



## Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus shows that he has authority over evil. He heals the man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue at Capernaum through his own power. Jesus brings a new teaching of love and does it with authority. He is a teacher with power, but he uses it to help others and to show God's love. Jesus makes the man whole and calms him, showing him that God loves him.

## Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** Read aloud the paragraph at top left of the *Venture* cover, substituting "family" for "class." Pause and give your child time to think of people whose work heals others. Read aloud the prayer petition, and invite your child to share the name of someone who works for healing.
- Cover Activity • How Can We Help Others? (page 1)** This Sunday's Gospel is about one of Jesus' healing miracles; it also reveals Jesus' teaching authority. This week, we concentrate on the ways we can share Jesus' healing ways. Share with your child that Black History Month begins this week. After your child reads the timeline, ask if any of the facts were surprising. Read aloud the brief biography of Father Augustus Tolton and watch the ten-minute video together.
- Article • Doing Good (pages 2–3)** Explain that the experiences we have when we're young can influence who we become as adults. This was the case for Sebastián Seromik, who was influenced by the poverty he saw when he was about the same age as your child. Read aloud the article together, switching readers at each paragraph.
- Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. It is real life for many people; it might motivate us to take action to help. 2. Open-ended. Remind your child that this is not pocket money; it's the only money these people have to meet their basic needs, including food. 3. Their families could not be found; they had no place to stay. 4. Education can open doors to jobs, resources, and skills to help people earn a living.*
- Activity • You can do good, too! (sidebar, page 3)** If you would like to create postcards or write notes to the kids at the Children's Center in Benin, remind your child that this is not a pen pal program and the children cannot write notes in return. Notes do not have to be addressed to specific children and should be simple, as children in Benin do not begin learning English until middle school. Notes can be sent to: Dagbé, P.O. Box 1734, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

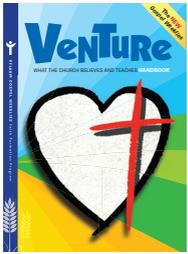
## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches and Heals (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by reading the various parts.
- Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus commands the unclean spirit to come out of the man. 2. They question what is happening and the kind of teaching Jesus does; they are amazed that the spirits obey Jesus' powerful commands. 3. We know that he has the power to do healing miracles; we also witness his compassion for a man who is unclean, or outside of the community. 4. Father Tolton preached and cared for his community, despite the prejudice he would have faced as a Black priest in the late nineteenth century. The Dagbé organization that Sebastián founded offers safe housing and education to children.*
- Catholic Faith Word • Synagogue (page 4)** Read aloud the definition when you encounter it in the Sunday Gospel. Explain to your child that it is significant that Jesus teaches and heals inside the synagogue; this is a sign to the



religious leaders of the time that Jesus has the authority to preach and heal in God's name.

- ❑ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • No One Is Outside of God's Love (page 4)** This topic will likely generate some discussion. Children at this age like to follow rules and do not wish to be embarrassed or called out. God cares about people whether or not they act appropriately or "cool." No one is excluded by God.
- ❑ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus' public healing of the man reveals his own healing power; it also reveals the nature of God's inclusive love—no one is left outside. Likewise, the Church is home to everyone. We are called to welcome the least among us. Every person is a member of the Body of Christ. 2. Open-ended; encourage everyone to participate.*



- ❑ **Open the What the Church Believes and Teaches handbook to page 51.** Read each section and together identify which Themes of Catholic Social Teaching apply to this Sunday's Gospel Reading. *Responses: Life and Dignity of the Human Person; Call to Family, Community, and Participation; Option for the Poor and Needy.* Turn to page 32, and read aloud Section 5. Then **ask:** What is the common good? *Everyone thrives; no one is left out.* **Ask:** Why should Catholics work for the common good? *We are all created by God with equal dignity.* Read Section 6 and ask similar questions. *Conclude that as Catholics we must work to help people be all they can be. We praise God when we do this.*

*Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.*

- ❑ **Our Catholic Faith • People from Africa in the Bible (page 5)** Do the exercise with your child, helping to look up the Bible passages. Record your findings together. *Answers: Zipporah; the Queen of Sheba; the queen of the south; Simon of Cyrene; the Ethiopian eunuch, a court official.*

## Live the Gospel

- ❑ **Activity • How Do I Live Jesus' Values? (pages 6-7)** Read aloud the instructions at the top of page 6. Then go through the five teachings of Jesus on page 6, lower left. Read aloud each scenario, and ask your child to select which of the five teachings best apply. Decide together on the best way to deal with each situation.
- ❑ **Saints • Saint Brigid of Kildare (page 8)** Give your child time to read this feature.
- ❑ **Closing Prayer** In honor of the Presentation of the Lord, which the Church celebrates on Tuesday, February 2, pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary (see page 54 in *What the Church Believes and Teaches*).



## Parent Resources

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