** *It was a privilege to attend a college or a university. Those who did made contributions to the Church that continue to shape our understanding of the Church and its teaching.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Religious Orders on page 93. Point out that members of the Mendicant Orders built up the Kingdom of God through direct service to others.
- ▶ Together read aloud Francis of Assisi. **Ask:** *Why did Francis's lifestyle attract followers?* (Possible answer: His followers were also interested in living a simple life dedicated to the Gospel.) Point out that the wounds that Francis of Assisi experienced are known as the stigmata and that other holy men and women have experienced the wounds as well.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Cross of Jesus. **Say:** *When we help alleviate the suffering of others, we also alleviate Jesus' suffering.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 94–95

- ▶ Write a large Z. Explain that this mark was used by the fictional character Zorro, a Spanish hero who helped people who were poor. **Ask:** *If you traveled the world standing up for oppressed people, what mark would you leave behind?* Discuss your child's response. **Say:** *In this article we are going to read about the Marks of the Church, four characteristics that identify our global Catholic community.*

- ▶ Read aloud the title The Marks of the Church and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *What has Jesus instructed the Church to do?* (continue his mission in the world)
- ▶ Read aloud The Church Is One. Emphasize that the bishops, united under the pope, are the strongest sign of the unity of the Church because they are the direct successors of the Apostles.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. Explain that through Confirmation, we receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Read aloud The Church Is Holy on page 95. **Ask:** *Why is the Church holy?* (It is one with Jesus Christ.)
- ▶ Together read aloud The Church Is Catholic and The Church Is Apostolic. **Say:** *It is important for us to remain in conversation with our Christian brothers and sisters from other denominations.* Explain that the gift of infallibility does not mean that the pope is perfect or without sin.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Together name individuals who, by their lives, model for us the four Marks of the Church.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 96–97

- ▶ Read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *How does our community work together to live the way Jesus showed us?* (Possible answer: by sponsoring food drives or service trips)
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together. Then give your child time to reflect silently. Conclude by praying together the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ **Ask:** *When you were little, what did you want to be when you were older?* Discuss your child's response. **Say:** *As we grow and mature, we continue to learn more about ourselves and the gifts we have received from God.* Read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 97. **Say:** *The journey toward our vocation is often an adventure.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud How Do We Know What God Wants of Us? **Say:** *God has a clever sense of humor. What is clever about the fact that Father O'Brien heard his call outside a courthouse?* (Possible answer: Courthouses are where people decide the truth about an issue.) Explain that sometimes people receive the call to serve God in new ways after they have already begun a profession that they might enjoy.
- ▶ Allow time for your child to write a personal prayer in the section Listen to God.

Respond: Page 98

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and answer each question. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Invite your child to complete the activity. **Say:** *By living out the Marks of the Church, you put into practice the words you proclaim when you pray the Nicene Creed.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



The Great Cathedrals and Worship

Engage: Page 99

- ▶ Look at images of magnificent structures, such as Willis Tower, the Empire State Building, the Gateway Arch, and St. Peter's Basilica. Discuss how the form of each building influences the function for which it is used.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we're going to learn about cathedrals and the role these buildings play in our worship of God.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 100–101

- ▶ Invite your child to close his or her eyes and answer questions about your home, such as what color the walls are in the kitchen and how many windows are in a certain room. **Say:** *We often spend time in a place without paying much attention to it. We will open our eyes to the beauty and meaning of cathedrals.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article The Great Cathedrals. Provide this information as your child explores the picture of the cathedral:
 1. Stained-glass windows show stories of faith.
 2. Symbols of the natural world point to the grandeur and glory of God.
 3. The bishop's throne is where a bishop sits when he celebrates Mass.
 4. The rounded section of the cathedral often contains the tabernacle, the altar, and the bishop's throne.
 5. A crypt is a space beneath the altar that holds the remains of those who have gone before us in faith.
 6. We use the aisle to process to the altar.
 7. The nave symbolizes the boat from which Jesus calmed the waters.
 8. Images of the heroes of our faith remind us that we are members of the Communion of Saints and the Mystical Body of Christ.
 9. These windows illuminate the central part of the interior.
 10. This window symbolizes the harmony and integrity of the life of faith.
 11. Gargoyles are statues whose purpose is to keep water away from the walls of the cathedral.
 12. The bell tower holds the chimes that call people to worship.
 13. Lofty spires allowed people to see the cathedral at a great distance.
- ▶ Together look online to find an image of your diocesan cathedral. Make a plan to visit it in the near future.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 102–103

- ▶ Display images of various symbols, such as fire, water, and oil. Invite your child to suggest what each symbol represents. **Say:** *Symbols help us express a reality that we cannot fully express in words.*

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title A Sacramental Church and the first section. **Say:** *Just as cells are the building blocks of human life, rites are the building blocks of the sacraments.* **Ask:** *How is the word sacrament defined?* (the visible signs of divine life that God shares with us) **Say:** *The sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ and given to us by the Church. Through the sacraments we receive the grace to open our minds and hearts to God and one another.* Display pictures of various sacramentals (if necessary, refer to the Glossary for the definition of *sacramental*) and invite your child to explain how the sacramentals are used in prayer and worship.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. **Say:** *In this case the word seal means "marked, protected, and strengthened by" rather than "closed with."*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud A Life of Prayer on page 103. Draw your child's attention to the word *piety*. Read aloud the definition of the word from the Glossary. Point out that acts of piety are like sacramentals in that they use everyday behavior to help us grow in our relationship with God. Share particular acts of piety that are common to your parish, such as praying the Rosary before Mass or praying novenas for feast days.
- ▶ Make a two-column chart with the headings *School* and *Characteristics*. Together write the names of the schools of spirituality included in the section and describe the characteristics of each.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Point out that we celebrate the sacraments in a church building. **Say:** *We are called to "be Church" by sharing Jesus' peace and love with others.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 104–105

- ▶ Read aloud the title Growing Closer to God and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *What do the seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer teach us?* (how to place ourselves in God's presence and speak with him in prayer)
- ▶ Have your child pray aloud the first part of the Lord's Prayer. Pause a moment before praying aloud the first reflection. Then have your child pray aloud the second part of the Lord's Prayer. Pray aloud the second reflection and allow time to reflect silently.
- ▶ Ahead of time, write each of the following letters on separate note cards: G, O, D, I, S, L, I, G, H, T. Mix up the cards and **ask:** *What message do these cards indicate?* (No message—they are just letters.) Work together to put the cards in order so that they tell a message about God. **Say:** *On our own, things don't make much sense. But when we join together with others, we find meaning and share God's light.* Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? on page 105.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Let There Be Light! **Ask:** *What about the spectacle was particularly moving for the author?* (the fact that the people whose lights she was seeing were unaware that they were contributing to such beauty) **Say:** *This is also true for us. We are part of a design that is more beautiful than we could ever dream. If we remember this, the light of our lives will grow brighter and brighter.* Draw your child's attention to the last sentence of the article. **Ask:** *What do you think this means?* (Possible answers: We do not accept darkness, evil, and misery as ultimate realities. We have hope.)
- ▶ Have your child complete Revealing God's Presence independently. Encourage him or her to share the response with you.

Respond: Page 106

- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child fill in the blanks independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Have your child complete the activity and be mindful of his or her response during the week. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



Nourished by the Eucharist

Engage: Page 107

- ▶ **Say:** *We are stuck in traffic, and you are late to a party. How would you react in this situation?* Discuss how when we get frustrated, it is better to adopt an “attitude of gratitude” and focus on what we have rather than what we don’t have.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *When we don’t get enough of something, we feel antsy. In this session we’re going to explore this feeling and learn about a powerful source of satisfaction.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 108–109

- ▶ “Accidentally” spill a small cup of water near your child. Make sure there are paper towels nearby. When your child moves to wipe up the water, **say:** *Thank you for helping me!* **Ask:** *Why did you help?* **Say:** *Human beings usually help others when the task is clear and they have what they need to perform it. God wants us to be just as proactive even when the task isn’t clear and resources aren’t readily available.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title Pope Innocent III and the Eucharist and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *What impresses you most about this Church leader?* (Possible answers: his intelligence, his quick rise, his young age, his ability to manage the Crusades and tend to people in need simultaneously) **Say:** *We all have charisms, or gifts, like Pope Innocent III. When we are using these gifts, we feel energized, and we energize others.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. **Say:** *The sacraments give us the strength to build up God’s kingdom by welcoming others.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud The Council of Lateran IV on page 109. **Say:** *The word dogma describes the body of teachings held by the Church.* Point out that the Church’s dogma is presented in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. **Say:** *As Catholics we believe that the Church leaders who were present at the Council of Lateran IV were guided by the Holy Spirit. These men were acting in their role as the Magisterium.* Have your child read aloud the Precepts of the Church on page 264 in the Prayers and Practices section of the book. Invite your child to suggest how living out the Precepts of the Church help us build up God’s kingdom.
- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. Encourage your child to ask an older relative to describe what the celebration of the Mass was like prior to the Second Vatican Council and to describe his or her feelings about the changes.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 110–111

- ▶ **Say:** *I’m going to name three objects. Tell me what these objects have in common: an egg, a wrapped gift, a pinata. (You have to break or tear them open to get to what is inside.) This is true of the Eucharist too. When we “break open” our understanding of this great gift, we come to understand how important it is.*

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title The Sacrament of the Eucharist and the first two paragraphs. **Say:** *In the Eucharist, giving and receiving are intertwined. When we come to Mass, we give our time, attention, and devotion. At the same time, we receive God's grace.*
- ▶ Read aloud Memorial and Sacrifice. **Ask:** *How is the Eucharist a memorial of Jesus' Death? (Through the celebration of the Mass, Christ's Death is made present to us in the Eucharist.) To what do we commit ourselves by celebrating the Eucharist? (to live and die as Jesus did as a person for others)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Then read aloud Matthew 26:26–30. Discuss elements of the artwork that echo the Scripture passage.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Presence on page 111. Point out that the Eucharist is the fullest experience we have of God's nearness. **Say:** *During consecration, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.* **Ask:** *What do we call this change? (transubstantiation) Why do you think that the Church requires a person in a state of mortal sin to receive absolution before receiving the Eucharist? (Possible answer: Receiving absolution signals the person's desire to turn his or her life back over to God.)* **Say:** *When we have received absolution, we are in a state of grace. We are once more open to God's love.*
- ▶ Give your child time to complete the activity in The Eucharist and Me.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 112–113

- ▶ Read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. Have your child prepare himself or herself for prayer.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the first paragraph of the reflection. Then read aloud the images of the litany, pausing after each image to give your child time to reflect silently. Read aloud the last paragraph and then pray together the closing prayer. **Say:** *Let's remember to give thanks for all that we receive in the Eucharist.*
- ▶ Ask your child to describe the best meal he or she has ever had, including where it was, who was there, and the food he or she ate. **Say:** *Isn't it interesting that great meals are never experienced alone, in front of the TV? When we share something, it becomes more real.* Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? on page 113.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Jesus Is There for You. **Say:** *The Eucharist is the gift of Jesus' Real Presence. This act of graciously receiving Holy Communion at Mass nourishes us as individuals and as a community.* **Ask:** *How does the Eucharist nourish us? (Possible answer: It is a source of God's grace.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Here Are Three and discuss the practices.

Respond: Page 114

- ▶ Read aloud the directions. Remind your child to use the page references to help find the correct responses. Have him or her complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? **Say:** *The nourishment that we receive through the Eucharist compels us to do what we can to help others.* Have your child complete the activity and then together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Serving Physical and Spiritual Needs

Engage: Page 115

- ▶ Together share what your greatest talents are, such as good with tools, artistic, computer whiz, and good listener. **Say:** *All of us have received gifts from God that enable us to serve the needs of others.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the questions in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to be reminded that we are members of a Church community and that as members of the Church, we are called to serve others, not ourselves.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 116–117

- ▶ Share stories of community crises and how people in the communities responded heroically. **Say:** *God does not cause crises or disasters to happen. What God does is equip us to love and support one another when they do.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title The Church Preserves and the section The Black Death. **Ask:** *Imagine that a person sitting next to you in school has a highly contagious disease that will kill you if you contract it. How does this make you feel? (Possible answer: It makes me very uncomfortable. It makes me want to stay away from this person and even the room.) How did the Church respond to people's needs? (by tending to those who were sick)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Turn to page 267 in the back of the book to read more about the Works of Mercy. Together brainstorm situations that young people might face that provide an opportunity to practice the Works of Mercy.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud The Avignon Papacy. **Ask:** *What was Saint Catherine of Siena able to do? (convince Pope Gregory XI to return to Rome) Explain that the reason the bishops of France declared Urban's election invalid is that they were still upset that Urban's predecessor had returned to Rome. **Say:** *The Church is like a family. Sometimes we have disagreements, but we trust that God's Spirit will lead us to a faithful resolution.**
- ▶ Read aloud Past Meets Present. Share with your child how Catholic Relief Services has responded to the needs of people in your area in recent years.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 118–119

- ▶ **Ask:** *What place would you like to visit during your lifetime, and what means of transportation would you use to get there?* **Say:** *In a similar way, we are called to the same spiritual destination, but there are many different ways of "getting there."*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article The Sacraments at the Service of Communion and page 118. Explain that Holy Orders is comprised of three orders: the order of deacons, the order of priests, and the order of bishops. Holy Orders is a vocation. **Say:** *Men who receive Holy Orders have been called by God to serve the Church in a unique way.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Ready for Confirmation feature. Suggest that when your child experiences the laying on of hands, he or she imagines an ongoing line of succession that connects him or her with Jesus and the Apostles.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Sacrament of Matrimony on page 119. **Ask:** *What is reflected in the commitment that people make in marriage?* (the love of Christ for his Church)
- ▶ Read aloud The Domestic Church and the Church and Divorce. Remind your child that one of the conditions necessary for a valid marriage is that the couple be open to having children. Invite your child to share what he or she has learned about faith from his or her family. **Say:** *The Church does not believe that a civil divorce dissolves the commitment that a couple makes when they celebrate their marriage.* Explain that if a couple is granted an annulment, the tribunal found evidence that one of the conditions necessary for a valid marriage was not present when the couple celebrated their wedding.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 120–121

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *How can you continue to develop healthy prayer habits?* (Possible answers: pray daily, use a variety of prayer forms, engage in both public and personal prayer)
- ▶ Pray aloud Vocation Reflection together. Then read aloud the following reflection. **Say:** *Samuel was going about his normal routine when God spoke to him. Ask yourself, "How has God spoken to me amid the ordinary events of my life?" These experiences may be an early sign of your vocation. Pay attention to them. Samuel had a good relationship with Eli, who was the first to recognize that he was hearing God's call. Ask yourself, "Who is my 'Eli'? Who can help me discern God's call?"*
- ▶ Display an image of Jesus and ask your child to provide adjectives that describe the person he or she sees. **Say:** *Because we are surrounded by other people's ideas and images of Jesus, we can forget who Jesus showed himself to be. This is why it is important to discover Jesus for ourselves. When we do, we can share him with others.* Have your child read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 121.
- ▶ Read aloud I Am Not Alone. **Ask:** *What amazed the author when he finally read the Gospels?* (Jesus' humanity, the fact that he associated with the outcasts of society) **Say:** *The author felt alone, but he wasn't. Jesus was with him all the time.* **Ask:** *How did he come to know this?* (through the help and guidance of the priests) **Say:** *We can help others realize that they are never alone.*
- ▶ Read aloud The Life of Jesus and have your child write a one-paragraph biography of Jesus.

Respond: Page 122

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the multiple-choice questions.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Give your child time to complete the activity. **Say:** *When we thank others for the example they have set for us, we acknowledge how God is working through them.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Celebrating Lent

Engage: Page 123

- ▶ Together share stories about a time you were lost. **Ask:** *How did you feel when you were lost?* (Possible answer: scared, alone) **Say:** *Committing a sin is like getting lost. When we sin, we wander off the path that God has chosen for us.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Celebrating Lent and the text in the box. Discuss the questions. Then read aloud the page. **Ask:** *What is conversion?* (the process of getting back on the right path) **Say:** *Lent is really a season of hope. Rather than dwelling on the sins we have committed, we reflect on how we can turn back to God so that we can fully experience the joy of Easter.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 124–125

- ▶ Drop a small stone into a shallow dish of water and note how the water ripples outward. **Say:** *Every time we choose to do something other than what God wants us to do, the effects of our decisions ripple outward.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title and the first paragraph. Together look online to find a map of the size of the Roman empire during the Middle Ages.
- ▶ Read aloud the section The Crusades. **Ask:** *Why did the Crusaders face opposition?* (They were trying to establish a Christian kingdom in a land that was sacred to Jews, Muslims, and Christians.)
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Francis of Assisi and the Sultan. Explain that there was animosity between Christians and Muslims as a result of the ongoing Crusades.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. Then read aloud from the Bible 1 John 1:5–10. Remind your child that we can always turn to God for forgiveness. **Say:** *God cleanses us of our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Every time we celebrate this sacrament, we get a fresh start.*
- ▶ Read aloud Acknowledging and Asking on page 125. Explain that during his papacy, Pope John Paul II was acutely aware of the Church's past sins. **Say:** *By holding the Day of Pardon during Lent, Pope John Paul II reminded us that Lent is an important time for us to repent for our sins and turn our minds and hearts back to God.* **Ask:** *What can we learn from this example by our Church leaders?* (We can see that it is never too late to ask forgiveness for our sins.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. **Say:** *We have to know our strengths and our weaknesses before we can present ourselves truthfully to others and to God. This is one of the things Jesus was doing during his 40 days in the desert. He can help us get to know ourselves during the 40 days of Lent too.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 126–127

- ▶ Ask your child to stand up and hold a large stack of books. **Say:** *Many people choose to give up something during Lent. Doing so can help us remember that too much of a good thing can be a strain. Giving up something allows us to develop healthy habits.*

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title Lent Past and Present and the first three paragraphs. **Ask:** *Why does the Church suggest that we reflect on our baptismal promises during Lent?* (to help us identify areas in our lives in which we may need to turn our minds and hearts back to God)
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Ask:** *Why might some people have suggested that the star is a symbol of God's presence?* (Possible answer: God's love is a light that we can experience, even amid the darkness.)
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving on page 127. **Say:** *In addition to fasting from food, fasting from bad behavior is another way to prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter. When it comes to almsgiving, we might not have a lot of money to donate to charity. Emphasize that young people can share other resources, such as their time and talents, instead.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud RCIA. Encourage your child to pray for people who are entering their final period of discernment about whether or not to join the Church.
- ▶ Read aloud the Our Catholic Character feature. **Say:** *Receiving ashes is a reminder to turn our lives back to God.* Point out that in Old Testament times, people often wore ashes any time they needed to repent.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 128–129

- ▶ Read aloud the title A Contrite Heart and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *What do we do when we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation?* (We confess our sins and ask for God's mercy and forgiveness.)
- ▶ Pray the prayer aloud together. **Say:** *We can pray the Act of Contrition whenever we want to express sorrow for our sins.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? **Ask:** *What does the use of the verb am suggest about healing?* (It is an ongoing process. We always need it.)
- ▶ Together read aloud How Am I Healed? **Ask:** *When we are healed, how do we see other people?* (as divine images) Invite your child to spend a minute or two reflecting silently about a situation in which a choice he or she made hurt someone. Have your child imagine the person and ask for his or her forgiveness. **Say:** *We always have the opportunity to ask others for forgiveness.*
- ▶ Allow time for your child to write a prayer in the section Turn Toward God.

Respond: Page 130

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and answer each question. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Allow time for your child to complete his or her prayer. **Say:** *Prayer is one way to strengthen the virtue of fortitude, the gift that helps us do the right thing when we are tempted to do otherwise.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



We Are Called

Begin

Read aloud the unit title. Have your child silently identify someone he or she loves. **Say:** *Without saying it aloud, think of a kind message that you could share with this person, such as how much he or she means to you.* Point out that the person did not actually receive the message. Explain that there are multiple ways to share the message. **Say:** *The most powerful way to share your message is through your actions. Likewise, our faith is more than a mental activity. God calls us to live out our faith through our actions.*

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 133. Explain that the Third Order of Saint Francis is a religious community for men and women who are called to devote their lives to God but who are not called to become priests or religious brothers or sisters. **Say:** *Because of her strong prayer life, Angela Merici was open to the dream that helped her discern that God was calling her to live out her faith in a new way.*

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saint Relates. **Ask:** *How did Angela receive her new call from God? (through her dream)* **Say:** *God calls each of us in unique ways. It is important for us to open our minds and hearts in prayer so that we can receive this call.*

Turn to page 134. Invite your child to read aloud Founding a New Religious Community. Explain that when people make a pilgrimage, they travel to a sacred place. **Ask:** *Why did Angela go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land? (to help her better understand the will of God)* **Say:** *Imagine you are traveling in a distant country, and you go blind. How would you react? What did the experience teach Angela? (to see with the eyes of her soul)*

Point out that like the dream she had, this experience of blindness helped Angela realize that God was calling her to serve his people in a special way. Explain that when we see with the eyes of our souls, we listen to God in prayer so that we can discover his will for us.

Say: *Like the Rule that Saint Benedict wrote for the members of his community, Angela wrote her Rule and Testament to give the members of her community advice on behaviors that would help them live together peacefully. Angela Merici was a pioneer in that her community was one of the first to live among people so that the sisters could better serve people's needs.* Identify any apostolic communities in your area in which sisters live among the people.

With your child, add Angela Merici's feast day, January 27, to your calendar. Together research the Order of Saint Ursula to discover how members of this community continue the work that Angela Merici began.

The Protestant Reformation

Engage: Page 135

- ▶ **Say:** *Imagine that your teacher gives you a big homework assignment before a school vacation. Ask: How might you respond?* Lead your child to realize that an angry or a forceful response will increase frustration and make the situation worse. **Say:** *How we choose to respond to a situation reflects the values we hold.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *When we choose to respond with gentleness, we reflect that we are Jesus' followers. We are going to learn how a group of people who disagreed with the Church and its practices presented their concerns.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 136–137

- ▶ Display an image of a block of marble and of a statue such as the *Pietà*. Point out that an outer force has to be exerted by someone for the sculpture to take shape. **Say:** *We'll read how external forces exerted by members of the Church helped the Church articulate its teachings more clearly.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title Disagreement in the Church and the section Martin Luther. **Ask:** *What did Luther believe about Scripture?* (that Scripture alone is the final authority for Christians) *What did Luther believe about the sacraments?* (Baptism and the Eucharist are the only two sacraments. Luther denied the doctrine of transubstantiation.)
- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Say:** *Our sins have an effect that ripples outward, even after the sin itself has occurred. For example, if we hurt someone in anger, that person may then treat others poorly.*
- ▶ Read aloud the section Other Voices Call for Reform on page 137. **Say:** *Calvin believed that some people were destined for Hell from the very moment of their creation. The Catholic Church believes that God has offered the gift of Salvation to all people.* Point out that King Henry VIII's actions were motivated by politics. He established the Church of England because he wanted to divorce his wife, which the Church did not allow.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. If possible, look together online or display images of some of the artworks that are housed at the Vatican museums.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 138–139

- ▶ **Say:** *Think of times when you receive presents, such as on your birthday or Christmas. Ask: What is the best gift someone could give you?* Discuss your child's responses. **Say:** *While these gifts are nice, in this article we're going to learn about the best gift ever—the gift of Salvation that we have received from God.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title God's Gift of Salvation and the first section. Have your child summarize the story of Adam and Eve. **Ask:** *What did God do after Adam and Eve turned away from him?* (He promised that he would send a Savior to forgive sins and restore peoples' relationship with him.) *How does Jesus offer the gift of Salvation to all people?* (through his Paschal Mystery) *What does the Church teach is necessary to receive God's gift of Salvation?* (faith and good works) *How does God want us to use the gift of free will?* (God

wants us to use this gift to choose to have faith, to profess our belief in Christ and his Church, and to do works that bear the fruit of faith.)

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Say:** *The artist's use of color, light, and movement reminds us that God's grace is all around us, even if we cannot see it.*
- ▶ Read aloud Particular Judgment and Purgatory on page 139. **Ask:** *What does the Church teach will happen at the time of our death?* (We will be judged based on how willing we were to accept God's grace and how faithful we were to following Jesus.) Explain that we experience a glimpse of Heaven every time we choose to act in a way that builds up God's kingdom.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the sections Last Judgment and Our Final Goal. Point out that the Last Judgment describes our journey toward God as a community, whereas particular judgment describes our journey toward God as individuals. **Say:** *As Catholics we believe that these journeys are connected.* **Ask:** *What is the final goal of human life?* (to live in Heaven with God the Father)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 140–141

- ▶ Read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. Point out that the psalms are especially powerful because they are prayed by Jews and all the Christian traditions.
- ▶ Have your child pray aloud the first verse of A Psalm Prayer. Pray aloud the reflection and give your child time to reflect silently. Continue praying aloud the psalm verses and the reflections, giving your child adequate time to pray silently after each reflection. Conclude the prayer by praying together the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Ask your child to name a positive choice he or she made recently, such as helping instead of ignoring a friend in need. **Say:** *Every choice we make, even a simple choice, has a consequence.* Read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 141. **Say:** *When we are faced with a choice, it's important to make the one that leads us to God.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Choose Life. **Ask:** *What do you think Moses meant by "Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live"?* (Possible response: Moses meant that if the Hebrews made good choices and followed God's will, they would be with God in Heaven. He also meant that the Hebrew people would be good leaders for those who come after them and point the way to Salvation.)
- ▶ Allow time for your child to write a personal prayer in the section It's Your Choice.

Respond: Page 142

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the crossword puzzle. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Invite your child to complete the activity. **Say:** *When we perform good works, we express to God our thanks for the gift of Salvation.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



Renewal in the Church

Engage: Page 143

- ▶ **Ask:** For which of these offenses do you think the offender deserves to be suspended from school: being tardy, getting into a fistfight, turning in homework late? (fistfight) **Say:** It seems just, but the student who receives the suspension might not feel that the consequence is fair. Because of our emotions, sometimes it is difficult for us to see the fairness of the consequences we face.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** In this session we're going to learn about Church teachings that help us make good decisions so that we can avoid sin and its consequences.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 144–145

- ▶ Display a road map or a GPS unit. **Ask:** Why do we use these? (to help us find our way) **Say:** After the Reformation the Church needed to check its course to make sure that its teachings and practices were an authentic response to God's Revelation.
- ▶ Read aloud the title The Bishops Respond and the introductory paragraphs. Ask your child to summarize what happened during the Reformation. Point out that reformers challenged the Church's teachings and practices regarding indulgences, Scripture, the sacraments, and Salvation. As a result of the reformers' challenges, new Christian denominations developed.
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph of The Council of Trent. **Say:** The decisions made at the Council of Trent influenced the course of European history and shaped Church teaching for the next half century. Continue reading aloud the next four paragraphs. **Ask:** What effect would the opening of seminaries have? (There would be systematic and uniform formation for the priesthood.) **Say:** The members of the new religious communities that were founded after the Council of Trent responded to the needs of their time.
- ▶ Read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. Ask your child to read aloud from the Glossary the definition of the word *catechism*. If possible, together explore online the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Teaching the Faith. Together decide what teachings you both believe to be essential to pass on to those who want to become Catholic.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 146–147

- ▶ **Ask:** Do you think it would be good for us to live in a world where there weren't any rules? Encourage your child to explain his or her answer. **Say:** We will read about the consequences of choosing to act in ways that are contrary to God's rules as well as about practices that help us remain faithful to these rules.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title Sin and Forgiveness and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** What does the term seal of the confessional mean? (that a priest can never reveal the sins that are confessed to him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation)

- ▶ Read aloud Types of Sins. Ask your child to explain the terms *mortal sin*, *venial sin*, *personal sin*, and *social sin*. Encourage him or her to refer to the Glossary if necessary. **Ask:** *What three conditions must be present for a sin to be considered mortal?* (The action must be serious. The person must know that it is serious. The person must freely choose to commit the sin.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. As you discuss the capital sins, explain that greed is also known as avarice or covetousness.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the sections The Ten Commandments and The Beatitudes on page 147. **Ask:** *What do the Ten Commandments teach us?* (what is required to love God and our neighbors) Read aloud the Beatitudes found on page 263 in the back of the book.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Precepts of the Church. Point out that the Precepts of the Church present the minimum we are called to do in prayer and in living a moral life.
- ▶ Read aloud the Ready for Confirmation feature. Tell your child that he or she does not have to wait to be confirmed to practice these rights and responsibilities and that maturing as a follower of Christ's takes a lifetime.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 148–149

- ▶ Read aloud the title Restoring Relationships and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *What do we acknowledge when we pray the Lord's Prayer?* (that God's mercy can penetrate our hearts only when we are merciful toward others and forgive those who have hurt us)
- ▶ Ask your child to pray the Leader part and you will pray the Reader part. You both can read the All part. Begin the prayer Forgiveness Reflection. When you reach the end of the reflection, conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? on page 149. **Say:** *As you get older, your decisions will get more complex and require more thought.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Decisions: Whom Do I Serve? **Ask:** *When the author was a child, what did he imagine money could do?* (solve every problem in life) *What did he come to realize about having more money than one needs?* (that one has to make choices about how to spend it) Point out that sharing our goods with others helps prevent us from turning these goods into idols.
- ▶ Have your child complete Making Decisions independently. Suggest that he or she turn to pages 290–293 in the back of the book for information about making good choices.

Respond: Page 150

- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child answer the questions independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Have your child complete the activity and be mindful of his or her response during the week. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

The Church Reaches Out

Engage: Page 151

- ▶ Discuss some events that occurred to either of you this past week. **Say:** *While we might not have realized it, God was present in those events.* Provide an example of something you experienced recently and identify what God may have been trying to say to you. Invite your child to identify what God may have been saying to him or her through personal experiences.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we are going to learn more about how we can discover God's presence in our everyday experiences.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 152–153

- ▶ **Say:** *Imagine that you are asked to live in a room that is no bigger than 10 feet by 10 feet. The room does not have access to the Internet, and you cannot have a cell phone or an MP3 player.* **Ask:** *How would you spend your time?* Explain that this article tells about a man who chose to live in such conditions so that he could grow in his relationship with God.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title Ignatius of Loyola, the first paragraph, and the section A Journey to Faith. Point out that Ignatius chose to live a life of asceticism so that he could grow closer to God. **Ask:** *What did Ignatius's experience help him realize?* (that he wanted to serve others by helping them recognize the presence of God in their lives)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Jesuits. **Ask:** *What did Ignatius and his friends do together?* (study, preach the Gospel, offer spiritual direction)
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Ignatian Spirituality on page 153. **Ask:** *What is the charism of the Jesuits?* (to help people find God in all things) Explain that the Spiritual Exercises are often done during a 30-day retreat. The Jesuits have adapted the Spiritual Exercises so that people can incorporate components of the Spiritual Exercises into their daily lives. **Ask:** *How can practicing the tenets of Ignatian spirituality help you find God in the world around you?* (Possible answer: Ignatian spirituality can help us reflect on our daily experience so that we can find God in the midst of everyday events.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. If possible, research information together online about Jesuit ministries in your diocese.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 154–155

- ▶ Give your child a moment to reflect on his or her favorite aspect of creation. **Say:** *Thank God for creating this gift.* Invite your child to share the gifts for which he or she is thankful. **Ask:** *What can you do to care for this gift?*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title Caring for God's Creation, the first paragraph, and the section The Fifth Commandment. **Ask:** *What does the Fifth Commandment remind us?* (that every person has dignity as a human being created in God's image and likeness) Draw your child's attention to the terms *moral law*, *abortion*, and *euthanasia*. Read aloud the Glossary definition of the term *moral law*. **Say:** *Sometimes this term is referred*

to as natural law. Through its teachings on abortion, euthanasia, child labor, the sexual exploitation of human beings, and child soldiers, the Church reminds us that all people are made in God's image and likeness. Because of this, we are called to respect the life and dignity of all people.

- ▶ Read aloud The Sixth and Ninth Commandments. **Say:** *The Sixth Commandment is "You shall not commit adultery."* **Ask:** *What is the Ninth Commandment?* (You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.) Draw attention to the words *adultery* and *chastity*. Have your child read aloud from the Glossary the definition of each word. **Say:** *Chastity means viewing our sexuality as a precious gift.* Point out that one way to show thanks for a gift is to treat it with respect.
- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Say:** *One way to protect ourselves from the temptation to covet is to practice detachment.* **Ask:** *How can detachment prevent us from giving into the temptation to covet?* (Possible answer: By practicing detachment, such as by donating items I no longer need, I am reminded that God alone is the source of true happiness.)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 156–157

- ▶ Read aloud the title God's Fingerprints and the paragraphs in the left column. Explain that nurturing our prayer life helps us grow in our ability to recognize this grace in our lives.
- ▶ Pray aloud the reflection Finding God in All Things, giving your child time to reflect after each paragraph and question. After praying together the last paragraph, pray together the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What are some blessings that you have received?* (Possible answers: God's grace, my family's love) Point out that God's grace works in interesting ways and that we can receive blessings when we least expect them. Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? on page 157.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Unexpected Blessings. **Ask:** *What blessings came to the author and her family from the bad news?* (community support, the joy of learning, gratitude for solutions)
- ▶ Have your child complete the Unexpected News activity independently and invite him or her to share the response with you. **Say:** *Finding the blessing in bad news isn't about ignoring the pain or pretending everything is fine. It is about staying open to God's mysterious ways.*

Respond: Page 158

- ▶ Read aloud the directions. Remind your child to use the page references to help answer the questions. Have him or her complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? **Say:** *When we give thanks to God, we show our appreciation for the many ways that he has revealed himself to us through our daily experiences.* Have your child complete the activity and then together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Faith and Reason

Engage: Page 159

- ▶ Share a story about a time you believed in something and later found out that what you believed was not true, such as believing that Washington, D.C., was the same as the state of Washington. Point out that as we mature, the gift of reason that we have received from God helps us learn new facts.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *Sometimes these facts may challenge our beliefs. In this session we will learn more about the relationship between faith and reason.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 160–161

- ▶ Together discuss how you maintain contact with friends and relatives who live at a distance. **Say:** *In this article we're going to learn about a time when people began to believe that God was far away from us and how this belief affected people's relationship with him.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title The Enlightenment and the first four paragraphs. **Ask:** *What did people begin to believe about God during the Age of Enlightenment? (that God was not actively involved in the world, that God created the world and then sat back as it ran itself, that God was a distant being)*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Faith and Science Are Complementary. Have your child look up the words *rationalists* and *fundamentalists* in the Glossary. **Ask:** *What is the difference between these beliefs? (Rationalism is the belief that humanity's issues can be solved by examining them scientifically and mathematically. Fundamentalism is the belief that the Bible is literally true.)* Turn to page 253 in the back of the book. Read aloud The Story of God's Promise. **Say:** *As Catholics we believe that the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God. Our belief takes into account the fact that Scripture was written by people who chose to use a variety of literary styles.*
- ▶ Read aloud the directions for the Faith or Science? activity on page 160. Give your child time to write a response and share it with you.
- ▶ Read aloud Past Meets Present. **Say:** *At the time of the French Revolution, a law had been passed that made ministers of the Church employees of the state. Like the priests and sisters who were killed during the Reign of Terror, the Latin American martyrs were killed for choosing to remain faithful to God by challenging the policies of the government.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 162–163

- ▶ Together make up nonsense definitions for the following words: *wherry, zebu, knar, factotum*. Then look up the words to learn the real meanings.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title Choosing to Do Good, the first two paragraphs, and the section The Eighth Commandment. **Ask:** *Why is it important to have a well-formed conscience? (It helps us discern God's will for us so that we can make good moral choices.)* Have your child look up *calumny* in the Glossary in the back of the book.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Ask:** *What can you do when you are tempted to tell a lie?* (Possible answer: pray for the strength to remain truthful) Have your child look up *detraction* in the Glossary.
- ▶ Read aloud Making Good Decisions on page 163. **Say:** *We cooperate with God in making good decisions when we listen to our conscience.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud The Seventh and Tenth Commandments. Point out that the Church does not teach that it is a sin to have money. **Say:** *Having wealth becomes a sin when we turn money into an idol and become greedy for more.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature and discuss the artwork. **Say:** *When we care for people's needs, we follow Jesus' example of loving service.* Turn to page 267 to read more about the Works of Mercy.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 164–165

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. **Say:** *Being truthful means more than just being honest. It also means living with integrity.*
- ▶ Point out that when we live with integrity, we are like an artist who, through his or her work, translates the truth and beauty of God's Revelation into visible forms. Guide your child through the meditation Living with Integrity. Conclude by praying together the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 165. Explain that "integrating our spiritual practice into everything that we do" means being nourished by our spiritual practices so that we remain connected to God as we go about our daily lives. Invite your child to name the spiritual practices that are an important part of his or her life.
- ▶ Read aloud A Spiritual Practice I Can't Do Without. **Ask:** *What is surprising about the article?* (Possible answer: We don't think of basketball coaches as "spiritual" people; their business is athletics.) **Say:** *Coach Beilein's players might not know about his spiritual practice, but they definitely benefit from it.* **Ask:** *How?* (Possible answers: It makes him a better leader and teacher. It enables him to keep his players focused on important lessons.)
- ▶ Have your child complete Plan Your Week independently. Explain that he or she may write the same spiritual practice on more than one day, but encourage variety in the plan.

Respond: Page 166

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the matching activity.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Give your child time to complete the activity. **Say:** *The gifts of faith and reason help us discover God's truth. We can rely on both of these gifts to help us discern what God is asking of us.* Conclude by praying together the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Celebrating Holy Week and Easter

Engage: Page 167

- ▶ With your child, use hand wipes and take turns washing each other's hands. **Say:** *Washing another person's hands is an act of humility for both people.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Celebrating Holy Week and Easter and the text in the blue box. Discuss the questions. Then read aloud the page. **Say:** *The Triduum is comprised of the three most important days in the liturgical year. On these three days, we recall Jesus' Passion and Death. We remember Jesus' act of humble service during the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday when the priest washes the feet of members from the parish.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 168–169

- ▶ Using the Internet, together find an image that makes use of chiaroscuro, the dramatic use of contrast between light and dark, such as Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. **Ask:** *Why is this image so impressive?* **Say:** *Jesus' Crucifixion was a profound experience of darkness. Yet God was able to turn this darkness to light through the Resurrection.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title A Message of Hope, the first paragraph, and the section Saint Vincent de Paul. **Ask:** *What gifts did God give Vincent to help him respond to people's suffering?* (organizational skills, a companion to help him in ministry) Point out that the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity continue the works that Vincent and Louise began.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. Then turn to page 266 in the back of the book to read aloud and summarize each Gift of the Holy Spirit. Invite your child to share how the Gifts of the Holy Spirit can help him or her share the hope of the Resurrection with others.
- ▶ Read aloud The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. **Ask:** *How did Frederic Ozanam believe members of society should operate?* (by putting the values of mercy and love into action by performing acts of charity)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Jesus Points the Way on page 169. Emphasize that each person we encounter, regardless of his or her circumstance, is a reflection of Christ's presence among us.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Ask:** *What can you do to continue the work begun by Vincent and Louise?*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 170–171

- ▶ Together recall a time when you were waiting for someone or something and the person or thing did not come. **Say:** *Ultimately, things turned out OK because we are here today. God wants us to remember that everything will be OK in ways that we can't yet imagine.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title Choosing Hope Over Despair. Read aloud Matthew 26:14–16, 47–56, and 27:3–9. Then read aloud the rest of page 170. Point out that Judas's guilt and sorrow over his actions were so extreme that he did not believe

he would ever be able to recover or be forgiven. **Say:** *God's love is so profound that he is capable of forgiving any sin imaginable.*

- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. Emphasize that we are called to focus on the hope of the Resurrection rather than the despair of Jesus' Crucifixion and Death.
- ▶ Read aloud Matthew 26:69–75. Then invite your child to read aloud the section Peter. Point out that even though Peter had sinned by denying that he was one of Jesus' closest followers, Jesus forgave him and asked him to be the Church's first leader.
- ▶ Read aloud the directions to the A Beacon of Hope activity. Give your child time to complete the activity and share the response with you.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Past Meets Present. **Ask:** *Why, according to tradition, was Peter crucified upside down?* (He did not consider himself worthy to be crucified in the same way Jesus was.) If possible, together find an online map of Vatican City and point out the location of the basilica.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 172–173

- ▶ Read aloud the title Easter Proclamation and the paragraphs in the left column. Explain that the *Exsultet* is a prayer of praise in which we give thanks for the many ways that God has shone a light of hope amid the darkness of human suffering. If possible, play a recording of the *Exsultet*.
- ▶ Pray aloud each paragraph from the *Exsultet*, pausing after each one to give your child time to reflect on the meaning of the words. Conclude by praying together the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? on page 172. **Say:** *Sometimes we can't solve problems instantly. We have to wait.*
- ▶ Together read aloud Finding Jesus Where I Least Expected. **Ask:** *Where did the author find Jesus?* (Possible answers: in Kelly's healing, in Kelly's faith, in Kelly's story) **Say:** *When we are inspired to stay faithful by stories like these, we have Jesus to thank. He is in our suffering, in our healing, in the support we give one another, and in the stories we tell one another.*
- ▶ Have your child complete Surprise! independently and share the reflection with you.

Respond: Page 174

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions. Remind him or her to use the page references to answer the questions independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Allow time for your child to complete the activity. **Say:** *We can always rely on the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to share the light of Christ's hope with others.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.



We Are Sent

Begin

Read aloud the unit title. Display both secular and religious items, such as baseball cards, cereal bars, rosaries, and prayer cards. Invite your child to separate these items into logical categories and explain what categories he or she used. Write the words *secular* and *sacred*. Together define these words. (secular—not overtly or specifically religious; sacred—dedicated or set apart for the worship of God) **Say:** *The sessions in this unit will teach us that there is no distinction between sacred and secular.*

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 177. **Ask:** *What tradition did John XXIII change after he became pope? (He hired a cook and began inviting people over for dinner.) What did the meals he shared with others help him do? (remain close to the people he served as pope) Why is it important for the pope to remain close to the people he serves? (Possible answer: so that he can better respond to their needs)*

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saint Relates. **Ask:** *What did John XXIII's spirituality enable him to do? (serve God's people)* Encourage your child to develop his or her own spirituality by praying often.

Turn to page 178. Invite your child to read aloud the title Elected Pope and the first two paragraphs. Point out that during the time John XXIII was pope, people often worked long hours for little pay. **Say:** *By standing up for social justice and the rights of workers, Pope John XXIII reminded people that we all have inherent dignity as human beings because we are made in the image and likeness of God.* Remind your child that an encyclical is a letter written by the pope that is meant for the whole Church.

Read aloud Prayer and Reflection. **Say:** *Pope John XXIII's strong prayer life helped him hear God's voice in his life.* Point out that keeping a journal is one form of prayer.

Have your child read aloud Calling a Council. **Say:** *At the Second Vatican Council, Church leaders worked together to discern how God's Spirit was calling the Church to respond to changes in society.* Explain that the council demonstrated the Church's ability to find a balance between remaining faithful to Tradition while also remaining open to God's ongoing Revelation.

With your child, add Pope John XXIII's feast day, October 11, to your calendar. To honor his memory, take time to nurture your prayer life to receive the strength and passion you need to live out your vocation.

Truth Revealed by God

Engage: Page 179

- ▶ Together think of times someone offered you constructive criticism and share your stories. **Ask:** *How did you feel afterward?* (Possible answer: slightly embarrassed, grateful) Point out that if we remain open to the comments, we can use the feedback to improve ourselves.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we're going to read how the Church responded to criticism it faced during the modernist movement.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 180–181

- ▶ Ask your child to recall a time he or she made an important decision. **Ask:** *Did you rely more on your emotions or on your ability to reason? Why?* Point out that it's important to consider both our thoughts and emotions.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title Responding to Modernism and the first five paragraphs. **Ask:** *What did people begin to believe during the modernist movement?* (that we can use logical, scientific means to understand the world thoroughly and that we can understand and control the world through rational thought) Ask your child to define *pantheism* in his or her own words. **Say:** *As Catholics we believe that God created the universe, not that God is the same being as the universe.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud The First Vatican Council. Explain that the Eastern Catholic Churches are branches of the Catholic Church that have their own liturgical rites. Remind your child that the Liturgy of the Hours is the universal prayer of the Church. **Say:** *The Liturgy of the Hours is comprised of Scripture readings, hymns, and writings by the Fathers of the Church.* Explain that canon law is the Church's collection of laws. **Say:** *We can use both faith and reason to help us discover God's truth. The danger comes when we rely on one more than the other.*
- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. Point out that for a pope to decree something as infallible, the teaching must already be accepted as true by the majority of the faithful and confirmed true by the entire Magisterium.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 182–183

- ▶ With your child, come up with slang phrases for these sentences: *How are you today? What are you doing? You make me laugh. I had a great time at your party.* **Say:** *There are many ways to express a message. To communicate effectively, we have to consider our audience and speak their language.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Witnesses to Truth, the first paragraph, and Reach Out to Others. **Ask:** *What are the main ideas of modernist thought?* (We can use logical, scientific means to understand the world thoroughly, and we can understand and control the world through rational thought.) *What is the goal of reaching out to people through forms of communication that are familiar to them?* (to get to the heart of people's daily lives) *What*

does the word evangelization mean? (the process of sharing the Good News) *How can you engage in this process?* (Possible answer: treat others with kindness)

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. **Ask:** *What is the goal of the Paulists?* (to spread the truth about the Church and its teachings)
- ▶ Read aloud Modern Evangelization on page 183. If possible, explore together the Vatican and your diocesan and parish Web sites, and explain some of the resources that are available there. Share any other faith-based Web sites and television or radio stations of which you are aware.
- ▶ Read aloud Use Technology Wisely. Point out that thoughtlessly drifting toward a screen or a gadget during downtime can eventually become an unhealthy habit that is difficult to break. Explain that the Church wants us to remember that technology is best used in moderation.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. **Ask:** *What does the gift of fortitude do?* (It strengthens us to do the will of God in all things.) **Say:** *The Holy Spirit will always give you the strength to remain faithful to God.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 184–185

- ▶ Read aloud the page title and the paragraphs in the left column. Point out that the Peace Prayer is a good one to carry with us because it provides comfort and direction in trying times.
- ▶ **Say:** *Ask Jesus to show you how you can be a peacemaker in the world today. When you're ready, pray the prayer.* Allow your child time to pray the Peace Prayer silently. Conclude by praying together the Glory Be to the Father.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 185. Together share stories about times when God reaches out to us in surprising or unusual ways. Point out that God, in his love, sometimes reaches out to us in creative ways that make us more fully aware of his presence.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud What Does God Want Me to Do? **Ask:** *What exactly did Sister Dorothy ask for?* (She asked God to tell her where to go and what to do.) *Where did God send her?* (to the very places she wanted to go) Point out that we do not know where God will send us. In God's presence, even in places of drudgery or misery, we will discover the joy of using our gifts in his name. **Say:** *God will lead us to a place that fills us with joy and makes good use of the gifts he has given us.*
- ▶ Allow time for your child to write answers to the questions in the section God Guides.

Respond: Page 186

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and write a short answer to each question. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Invite your child to complete the activity. **Say:** *Using technology wisely is one way to build up the Kingdom of God.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at **www.loyolapress.com/retreat**.



Acting on Behalf of Justice

Engage: Page 187

- ▶ **Ask:** *What is justice?* (the virtue that guides us to give to God and to others what is due them) Discuss current events that demonstrate an issue of injustice. **Ask:** *How do you think these situations can be resolved justly?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *One way to build up the Kingdom of God is to work to end injustices. In this session we are going to learn how we are called to work for justice in the world today.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 188–189

- ▶ **Ask:** *What is fairness?* (Possible answer: respecting the rights of others) Together discuss an experience where you believed you were treated unfairly. Talk about how the experience made you feel.
- ▶ Read aloud the title *The Industrial Revolution* and the first five paragraphs. **Ask:** *What injustices did workers face after the Industrial Revolution?* (Children were required to work. People worked long hours for little pay. Working conditions were dangerous.) *What could factory owners have done to make more just working conditions?* (Possible answers: not hire children, pay fair wages)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Explain that a living wage is the amount of income that is necessary to live a life of dignity. **Say:** *God wants our basic physical needs to be met, and he wants us to experience peace and joy.*
- ▶ Read aloud Church Reflection and Action on page 189. **Say:** *Working for systematic change involves efforts to change unjust social structures and attitudes such as racism and sexism.* **Ask:** *What can we do to engage in systematic change?* (Possible answer: contact our legislators)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *Rerum Novarum*. **Ask:** *If the current pope were to write a letter addressing contemporary social injustices, what might he write about?* Discuss your child's response.
- ▶ Read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. To explain the concept of subsidiarity, **say:** *If someone were to misbehave at school, teachers would try to deal with the issue first before calling the police.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 190–191

- ▶ Display a bowl of cereal, a serving spoon, and two bowls. **Say:** *Imagine this cereal is the only food you get to eat tomorrow.* Give your child one spoonful, but fill your entire bowl. **Ask:** *How do you feel when you see that I get a full bowl and you don't?* **Say:** *Now imagine that the cereal represents the world's wealth. Many people today have more than they need, while others do not have enough to survive.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title *Catholic Social Teaching* and the text on page 190. **Ask:** *When does justice exist?* (when we follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit and treat one another in the same way that God treats us) Turn to page 263 in the back of the

book to review the Beatitudes. **Ask:** *How do the Beatitudes help us live just lives?* (Possible answer: They give us directions for how we can act in ways that build up God's kingdom.) Emphasize that as members of the Church, we cannot passively ignore the injustices that surround us. **Say:** *We are all called to use our gifts to respond to the needs of others.*

- ▶ Read aloud Solidarity on page 191. Point out that because God is our Father, we are all brothers and sisters in faith. **Ask:** *What can we do to show care for God's creation?* (Possible answers: use garbage bins rather than littering, recycle, reduce what we use)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Point out that the Church's teachings on life and death remind us that life is a gift from God and that we are called to respect this gift. **Say:** *As human beings we know that death is a part of life. As Catholics we have faith in the Resurrection. We trust that God will raise us from the dead at the end of time.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 192–193

- ▶ Read aloud the title Looking Beyond Myself and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *Why are we called to recognize the injustices that surround us?* (Possible answer: so that we can do something about them, thereby sharing God's love with people who need it)
- ▶ Pray together the Litany to Heal Injustice. After praying aloud the closing prayer, **say:** *Remember that working to end injustice requires both prayer and action. As we continue the session, let's think of ways that we can act on behalf of justice.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? on page 193. **Say:** *People who are poor and vulnerable are all around us. As Catholics we are called to see them and to respond to their needs.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud How Do I Respond to the Needs Around Me? **Say:** *The power of love is strong, and its effects are ongoing.* **Ask:** *Whom did the author's mother help? How?* (Possible answers: the author, by setting an example of generosity; the woman with lymphoma, by raising a daughter who would in turn help people in need; the author's cousin, by taking him in) *Why does the author say that it is "a gift and a privilege" to help someone in need?* (Possible answer: because it takes you outside yourself into the heart of another person)
- ▶ Have your child complete Needs Chart independently. Suggest that he or she take a few moments to "see" those who are poor and vulnerable in the community before beginning to write.

Respond: Page 194

- ▶ Read aloud the directions and have your child complete the crossword puzzle independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Have your child complete the activity and be mindful of his or her response during the week. **Say:** *When we put the Catholic Social Teachings into practice, we follow Jesus' example by sharing God's love with others.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Called by God

Engage: Page 195

- ▶ Brainstorm areas in the world that are in need of Christ's love. Discuss with your child how he or she can share surplus time and talent with the people in those situations to help share Christ's love. **Say:** *Whenever we use our gifts to help others, we share God's love.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we will learn more about how we can respond to the call of holiness.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 196–197

- ▶ Together share stories about a time you had to adjust to change, such as moving to a new city or beginning a new job. **Ask:** *How can you support people who are experiencing change in their own lives?* (Possible answers: treat them with kindness, offer words of welcome and support) **Say:** *In this article we are going to read about how the Church responded to cultural changes.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title The Second Vatican Council and the text below it. **Say:** *Pope John XXIII realized that the Church needed to try new approaches to connect with the modern world. To many, the old ways were more comfortable. But the pope knew that for the Church to continue serving people, change was necessary.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Ask:** *Why do you think the painter chose to place the cross in a prominent position?* (Possible answer: to remind Church leaders that they are responsible for leading the Church founded by Christ)
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Providing Direction for the Future. **Say:** *Bishops are responsible for the spiritual needs of the people in their dioceses. Point out that people living in different parts of the world can have drastically different needs. One of the challenges the bishops faced during the council was addressing the needs of the people they served.* If possible, show a Web clip of the council opening.
- ▶ Read aloud Renewal on page 197. If possible, together research online documents promulgated during the Second Vatican Council. Read aloud the titles of the documents to help your child understand the breadth of issues discussed by Church leaders.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Ask:** *Why did the changes that were approved during the Second Vatican Council help people enter into the celebration of the Mass?* (Possible answers: People were able to pray more actively. People were able to participate in the Mass in their own language.)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 198–199

- ▶ Design a T-chart with the headings *Sacraments of Initiation* and *Gifts Received*. Together list the sacraments and the gifts that we receive through each sacrament. Turn to pages 284–285 in the back of the book for information about the sacraments.

- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title Called to Holiness and the first section.
Ask: *Why are we called to lead holy lives?* (We are made in God's image.) Point out that the Sacrament of Baptism welcomes us into the Christian community and that the Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens the grace that we receive through our Baptism.
Say: *Through the Eucharist, Christ has given us a model of how to live. We are called to share ourselves with others.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Many Gifts. Identify the gifts named in the Scripture passage.
Ask: *In which vocations can people practice each gift?* (Possible answers: Expression of Wisdom—counselors; Expression of Knowledge—teachers; Mighty Deeds—advocates for peace)
- ▶ Brainstorm ways that you and your child work to build up the Kingdom of God. **Say:** *Through the work that we do, we help build up the Church, and we model the Church in action.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation on page 199. Then turn to pages 94–95 to review the Marks of the Church. Invite your child to summarize each Mark of the Church.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 200–201

- ▶ Read aloud the title Abundant Harvest and the paragraphs in the left column. Point out that Catholics believe that God alone is worthy of our worship. **Say:** *We do not worship Mary and the saints, but we do pray to them, asking them to intercede on our behalf.*
- ▶ Pray aloud, taking turns reading each part of Interceding for Others. After praying, **say:** *Take a moment to pray your own prayers of intercession silently.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? on page 200. **Ask:** *Why is it important to share, take turns, and help others?* (Possible answers: because God wants us to, because that is how we make God's love present to the world, because loving works better than hating)
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Why Am I Being Sent? **Say:** *The author reminds us that the Kingdom of God is inside us and in our relationships with others when we choose to do his will.* **Ask:** *In the story about the two sons, what was the second brother's first response to his father's request?* (He complained and refused to do it.) *What happened next?* (He decided to do the work.) **Say:** *We may complain sometimes and turn away from God. But this doesn't make us unfit to serve him. God will always rejoice when we turn back to him.*
- ▶ Have your child complete the Witness to Love activity independently and invite him or her to share the response with you.

Respond: Page 202

- ▶ Read aloud the directions. Remind your child to use the page references to help find responses to the questions. Have him or her complete the activity independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? **Say:** *God has given each of us different gifts that, when used together, can respond to all of the world's needs.* Have your child complete the activity and then together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

People for Others

Engage: Page 203

- ▶ **Ask:** Why do we like to be notified when someone calls or texts us? (Possible answer: so that we don't miss anything) **Say:** God doesn't have a cell phone. **Ask:** How does God call us? (Possible answers: through our conscience, our experiences, prayer, the Church)
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** Answering these calls from God can give us a much bigger boost than we receive through a text message or an e-mail. In this session we're going to read about ways we can respond to God's call.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 204–205

- ▶ **Ask:** What does it mean to be poor? (to have very little money) What are some of our basic needs? (food, rest, shelter) **Say:** Poverty comes in many forms. As Christians we are called to see it and respond to it.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title Hearing the Cry of the Poor and the section Blessed Teresa of Calcutta. Point out that Church leaders call on us to care for people in need. **Ask:** What do you find most remarkable about Blessed Teresa of Calcutta's life story? Discuss your child's response.
- ▶ Read aloud Our Catholic Character. Brainstorm examples of contemporary people or organizations that care for people in need. Encourage your child to name ways that he or she can support this work. **Say:** When we serve the needs of others, we follow the example of all those in the Communion of Saints.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud A Call Within a Call on page 205. **Ask:** How would you describe Blessed Teresa? (Possible answer: intuitive, decisive, energetic, action-oriented) **Say:** The Church recognizes that Blessed Teresa lived a life worthy of emulation.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Faith and Doubt. Point out that many people of faith have experienced times of doubt and uncertainty. **Say:** Doubt is a sign that a person takes his or her faith seriously. It is a sign of active engagement.
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Explain that before the founding of the Daughters of Charity, women in religious communities led private, or "cloistered," lives. **Say:** The Daughters of Charity lived and worked among the people of the community.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 206–207

- ▶ Place your child's favorite treat in front of him or her. **Say:** Let's pray together the Act of Faith. (Pause.) You don't seem focused. **Ask:** Is something distracting you? **Say:** The Church understands that the needs of the body are very strong and must be fulfilled before the needs of the spirit can be addressed. Let's eat our treat and then begin.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title Works of Mercy, the introductory paragraph, and the Scripture passage. **Say:** In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." He wants his listeners to realize that hunger, thirst, and poverty can apply to the spirit as well as to the body.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Turn to page 274 in the back of the book. Pray together the Prayer of Generosity. **Say:** *This is a great prayer to take to heart.*
- ▶ Read aloud Corporal Works of Mercy on page 207. Remind your child that while the Corporal Works of Mercy refer to people's physical needs, they can also refer to other needs that people have. **Say:** *We can visit people imprisoned by loneliness, for example, by spending time with people who live in nursing homes.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Spiritual Works of Mercy. Together find examples from newspapers and magazines of different ways that people live out the Works of Mercy.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. Suggest that whenever your child receives a thank-you for an act of kindness, he or she can mentally "pass it on" to the Holy Spirit for giving your child the strength to act.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 208–209

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. **Say:** *For Jesus' followers, the Beatitudes are a way of life. One of the Beatitudes describes the reward for those who work for peace. Today we're going to reflect on this beatitude.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Beatitude Reflection. After each paragraph, allow time for reflection before reading the beatitude. Conclude the prayer by exchanging the Sign of Peace.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 209. **Say:** *God has a plan for each of us, and the more we listen to him, the more faithful we will be at following that plan.*
- ▶ Read aloud Discovering Who You're Meant to Be. Discuss with your child the idea that Jesus gradually discovered who he was. **Say:** *God rejoices as we discover who we are too.* **Ask:** *What kinds of actions brought Jesus closer to the truth about himself? (listening to his heart; helping people who were poor, sick, and lonely; sharing God's message with others)* **Say:** *When we do these things, we get closer and closer to finding out who we are too.*
- ▶ Have your child complete Vocation Reflection independently. Invite him or her to share the response with you.

Respond: Page 210

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the matching activity.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Give your child time to complete the activity. **Say:** *The Church has given us many tools to help us respond to the needs of people who are suffering and vulnerable. We can rely on God's grace and the strength of the Holy Spirit to practice the Works of Mercy. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.*
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.

Celebrating Pentecost

Engage: Page 211

- ▶ Share experiences of working with a group to complete a task. **Say:** *As members of the Church, we rely on the Holy Spirit to bond us together. As members of the Church, we support one another in fulfilling the Church's mission.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Celebrating Pentecost and discuss the text in the box. Then read aloud the page. **Say:** *On the Feast of Pentecost, we give thanks to God for sending us the Holy Spirit. In this session we're going to learn about the Feast of Pentecost.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 212–213

- ▶ Together plant seeds in paper cups filled with soil. **Say:** *Through our words and actions, we cooperate with God in planting the seeds of his love in the hearts of the people with whom we interact. The Holy Spirit helps nurture these seeds. As disciples we help others grow in their relationship with God.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title Proclaiming Christ Anew, the text below it, and the section Blessed Pope John Paul II. **Say:** *Pope John Paul II went all over the world to connect with Catholics from various countries and cultures. By doing so, he reminded us that the pope is both the Bishop of Rome and the shepherd of the People of God all over the world.* **Ask:** *For what else was he known? (as a peacemaker and as someone who lived a life of openness and charity)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. Explain that for a miracle to be “scientifically proven” means that medical and scientific experts must verify that the act is not explainable by science.
- ▶ Read aloud World Youth Day on page 213. Point out that the celebratory nature of Jubilee Year is rooted in Scripture. Read aloud Isaiah 61:1–2. **Say:** *The last Jubilee Year was 2000. Pope John Paul II had a great respect for young people. He believed that their joy and enthusiasm reflect the creative joy of God. To remind us that social justice is an important component of our lives as Catholics, the Church also participated in an initiative asking governments to forgive the debts of developing nations.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. **Say:** *Saint John Vianney was a remarkable priest. People came from all over the world to seek his counsel. It is said that he heard confessions for 16 hours a day but never lost patience.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 214–215

- ▶ Discuss situations where it is appropriate to use a whisper, a speaking voice, and a scream. **Say:** *Sometimes a whisper is more effective than using a loud voice.* **Ask:** *Why? (Possible answer: People have to pay more attention to hear someone whisper.)* Point out that the Church calls us to use various voices in the work of evangelization.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the section The New Evangelization. **Ask:** *Why might people be indifferent about their faith? (Possible answer: They are more interested in worldly concerns.) What does the term New Evangelization describe? (our call to serve as*

evangelists, both to those who have not yet heard the Gospel as well as to traditionally Christian countries that need to hear the Gospel anew) Invite your child to explain the principles of the New Evangelization, using his or her own words.

- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Ask:** *Why are doves and tongues of flame appropriate symbols for the Holy Spirit?* (Possible answer: Doves are symbols of peace, and the Holy Spirit fills us with the warmth and light of God's love.)
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the sections on page 215. Explain that the Roman Curia is comprised of the Church's central administrative offices. Point out that by establishing an office responsible for the New Evangelization, the pope demonstrated the importance of this ministry. **Say:** *The Fruits of the Holy Spirit are behaviors that we exhibit when we choose to follow God's path for us.* Have your child turn to page 266 in the back of the book for more information about the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Have your child complete the activity Bearing Fruit independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud Ready for Confirmation. **Say:** *We can always pray to the Holy Spirit for the strength to follow God, even before we have been confirmed.* Emphasize that we receive the grace of the Holy Spirit through Baptism.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 216–217

- ▶ Read aloud the title Come, Holy Spirit, Come! and the paragraphs in the left column. **Say:** *While Pentecost was a one-time event, God wants us to remember that the Holy Spirit is always with us.*
- ▶ Have your child take the role of Leader and pray aloud the prayer Sequence for Pentecost Prayer and Reflection together. After your child prays the last part of the prayer, give him or her time to pray silently. Conclude your prayer by praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Describe memories of good times experienced by your family. **Say:** *All of these are experiences of Church even though we might not immediately think so.* Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? on page 217.
- ▶ Together read aloud What Does It Mean to Be Church? **Ask:** *In what ways does the author experience God in his family?* (through the ministry and example of his sister's work, through his marriage, through being a parent) **Say:** *The word church can refer to any community in which we experience joy and belonging.*
- ▶ Have your child complete Church independently and share his or her image with you.

Respond: Page 218

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions. Remind him or her to use the page references to complete each sentence independently.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Allow time for your child to complete the activity. **Say:** *Remember that we are called to be evangelists in all that we do. Often we are more effective at sharing God's love with others through our actions rather than our words.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.