



The Church, Our Community in the Spirit

Begin

Ask: *Imagine that you are the ruler of a country and have the power to do almost anything. How would you use your power? Have your child brainstorm ideas with you. Read aloud the unit title on page 43.* **Say:** *This unit helps us learn how the Holy Spirit guides us to bring God's presence to the world.*

Introduce the Saint

Say: *Saint Helena used her influence to do good things. Let's read on to learn more about the extraordinary life of an ordinary person.*

Have your child read the text silently. **Ask:** *What was Helena's life like before her marriage to a Roman general? (She was poor; she worked at her father's inn; she was an ordinary person.) What did Helena's son Constantine do that changed the history of Christianity? (He ended the persecution of Christians by allowing them to worship freely.) How did Helena use her power after she became empress? (She had churches built in Jerusalem and Bethlehem.) Why were these cities so important? (Jesus was born in Bethlehem. The Temple was in Jerusalem. Jesus died and rose from the dead in Jerusalem.)*

With your child add Helena's feast day, August 18, to your calendar. Plan an event together to celebrate the good works of Saint Helena.



God's Presence in the Temple

Engage: Page 43

- ▶ Have your child close his or her eyes. **Say:** *Think of a place that makes you feel happy.*
Ask: *What can you see, hear, and smell in this place? Why do you feel safe here?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response.
Say: *In this session we will learn about how one king built a special place where his people could feel close to God.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about places where he or she feels close to God. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 44–45

- ▶ **Ask:** *Have you ever observed a house or building under construction? How would you describe the construction process?*
- ▶ Have your child silently read page 44. **Ask:** *What was the most sacred room in the Temple called? (the Holy of Holies) What was the Ark of the Covenant? (a large gold box containing the Ten Commandments)* **Say:** *Once the Temple was built in Jerusalem, all the tribes of Israel would go there to worship.*
- ▶ Read aloud God's Presence in the Temple. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *What was the tent in which the Hebrews worshiped called? (tabernacle)* **Ask:** *Who makes God's presence known today? (priests, the Church, all of us)*
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Site feature. Invite your child to read 1 Kings 6–7 for an in-depth description of the construction of the Temple and how it was furnished.

Art Exploration: Page 179

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Jesus helping someone in need.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including how Jesus is helping someone in need.
- ▶ **Say:** *God works through us to help people in need.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 179. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud God's Presence in Jesus Christ. **Ask:** *When did Jesus call the Temple his Father's house? (when a young Jesus entered the Temple, the cleansing of the Temple scene)*
- ▶ Read aloud God's Presence Within Us. Give your child time to complete the activity and share his or her response with you.



- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *The temple the Jews thought Jesus was talking about was the physical Temple in Jerusalem. Jesus was speaking of himself as the new spiritual temple, that was raised three days after he died.*
- ▶ Take turns reciting the following lines. Say the refrain after each line.
Refrain: *Whatever you do for others, you do for me.*

I was hungry, you gave me food.

Refrain

I was thirsty, you gave me drink.

Refrain

I was a stranger, you welcomed me.

Refrain

I needed clothes, you gave me some.

Refrain

I was ill, you cared for me.

Refrain

I was lonely, you visited me.

Refrain

Reflect: Page 46

- ▶ Together look at page 46. **Say:** *In this prayer we express our needs as children of God and temples of the Holy Spirit. Make yourself comfortable as we get ready to pray.*
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph. Then have your child read aloud the prayer. Allow time for your child to finish his or her silent prayers.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud We Are the Church. **Ask:** *Why is discrimination unacceptable for God's people? (God calls us to love and respect everyone.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud The Sacrament of Holy Orders. **Say:** *Name the three titles given to men who receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders. (priest, bishop, deacon)*

Respond: Page 47

- ▶ 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 respect his or her church and others as temples of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



Psalms, the Prayers of Jesus

Engage: Page 48

- ▶ If possible, show your child prayer books for children and for adults. Encourage your child to look through the books. **Ask:** *What are some of your favorite prayers?*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response. **Say:** *In this session we will learn about prayers in the Bible and different ways to pray.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about how they prefer to pray. Discuss how it is similar or different from the way you pray. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 49–49

- ▶ **Ask:** *What do we do between the First and Second Readings at Sunday Mass? (We sing or say a prayer.)* **Say:** *The song or prayer that we say between the First Reading and the Second Reading is a psalm.*
- ▶ Have your child read A Prayer Collection silently. Point out the vocabulary terms. **Ask:** *How many psalms are there? (150) What are the five most common types of psalms? (praise, lament, thanksgiving, intercession, wisdom)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Prayer Together and Alone. **Ask:** *What is the difference between communal prayer and personal prayer? (We pray communal prayer with other people. Our own conversations with God are personal prayer.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud page 49. Point out the vocabulary terms. **Say:** *Wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit.* **Ask:** *Why is Mary called the Seat of Wisdom? (Mary trusted God and had the wisdom and faith to cooperate with him.)*

Art Exploration: Page 180

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of a shepherd leading his flock.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the setting and the job of the shepherd.
- ▶ **Say:** *Our relationship with God and Jesus is similar to that of a shepherd and his sheep. A shepherd cares for his sheep just as God cares for us. God is our shepherd.*



- ▶ Have your child turn to page 180. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud Daily Experiences Make the Word Come Alive. **Ask:** *Why do you think God uses an ordinary person and the person's daily job to describe the way he cares for and protects us? (A simple, ordinary experience helps us bring God's message into our daily lives.)*
- ▶ Read aloud The Lord Is . . . and have your child describe his or her image of God.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Ask:** *What words could replace or define reproving? (correcting, scolding) What about admonishing? (warning, threatening)*
- ▶ Invite your child to copy Psalm 23 and illustrate the theme or message learned from the psalm.

Reflect: Page 50

- ▶ Together look at page 50. **Ask:** *What words would you use to describe the setting in the picture? Say:* *It is a peaceful place to thank and praise God.*
- ▶ Read aloud the first paragraph. Explain that in this verse, the word *holocaust* means "a burnt offering." Then take turns with your child reading alternate verses of Psalm 20. Allow time for quiet reflection and then join your child in praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ **Say:** *Psalms are aligned closely with the seasons of the Church.* Have your child read aloud Psalms and Seasons. Tell him or her to look at page 107 to review the meaning of each season. Have your child complete the activity. Read aloud each psalm and discuss your child's response.

Respond: Page 51

- ▶ 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 times he or she can pray the psalms.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



The Mission of the Church

Engage: Page 52

- ▶ Discuss things your family members do to help others. **Say:** *When we do these things, we are showing Jesus' presence to others through our actions.*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response. Point out the picture. **Ask:** *How are the people in the picture showing Jesus' presence to the world? (They are helping the community by keeping it clean.)* **Say:** *In this session we will read about how we are all called to be like Jesus.*
- ▶ Discuss activities you and your child have seen in your parish that proclaim Jesus' presence. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 52–53

- ▶ Share with your child an example of how someone has helped you on your journey of faith. Ask your child to think about people who have influenced his or her faith.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *The Church Leads in Faith*. **Ask:** *What message do we proclaim through our actions as members of the Church? (We are part of God's family, and God is present to us.)*
- ▶ Discuss ways that people show signs of God's presence to others. Explain examples such as teaching faith formation, going to Mass, being an altar server, and helping an elderly person.
- ▶ Have your child silently read page 53. **Ask:** *How do we know that God wants us to be close to him? (He made us temples of the Holy Spirit; we have his presence in our hearts; we can talk with and listen to him in prayer and through the sacraments.)*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *This verse confirms that we are called to show others the presence of God.*

Art Exploration: Page 181

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Jesus with Peter and the other apostles.
- ▶ **Say:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the actions of Jesus toward Peter.
- ▶ **Say:** *Jesus entrusted the care of the early Church to Peter and his followers.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 181. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Read aloud The Beginning of the Church. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *Why is the day described in this story so important to us today?* (It showed that Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies and is the Messiah. It was the birth of the Catholic Church.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud About Jesus and complete the activity. Encourage your child to share his or her responses with you.
- ▶ Read aloud the Link to Liturgy feature. **Ask:** *What are the ways we can announce the Gospel to the world by words, deeds, and actions?* Discuss your child's responses.
- ▶ Discuss Christian symbols such as keys, a cross, a fish, a lamb, and a dove. Have your child draw three new symbols that remind him or her of Jesus, the Church, and the kingdom of God, and write an explanation for each. Invite your child to pray a silent prayer, glorifying God.

Reflect: Page 54

- ▶ Together look at page 54. **Say:** *Imagine you are the boy in the picture. Describe what you might see, hear, feel, and smell.*
- ▶ Read aloud the first sentence. **Say:** *Use all your senses as you listen to the reflection.* Read aloud each part slowly, pausing after each paragraph. Allow time for your child to talk silently to God. Close the prayer by praying *Amen* together.
- ▶ Have your child read silently The Church Respects Other Religions. **Say:** *Christians, Jews, and Muslims all worship the God of Abraham.*
- ▶ Have your child read silently the first paragraph of Images of the Church. **Ask:** *What three images are mentioned?* (Bride of Christ, Temple of the Holy Spirit, Body of Christ) Have your child read aloud the second paragraph and complete the activity. Ask your child to share his or her response and drawing with you.

Respond: Page 55

- ▶ 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 respect people of other religions.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



Marks of the Church

Engage: Page 56

- ▶ Invite your child to cut out pictures from magazines and diocesan newspapers and make a collage showing how people are living out the purpose of the Church.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and the text below it. Discuss your child's response.
Ask: *What does the word Church mean to you? What do you think the purpose of the Church is?* **Say:** *In this session we will learn about four qualities called the Marks of the Church and how we are called to live out these qualities.*
- ▶ Invite your child to add a caption to his or her collage that describes how the pictures and articles relate to the purpose of the Church. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 56–57

- ▶ **Ask:** *What four words would you use to describe our family?* Work together to come up with the words. Ask your child to explain his or her choices.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the three sections on page 56. **Ask:** *Where do we find the Marks of the Church? (in the Nicene Creed) What are the four Marks of the Church? (one, holy, catholic, apostolic)*
- ▶ Have your child read silently the three sections on page 57. **Ask:** *What does catholic mean? (universal) Ask: What makes the Church apostolic? (Its tradition began with the apostles and continues their teachings.)*
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *This is a verse from the Magnificat—Mary's song of praise to God.*

Art Exploration: Page 182

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture of Paul preaching to a crowd of people.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the reactions of the crowd.
- ▶ **Say:** *Paul reminds us that we must follow Jesus' example and treat one another with love.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 182. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.



- ▶ Have your child read aloud Paul Speaks of Love and Unity. **Say:** *Paul's letters are important to us in many ways. They are read at Mass to remind us of the Christian qualities we should live by.*
- ▶ Write on a sheet of paper *humility, gentleness, patience, and love*. Discuss why these qualities are important. Have your child read aloud Christian Qualities and complete the activity.
- ▶ Tell your child that Paul visited many places to speak about qualities that Christians should have in their daily lives and how believers were to treat one another. Have your child write a speech about the importance of following Jesus' example.
Ask: *Will your message be like Paul's? What will you tell everyone?* Invite your child to give his or her speech to your family.

Reflect: Page 58

- ▶ Together look at page 58. **Say:** *The girl in the picture is focused on her prayer. The Nicene Creed is another prayer that we take to heart because we are praying our fundamental beliefs each time we pray it.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph. Take turns reading the prayer and the reflection. Close the prayer by praying *Amen* and joining your child in praying the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Have your child read silently Peace and Unity. **Ask:** *Why does God give us so many kinds of gifts? (so that we can do good in the world) Do you think we all have the same gifts? Why or why not? (No, we all have different gifts to serve in many different ways.)*

Respond: Page 59

- ▶ 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 treat others with love and kindness.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.



Celebrating Christmas

Engage: Page 60

- ▶ Together make a Venn diagram that shows at least three ways that your family is similar to and different from the Holy Family.
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. **Say:** *In this session we will learn more about our Church's Christmas season and the significance of the star.*
- ▶ Ask your child to think about what your family could learn from the Holy Family. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Page 61

- ▶ **Ask:** *What gifts could we give at Jesus' birth today that hold a spiritual importance? (a Theological or Cardinal Virtue or one of the Gifts or Fruits of the Holy Spirit)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud We Celebrate Epiphany During Christmas. Point out the vocabulary word. **Ask:** *Why didn't the Magi return to Jerusalem? (In a dream they were warned not to return and to go home a different way.)* **Say:** *We celebrate the Magi's journey to honor Jesus and the revelation that he is God's Son on the Feast of the Epiphany.*
- ▶ Have your child answer the questions and share his or her responses with you.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Say:** *Visualize the Magi, exhausted from traveling so far. Imagine the joy of finding the infant Jesus.*

Reflect: Page 62

- ▶ Talk about your favorite family traditions during the Christmas season. **Ask:** *What is a tradition you might carry on with your own family some day?*
- ▶ Read aloud Mass During Christmas. Ask your child to share his or her impressions and experiences at Mass during the Christmas season.
- ▶ Read aloud What We Experience. **Ask:** *How are the experiences at Mass similar to our family's Christmas celebrations? How are they different? Share your own thoughts with your child.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Jesus and the Magi. **Ask:** *What does the arrival of the Magi acknowledge to the world? (that Jesus has been born)*
- ▶ Read aloud Gifts of the Magi and have your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Did You Know . . . ? feature. **Say:** *Frankincense and myrrh were almost as precious as gold at the time. They are actually tree sap that has been dried. They both had a distinct scent and were used in incense, perfumes, and medicines.*



Art Exploration: Page 183

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture that shows the Magi.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including what the Magi are holding.
- ▶ **Say:** *Just as the Magi did, we find ways to recognize Jesus as our king and Savior.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 183. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud *The Church Celebrates the Christmas Season*. **Ask:** *What key points in the life of Jesus do we learn about during the Christmas season? (his birth, his family, the visit of the Magi, and his baptism) Why is the visit of the Magi to Jesus so important to all Christians today? (It's part of the Revelation; it shows that the child of God was born.)*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *Guiding Us* and complete the activity. Encourage your child to share his or her response with you.
- ▶ Ask your child to imagine that he or she welcomed the Magi to the town where Jesus is. Encourage your child to describe the faces of the visitors as they approach the baby Jesus. **Say:** *As you see these three strangers standing before you, what do you ask them? How do the Magi answer?* Give your child time to have a silent conversation with the Magi. Have your child offer a petition to Jesus to guide him or her through the day.

Respond: Page 63

- ▶ 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 take part in parish activities such as food drives and social events.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the *With My Family* suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.