The Church, Our Community in the Spirit

Begin

Ask: *Can you think of a movie or a book about someone going on an adventure?* Share ideas with your child. Ask: *What kind of adventures has our family taken?* Read aloud the unit title on page 86. Point out the picture of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Say: *We are going to learn about Saint Ignatius of Loyola. He had many adventures while serving God.*

Introduce the Saint

- Say: *Saint Ignatius of Loyola served God as a soldier and as a traveler. Just as Ignatius learned about Jesus from his family, we can learn with our family and grow closer to Jesus together.*
- Turn to page 87. Have your child read aloud the two paragraphs. Ask: *Who inspired Ignatius to change his life?* (Jesus and the saints) *Why do you think Ignatius wanted to be like Jesus and the saints?* (to spend his life doing God’s work.)
- Tell your child that Saint Ignatius loved teaching children about Jesus. Say: *Saint Ignatius taught about Jesus’ love. He told children they could talk to Jesus anytime in prayer. Now as we learn to listen to God in prayer, we can find out how to love and serve him.*
- Read aloud the Be Inspired feature. Tell your child that this is part of Saint Ignatius’s prayer the *Suscipe.* Say: *Saint Ignatius wants us to know that if we have God’s love and grace, we have everything we need. God loves us and takes care of us.*
- With your child, add Ignatius’ feast day, July 31, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the love of Saint Ignatius.
Unit Opener: Page 88

- Ask your child to name things he or she considers special or wonderful. Say: *Every time we encounter something wonderful, we find God. God is in all things that are good and holy!*
- Ask: *How did Ignatius live like Jesus?* (Responses will vary.) Say: *Let’s read to find out more about Saint Ignatius.* Read aloud the paragraph. Then ask how Ignatius did God’s work. (He became a priest. He taught people how to pray. He taught that God was in all things.)
- Have your child complete the activity. When he or she is finished, discuss his or her responses.
- Direct your child’s attention to the Reading God’s Word feature. Say: *Let’s pray part of Psalm 19. It names a place we can find God.* Read aloud the verse. Say: *The firmament is the sky.* Ask: *What things do you see in the sky? What do they say about God?* (Sample answer: I see the sun. It tells me God loves us so much that he gave us light.)

(Continued on the next page)
We Worship God

Engage: Page

- Discuss what it is like to be new, either on a sports team, at school, in your parish, or in a club. Ask: How would you welcome a new member? Encourage your child to think of other ways to welcome people who are new to your neighborhood.
- Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture.
- Ask: What would you need to build a house? (a design, money, tools, materials, workers) Say: It takes a whole team to build something that big. Jesus told his Apostles to form a team—the Church—to help build his kingdom. Read aloud the paragraphs on page 89. Ask: What power did Jesus give his disciples? (the power to share his love with others through baptism)
- Pray aloud the prayer. Conclude by praying together Amen.

Explore: Pages 90–91

- Raise your forefinger to your lips. Ask: What does this sign mean? (to be quiet) Give a thumbs up. Ask: What does this sign mean? (good job) Say: The sacraments are signs too. They remind us God is with us.
- Read aloud the title and first paragraph on page 90. Say: We have talked about how Jesus loved and healed people when he lived on earth. He continues to love and heal us through the sacraments. He does this through the Holy Spirit. Ask: Who is the Holy Spirit? (the Third Person of the Trinity)
- Read aloud the second paragraph. Guide your child to look up the term Fruits of the Holy Spirit in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definition. Say: The Fruits of the Holy Spirit are ways we act when God is alive in us.
- Invite your child to complete the activity. When he or she is finished, say: These are the 12 Fruits of the Holy Spirit. They help us live like Jesus.
- Discuss the day that your child was baptized. Then have your child read aloud The Sacrament of Baptism on page 91. Guide your child to look up the terms rite and Original Sin in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definitions. Say: The rite of Baptism is celebrated by pouring water over someone’s head or immersing the person in water. When we celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism, Original Sin is forgiven. We become members of the Church, God’s family.
- Read aloud the Ready for the Sacraments feature. Explain that we can use holy water, the rosary, religious medals, and participation in processions to help us turn our hearts to God and get ready to receive the sacraments.
Art Exploration: Page 92

