

Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus welcomes children and their families and invites them to be his followers. He asks his adult followers to be more like children, who are good at responding with their whole hearts to the goodness in others.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Jesus, we know you love children and families. Thank you for giving us our family to love. Thank you for making us part of your family at church. Amen."
- Story • The Birthday Party** Tell this story about a little girl who had her sixth birthday last summer.

Martina was having a birthday. She would be six years old on Sunday. The Gonzalez family tradition is that the birthday boy or girl gets to choose the place for the family birthday dinner. Since Martina's birthday was on Sunday, the party could be at breakfast or lunch. "Where would you like to have your birthday celebration, Martina?" her father asked. "Whom do you want to come along?" her mother asked. Martina said, "I want everybody—you and you and Alejandro and the baby and Abuelo (Grandpa)." "That's fine," said Dad. "We will all go to Mass together and go to eat after Mass. You decide where we should go." Martina thought about where she wanted to have her birthday celebration.

On Saturday, Martina told her mom, "I think we should go to McDonald's." Mom said, "Dad, Alejandro, and I like

McDonald's, but Abuelo..." Mom hesitated. Martina said, "Abuelo thinks it is too crowded and noisy, doesn't he?"

Martina got another idea. "We could go to the Pancake House," she said. "The Pancake House is nice," said Mom, "but the lines are very long on Sunday. Baby will probably fuss while we wait." Martina sighed and said, "We can't go there either."

Bella the dog came running into the room and jumped into Martina's lap. Martina kissed Bella on her head and petted her. "Mom," Martina said, "I want to have my birthday party someplace where Bella can go." "Let me see," Mom said. "We want a place that Abuelo will like, where the baby won't fuss, and where Bella can come. I have an idea." Mom whispered in Martina's ear.

Invite your child to guess what her ideas was. Then turn to page 2 for an answer.

- Activity • Create a Picture (page 2)** Identify the characters from the story. Have your child cut out the pictures at the top and glue or tape them to the park scene. Ask why each of them would be happy to have a picnic in the park.

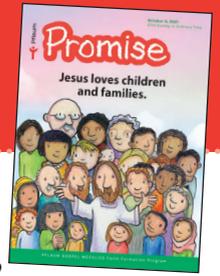
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus loves children and families. (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the cover picture as you read Sunday's Gospel:

Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he would place his hands on them and bless them. But Jesus' disciples told the people to stop bothering him.

When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said: "Let the children come to me. Don't try to stop them. People who are

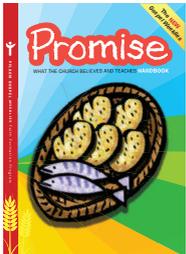
like these little children belong to the Kingdom of God. You cannot get into God's kingdom unless you accept it the way a child does." Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them by placing his hands on them.



Look again at the cover. **Ask:** What do you think Jesus likes about children? Why did he want children with him? What did the children like about Jesus? What does Jesus like about you? Finish by explaining that Jesus loves children today as much as he loves those in the Gospel.

Word of the Week • Church (page 2) Print the word *Church* so your child can see it. Share this definition: *The Church is God's family, the faithful people that God has called together all around the world.*

Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 15. **Ask:** Do you ever say “Cross my heart” when you make a promise? What does that mean? Make the Sign of the Cross together, but stop when you reach for your left shoulder. Explain that we are crossing over our hearts. Encourage your child to think about this when making the Sign of the Cross: We are crossing our hearts to promise to do everything in God’s name. Have your child complete the dot-to-dot activity.



Ask: When do we pray the Sign of the Cross? *At the beginning and end of prayers, when we are frightened, when we need God's help, when we are doing something for God.* Explain that when we enter or leave church, we pray the Sign of the Cross with holy water. It is a reminder of when we became part of God’s family, the Church, through Baptism.

Help your child find page 26. Remind your child of the Gospel. **Ask:** How did this Gospel make you feel? Read the two paragraphs starting with “Jesus wants you...” Invite your child to draw a picture of himself or herself talking to Jesus in prayer.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, pages 3-4.

Live the Gospel

Activity • I belong to Jesus' family. (pages 3-4) Help your child fold the page to make a booklet with Jesus on the cover. Read the cover sentences aloud and invite your child to comment on the picture in relation to the Gospel. Your child can write his or her name on the line under “I am.”

Turn to pages 2–3 of the booklet. Read aloud the sentence across the top of the pages. **Ask:** What are some ways you show that you belong to Jesus’ family? Recall the earlier discussion about the Sign of the Cross. Direct your child to complete the dot-to-dot cross on booklet page 2. Read the words aloud and practice the gestures. Complete the activity on booklet page 3.

Turn to booklet page 4. Talk about who makes up your family. Explain that a family is the people who know us, help us, and like having us around. That is why we sometimes call the parish our *church family*. Help your child write in the names of your family members.

Closing Prayer • Our family follows Jesus. (booklet, page 4) Read the prayer on page 4. Take turns speaking aloud the names of people in your family and your parish family whom you wish to pray for.



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture