



Our Faith in Action: Serving Others

Before You Begin

- Print the Chapter 9 BLM: My Prayer found at the end of this document.
- Have a Bible available during the session for reference.
- Download and print the Chapter 9 Prayer Service: Works of Mercy.

Engage: Page 65

- ◆ Read aloud the chapter title and the opening questions on page 65. Invite your child to share his or her responses. Share your own as well. Then say: **In difficult moments, it is important for us to remember that we are not alone.**
- ◆ Read aloud the Scripture passage at the bottom of the page. Say: **Jesus often taught about the importance of loving one another and working together. We are to love each other and take care of each other just as God loves and cares for us.**
- ◆ Have your child turn to the Morning Prayer on page 90. Say: **Let us now pray together the Morning Offering, asking for strength to show God’s care and compassion in all we do, think, and say.** Pray the Morning Prayer together.

Explore: Pages 66–71

- ◆ Have your child read the section *We Live in Communities* on page 66. Discuss some of the communities of which you are a part and how the people of these communities help one another.
- ◆ Have your child read aloud the paragraph of *Works of Mercy* and complete the *My Turn* activity. Say: **Works of mercy are real-life actions that help us answer the question posed to Jesus in the opening Scripture passage, “What then should we do?”**
- ◆ Say: **The corporal works of mercy are actions that tend to a person’s physical or bodily needs.** Take turns reading aloud the section *Corporal Works of Mercy* on pages 66–67. Share experiences related to the corporal works of mercy and how they can be put into action.
- ◆ Say: **In the corporal works of mercy, we give of ourselves—our time, our talent, and our treasure—to be present to and active with others. When we do so, we connect with one another and grow closer to God.**
- ◆ Take turns reading the section *Spiritual Works of Mercy* on page 68. Share experiences related to the corporal works of mercy and how they can be put into action. Have your child complete the Chapter 9 BLM: My Prayer. Say: **The spiritual works of mercy give strength and comfort to others and draw us closer to God.**
- ◆ Have your child complete the *My Turn* activity at the bottom of page 68. When he or she has completed the activity, say: **Saint Thomas Aquinas, one of the great teachers of the Catholic faith, taught that one becomes virtuous through habit and practice. Ask: Using this explanation, how might practicing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy help you grow in virtue?** (Possible answer: *When we practice works of mercy, we act virtuously. The behaviors are like habits. It soon becomes natural for us to act virtuously.*)

- ◆ Say: **Over the years, by applying the Gospel to various situations and issues, the Church has developed principles of social teaching. These teachings help us to transform society into a place where we can know and experience God’s love and share it with one another. We call these principles Catholic social teaching.**
- ◆ Have your child read any one of the following Gospel passages: Matthew 14:15–21, Matthew 19:16–21, Mark 12:28–34, and Luke 10:29–37. Ask: **How does Jesus’ teaching inspire Catholic social teaching?**
- ◆ Have your child read aloud the first three principles addressed on page 69. Then ask: **What are some real-world examples of these principles at work?** (*Possible answers: the right-to-life movement; the Red Cross; groups that work to help people and communities recover after a disaster*)
- ◆ Take turns reading the remaining principles of Catholic social teaching on page 70. With your child, brainstorm a list of social issues and problems prevalent in today’s world. Examples might include abortion, gun violence, poverty, pollution, and poor working conditions. Select one social issue and look at it in light of what he or she has learned about the principles of Catholic social teaching. Ask: **Which social-justice principles are being violated in this situation? What are some ways the principles could be used to address the problem? How would the world be different if this problem were solved?**
- ◆ Take turns reading the section *Making Good Choices* on pages 70–71. Then have your child complete the *My Turn* activity at the bottom of the page. Share how you recognize the voice of your conscience. Say: **Growing in our faith helps us develop our conscience and to be better able to recognize and make good decisions.**

Sacred Sign: Page 69

- ◆ Have your child read aloud the *Sacred Sign* feature of page 69. Ask your child to share what he or she already knows about this symbol. Discuss with your child how this symbol helps us know God more.
- ◆ Say: **Saint John Paul II stated that the consecrated life is a sign of the living and active presence of the Spirit at work in the world.** Share with your child that the habit is a recognizable symbol of this presence and of religious consecration, poverty, and membership in a particular religious family. In communities where habits are not worn, a cross or other visible religious symbol often takes its place.

Rite: Page 70

- ◆ Read aloud the *Rite* feature on page 70. Say: **The Sign of Peace is a gesture of reconciliation and unity.** Ask: **How does this particular rite help us worship God?**
- ◆ Invite your child to reread the feature quietly and reflect privately for a moment about times he or she has observed or participated in this rite. Invite your child to consider what meaning it had for him or her. Share your insights as well.

Witness: Page 71

- ◆ Read aloud the *Witness* feature on page 71. Say: **Francis of Assisi was a living model of social justice. He was a man of peace and his kindness and gentleness were also well-known, especially in relation to nature and animals. He lived out the principles of social justice, and we can learn much from his example.**
- ◆ Discuss ways your family can live simply after the manner of Saint Francis.

Reflect: Chapter 9 Prayer Service BLM

- ◆ Have your child reflect on what he or she has learned about the relationship between one's actions and a just society. Say: **The Church teaches us that we have a responsibility to act in just and moral ways. As we grow in our faith, we are more and more able to have a positive effect on those around us and on society as a whole.**
- ◆ Proceed to your family's prayer space. A prayer space can be a simple table on which you place a Bible, crucifix, statue, icon, or another religious icon. Invite your child to assist you in creating this sacred space.
- ◆ Remind your child that each new day is a gift from God, and that by praying daily, we ask God's help in making good decisions all day long.
- ◆ Distribute copies of the Chapter 9 Prayer Service: Works of Mercy. Choose who will read the part for Leader. You and your child will both read the parts labeled "All." Lead by example, participating actively and with reverence.
- ◆ Pray together the prayer service, following your assigned roles. Adapt it to your circumstances if needed. Observe the periods of silence and keep a prayerful pace. Allow time in between sections for reflection.
- ◆ Pause for a moment of silence before concluding.

Respond: Page 72

- ◆ Review with your child the *Faith Summary* on page 72. Ask your child to explain each sentence in his or own words and revisit concepts as necessary.
- ◆ Have your child read the *Remember* section silently and be sure he or she understands the main points of the chapter.
- ◆ Ask your child to choose one *Reach Out* item and follow the directions. Check in with your child and ask him or her to reflect privately on the outcomes.
- ◆ Read aloud the *Words to Know* and ask your child to use the words in sentences. Consult the Glossary at the back of the book and at www.loyolapress.com/calledtobecatholic if more clarification is needed.
- ◆ Invite your child to think about the *Reflect* scenario and write a response on the lines provided. If your child is comfortable doing so, encourage him or her to share the response with you.
- ◆ Pray together the closing prayer. Conclude by praying together the Sign of the Cross. Invite your child to pray this week whenever he or she feels the need for help or guidance.

Name _____

Date _____

My Prayer

Prayer is a powerful tool. In the spiritual works of mercy, we are called to pray for the living and the dead. By doing so, we not only give strength and comfort to those for whom we pray, but we also come to know and love God more.

Writing a Prayer

Directions: Think of an intention that is close to your heart. Perhaps you know someone who is ill or having a difficult time. Maybe you are especially grateful for something. With this intention in mind, write a short prayer about it that you would like to share with others. Remember that when you pray, you are speaking directly to God.

A large rectangular box with a decorative double-line border and rounded corners. Inside the box, there are 20 horizontal lines for writing a prayer.