- Find in a magazine, a book, or online a picture of a beautiful flowering tree.
- Ask: *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail including the flowers, buds, and trunk. Say: *Just like a branch grows strong on a tree, we grow strong and happy when we stay close to Jesus.*
- Have your child turn to page 92. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- Read aloud Jesus Is the Vine. Ask: *Why do you think Jesus calls himself a vine?* (He gives us life and keeps us strong.) *What do we need to grow in love of God and Jesus?* (prayer, sacraments, Bible, good deeds)
- Have your child read aloud Grow Like a Vine and complete the activity. Ask your child to share his or her ideas with you.
- Read aloud the Reading God’s Word Feature. Say: *When we stay close to Jesus, we bear the beautiful Fruits of the Holy Spirit.*
- Invite your child to draw a tree leaving the branches bare. Have your child label the tree Jesus and the branches Us. Ask him or her to add fruits to the branches and label the fruits of the Holy Spirit *love, joy, peace, patience,* and *kindness.* Pray silently together asking the Holy Spirit for these gifts.

Reflect: Pages 93–94

- Together look at page 93. Say: *Remember that we thrive when we are connected Jesus.*
- Read aloud the title and the paragraph slowly and with expression. Pause to give your child time to reflect. Then pray aloud the imaginative prayer slowly and reverently. Provide a moment of silence for your child to talk to God in his or her heart. Close the prayer by praying together the Sign of the Cross. Say: *Let’s learn how we can share our love for Jesus with others.*
- Ask your child to read aloud the title and the paragraph on page 94. Discuss the questions with your child.
- Read aloud the activity directions and have your child complete the list. Have your child read aloud his or her list and discuss the ideas. Say: *Just as you do nice things for your friends and enjoy shared activities, you can stay close to Jesus by being more like him, such as by being kind to others and talking to God in prayer.*

(Continued on the next page)
Respond: Pages 95–96

▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Words I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can be kind to others. Say: God helps us be kind. When we are kind, the Fruits of the Holy Spirit are alive in us. Invite your child to complete the activity.

▶ Pray aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Then pray the Sign of the Cross together.

▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 96. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Say: Remember that the Fruits of the Holy Spirit are alive in you! You are growing closer to Jesus through your kind and loving actions.
Celebrating Reconciliation

Engage: Page 97

Discuss times when you and your child have reconciled with friends. Talk about how you each felt after you made up. Say: Jesus helps us recognize our sins and ask for forgiveness. He also helps us forgive others when they have hurt us.

Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture.

Read aloud Mark 2:1–12. Then say: The Gospel of the Lord. Invite your child to respond Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Ask: What do we mean by the phrase “a broken heart”? (feeling sad; hurt) Say: While our physical heart is not damaged, we still need to be healed. Jesus heals our bodies and our souls. Read aloud the paragraphs on page 97. Ask: How might Jesus heal our souls? (by forgiving our sins)

Pray aloud the prayer. Close by praying together Amen.

Explore: Pages 98–99

Share a childhood story with your child about a time you disobeyed or disappointed someone you loved. Highlight the consequences or your actions and how you made peace with that person. Say: When we turn away from God, we can become close again through apologies, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Guide your child to look up mortal sin, venial sin, and contrition in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definitions. Then read aloud page 98. Ask: What is one thing both kinds of sin have in common? (They hurt our relationship with God and with others.) Say: In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we confess our sins to a priest and tell God we are sorry.

Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. Say: Together at Mass we praise God for being merciful and ask for God’s forgiveness.

Guide your child to look up the terms examination of conscience and confession in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definitions. Then have your child read aloud page 99. Say: Let’s turn to pages 270 and 271. Discuss these pages and explain that these types of questions help us think about what we will confess to Jesus.

Read aloud the Ready for the Sacraments feature. Say: A penance is a prayer or a deed we do to help us change and live as God wants us to live.

(Continued on the next page)
Art Exploration: Page 100

- Find in a book or online a picture of Jesus talking to a man in a tree.
- Ask: What do you see in this picture? Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the locations of the man in the tree and Jesus. Say: Jesus is always happy when we make efforts to be closer to him.
- Have your child turn to page 100. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- Read aloud Zacchaeus, the Rich Man. Ask: Why did the crowd become angry? (Jesus was going to the home of a sinner.) What did Jesus tell Zacchaeus? (that he was saved that day)
- Have your child read aloud Forgive One Another and complete the activity. Share what you think forgiveness means with your child.
- Read aloud the Reading God’s Word feature. Say: Our real treasure is one day being with God in heaven.
- Read the following rhyme aloud and pause after each line. Ask your child to make up actions for each line and perform them.
  Zaccaeus had to climb a tree. For it was Jesus he longed to see. When Jesus asked him to come down, Zaccaeus turned his life around. He made peace with God, you see. He walked in love through God’s mercy.

Reflect: Pages 101–102

- Together look at page 101. Ask: What do you think the girl in the picture is talking to God about? Say: Contrition is the sadness we feel when we know we have sinned. The prayer on this page is a special prayer we pray to ask God to forgive our sins.
- Read aloud the title and the paragraph slowly and with expression. Then invite your child to pray aloud the Act of Contrition with you. Ask your child to take a few moments to talk to Jesus in his or her heart. Conclude by praying together the Sign of the Cross. Say: Remember the great love God has for us as we practice Jesus’ teachings.
- Have your child read aloud Jesus Forgives on page 102. Say: After God has forgiven us, we have a pure heart, free from sin. When our hearts are pure, we feel joyful and holy.
- Read aloud A Pure Heart and have your child complete the activity. Say: Tell God how good you feel when he forgives your sins, making your heart pure and holy.

(Continued on the next page)
Respond: Pages 103–104

▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Words I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can show forgiveness to others. Then invite your child to complete the activity.
▶ Pray aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Say: *We have discussed forgiveness today. Remember, God wants us to make peace with him and with others.* Allow time for silent reflection. Conclude by praying the Sign of the Cross.
▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 104. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Say: *Jesus loves us, and he always forgives us when we are sorry for our sins and ask for forgiveness. Remember to always do your best to avoid sin. Think about your choices and actions so that you can live as God wants you to live.*
The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Engage: Page 105

- Say: *Words can hurt people, and words can heal too.* Ask: *When our unkind words hurt people, what can you say to heal the hurt?* (“I’m sorry.” “Please forgive me.” “Let’s be friends again.”)
- Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture.
- Read aloud the paragraphs on page 105. Say: *Sometimes it is hard to make peace with someone. Jesus is ready to help us! Let’s ask Jesus to teach us more about forgiveness.* Pray aloud the prayer. Conclude by praying together *Amen.*

Explore: Pages 106–107

- Ask your child to make a poster that shows signs and symbols of peace. At the top of the poster, tell him or her to write *May God give you pardon and peace.* Display the poster in your home.
- Ask your child to read aloud page 106. Guide your child to look up the terms *absolution* and *seal of confession* in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definitions. Say: *Jesus forgives us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Absolution is the forgiveness God offers us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*
- Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. Say: *When you receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the priest cannot tell anyone anything you have confessed to him.*
- Read aloud page 107. Guide your child to look up the word *penance* in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definition. Say: *After confession we are filled with peace in our hearts.*
- Read aloud the Ready for the Sacraments feature. Say: *The wonderful thing about the Sacrament of Reconciliation is that God frees us from the burden of our sins.*

Art Exploration: Page 108

- Find in a book or online a picture that shows four friends lowering a man through the roof to see Jesus.
- Say: *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including what the men are doing. Say: *Jesus heals and forgives us.*
- Have your child turn to page 108. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- Have your child read aloud Jesus Heals. Say: *The paralyzed man cannot get close to Jesus without the help of his friends.* Ask: *How do they help?* (They carried their friend to Jesus and lowered him through the roof.) *Who are some people in your life that help you grow close to God?* (family, friends, priests)
Have your child read aloud Friendship and complete the activity. Share your own experience of friendship with your child.

Invite your child to role-play these situations with you that teach how to be a good friend: a friend is worried about a sick pet; a friend broke an arm and needs help doing things; a friend has to do chores before playing with you. At the end of each role-play, talk about how being a good friend made your child feel.

Reflect: Pages 109–110

Together look at page 109. Say: God always helps us ask for forgiveness when we sin. Read aloud the title and the paragraph. Say: It’s our special prayer time. Be still, and feel the love of God in your heart.

Pray aloud the reflection slowly and reverently, pausing after each paragraph to give your child time to respond in his or her heart. Say: We can pray the Act of Contrition anytime to tell God that we are sorry for something we have done and to ask for his help. Pray aloud the Act of Contrition together. Then pray together the Sign of the Cross. Close by saying: As we learn to live in peace with one another, always remember how much God loves us.

Read aloud Peace Be with You on page 110 and discuss the question. Have your child read aloud Making Peace and complete the activity. Invite him or her to read aloud the sentences.

Read aloud the Reading God’s Word feature. Say: Jesus offers us the peace that comes with forgiveness. He calms our hearts.

Respond: Pages 111–112

Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Words I Learned in this session.

Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can be a peacemaker at home and at school. Invite your child to complete the activity.

Pray aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Then pray the Sign of the Cross together. Say: We know that when we sin, we can ask God and one another for forgiveness.

Read aloud With My Family on page 112. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Say: Remember, God wants us to be peacemakers at home, at school, and in our communities!
Mary Shows Us the Way

Engage: Page 113

- With your child, discuss special women you both know. Have your child design a trophy using gold construction paper and art supplies for a special woman. Ask him or her to complete this sentence on the trophy: You are special to me because ____. Invite your child to give the trophy to the woman he or she honored.
- Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture.
- Read aloud the title and the paragraph on page 113. Say: It can be difficult to sit quietly with good news. But when we reflect on God’s goodness in our hearts, we grow closer to him. Then we can share even more of his goodness with others!
- Invite your child to think about how Mary loved her son, Jesus, and how Mary loves us today. Say: Let’s ask God to help us learn from Mary’s example. Pray aloud the prayer. Then say: Now let’s spend some time reflecting on God’s goodness. Pause. Then pray together Amen.

Explore: Pages 114–115

- Discuss a time when your family traveled to visit a friend or family member. Talk about how you got there and how long it took. Recall how you felt when you finally arrived.
- Have your child read aloud page 114. Say: Mary wanted Elizabeth and all of us to know that all praise belongs to God. Mary was grateful for all God had done for her. Ask: What has God given you? (a healthy body, a home to live in, a good family)
- Read aloud the Did You Know? feature. Say: Everyone calls Mary blessed as Elizabeth said they would. Invite your child to do the activity.
- Read aloud page 115. Guide your child to look up the word Magnificat in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definition. Say: The Magnificat is a special prayer of praise that Mary offered to God for choosing her to be Jesus’ mother.
- Read aloud the Ready for the Sacraments feature. Say: Let’s take a few moments to thank God the Father for his Son, Jesus. Pause for a few moments of quiet time. Then say: God fills our hearts with joy. He creates you and loves you always.

Art Exploration: Page 116

- Find in a book or online a picture that shows the Virgin Mary with flowers.
- Ask: What do you see in this picture? Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including what Mary is wearing and holding.
Have your child turn to page 116. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.

- Read aloud Mother of the Church. Say: Mary has the special role of being Mother of the Church. Ask: How does God help us to be his children? (He gives us grace.) How can we be more like Mary?

- Ask your child to read aloud Special Women and complete the activity.

- Read aloud the Reading God’s Word feature. Ask: What are some of Mary’s experiences that you think she remembered? (visit from the angel Gabriel telling her she would be the mother of Jesus, visiting Elizabeth, praising God in the Magnificat, the birth of Jesus, find Jesus in the Temple)

- Explain to your child that different cultures picture Mary in their own way. Have your child picture Mary and draw his or her own version of the Mother of God. Display this artwork in your home.

**Reflect: Pages 117–118**

- Together look at page 117. Say: The boy in the picture looks happy. Remind your child that we ask Mary to pray for us, to help and support us, and to pray with us as we ask God for what we need.

- Read aloud the paragraph slowly. Say: Mary, the Mother of the Church, loves each of us and wants us to be close to God the Father and to her Son, Jesus.

- Pray aloud the prayer. Then pray together the Hail Mary, followed by the Sign of the Cross. Close by saying: As we remember Mary in our hearts, let’s try to follow her example today and every day.

- Read aloud the paragraph and the activity directions on page 118. Have your child read aloud each stanza and complete each sentence. When he or she is finished, read aloud the poem together.

**Respond: Pages 119–120**

- Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Word I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can honor Mary, the Mother of the Church. Invite your child to complete the activity.

- Pray aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Then pray the Sign of the Cross together.

- Read aloud With My Family on page 120. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Say: Mary found God in the quiet. We can also be with God in the quiet or in songs or spoken prayers. Remember that Mary is our best example of faithfulness to God!
Celebrating Christmas

Engage: Page 121

- On a dry-erase board or sheet of paper, draw a timeline showing the Sundays in Advent, Christmas, the Epiphany, and the baptism of the Lord. Together look at a calendar to find the Epiphany and the end of the Christmas season for this year.
- Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture.
- Turn on a flashlight. Say: When it is dark, we need help finding our way. When Jesus was born, he brought his light into a dark world to help us find our way to God. Read aloud the paragraphs on page 121. Ask: How did the birth of Jesus bring hope and light to the world? (by bringing all people back to God the Father)
- Ask your child to take a moment to imagine he or she is kneeling next to Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus in the manger. Pray aloud the prayer together. Conclude by praying Amen.

Explore: Page 122

- Say: Let’s pretend we are having a special guest come to our home to visit. Ask: What are some things our family might do to make him or her feel welcome?
- Have your child read aloud page 122. Discuss the questions. Say: Celebrating Christmas is similar to welcoming a special guest into our home.
- Read aloud the activity directions and have your child complete the activity. Discuss the picture he or she drew.
- Read aloud the Reading God’s Word feature. Ask: How does Jesus’ birth show that God is with us? (Jesus is God’s Son. Jesus is God’s gift to us.)

Reflect: Page 123

- Together look at a religious Advent calendar. Ask: What do you think we will see when you open the window on December 25? Review the special preparations of Advent and how they help prepare us to celebrate the joy of Christmas.
- Read aloud Mass During Christmas. Say: When Christmas finally arrives, families are ready to rejoice. Jesus is here! He is in our hearts, and he is with us.
- Guide your child to look up the term Nativity scene in the Glossary. Read aloud and discuss the definition. Then have your child read aloud What We Experience and complete the activity.
- Read aloud the Ready for Sacraments feature. Say: Jesus wants to be with us always. He is eager for the day when you can receive him as often as possible, at least once a week, in the Eucharist.
Art Exploration: Page 124

▶ Find in a magazine, a book, or online a picture that shows a Nativity scene.
▶ Ask: What do you see in this picture? Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the setting, the people, and the animals. Say: A Nativity scene reminds us of Jesus’ birth and how much God the Father loves us.
▶ Have your child turn to page 124. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
▶ Read aloud The Feast of Christmas. Ask: Why do you think we give gifts to one another at Christmas? (to recall the special gift that God gave us in Jesus) Say: God gave us talents that are meant to be shared. When we give someone the gift of ourselves, we are living as Jesus did.
▶ Have your child read aloud You Are a Gift and complete the activity. Example of talents might include reading to a younger child, playing an instrument, or sharing a positive attitude.
▶ Invite your child to design a Christmas card to give to a parishioner or neighbor who is homebound. Have your child fold a sheet of construction paper in half, decorate the card, and write a special Christmas message inside. Close with a silent prayer asking that all people be remembered on Jesus’ birthday.

Respond: Pages 125–126

▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Word I Learned in this session.
▶ Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can share joy with others. Then read aloud the activity directions. Have your child imagine that he or she is one of the shepherds who has come to see the baby Jesus. Say: Notice the night sky and scene surrounding the manger. What do the angels say? Ask your child to write the angels’ words of praise in the bubble.
▶ Pray aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Then pray the Sign of the Cross together.
▶ Read aloud With My Family on page 126. Together as a family, complete the page and do the activity. Pray the family prayer. Say: During the Christmas season this year, try to think of new ways to be more like Jesus.