

## Sunday Gospel Background

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus reminds us that he has come to redeem, not judge. Lent is a time for all of us to come to terms with the darkness, the sinfulness, in our lives. This isn't meant to produce guilt but rather, gratitude for Jesus' redemption. Many people choose the darkness of sin. As families, we can show others how to choose the light by our words and deeds of love.

**Editor's Note:** This Sunday is Laetare Sunday. *Laetare* refers to rejoicing. At Mass, we'll see the liturgical color rose, a sign of our joy. Christians rejoice in the salvation gained for us by Christ's suffering, Death, and Resurrection.

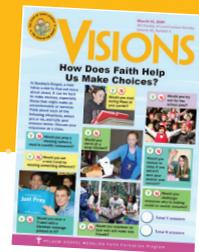
## Share Experiences

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

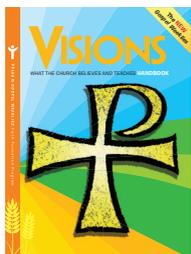
- Pray together** Light a candle if you have one, and **pray:** God of light, without you, we are in darkness. We are grateful that you have sent Jesus to light our path. Help us share our light with each other. Amen.
- Cover Activity • How Does Faith Help Us Make Choices? (page 1)** Have your child fill in the Y or N circles. This is an opportunity for your child to assess a personal comfort level for trying something new. Point out that our faith can help us make decisions, and share that this Sunday's Gospel is about a man who takes a risk to find out more about Jesus and his teachings.
- Article • The Solution Is Hope (pages 2–3)** Before reading the article together, talk about words you associate with gangs. (Examples might include *criminals, guns, tattoos, drugs, etc.*) Although this article may be difficult to read at some points, it uses real-life accounts to explore the power of God's unconditional love for all people.
- Discuss the Talk questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Drugs, violence, abuse, loss of a parent, poverty, stereotypes that assume they are hopeless. 2. Without hope, gang members don't care if they live or die. They live by the gang codes of hanging, banging, slanging. The power of hope shows in the personal stories. 3. Father G insists God made the homies as they are. By "showing up" in their lives, he reflects God's love for each of them, valuing them just as they are. 4. Chico wants to learn a skill and work; he was being just who God created him to be—a terrific kid, in Father G's estimation.*

## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Gives Us Light (page 4)** Note that, in Jesus' time, it could be risky to follow him or even be associated with him. This was the case for Nicodemus, a Pharisee, or teacher in the Jewish religion. Proclaim the Gospel by reading aloud the parts of Narrator and Jesus 1–5 together.
- Discuss the Talk questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. God sends us Jesus to show how much God loves us, to invite us to live forever through believing in Jesus, and to enlighten us as to what is true and good, that which is God's will. Jesus intrigues Nicodemus, but he is a Pharisee who isn't sure how his fellow Pharisees might feel about his interest in Jesus. 2. God loves the world and wants to save the world. 3. Nicodemus is a Pharisee, a Jewish teacher of the law. Nicodemus' curiosity is significant. 4. Open-ended; Father G does not condemn gang members. He is a light for them to follow to new lives outside of the gangs; he gives them the chance to live their lives in the light with new jobs and opportunities. 5. Nicodemus has become Jesus' follower.*



- **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • What Is the Message of John 3:16? (page 4)**  
Read this feature as a summary of Sunday's Gospel message—Jesus is God's Son sent to show us God's love.
- **Discuss the *Talk* questions on page 4.** Both questions facilitate discussion. You might have your child create a small poster featuring a favorite Bible verse to hang in your home.
- **Catholic Faith Word • Conscience (page 4)** Read aloud the definition. Explain that conscience is how we make concrete judgments about what is right and wrong. Jesus shows us God's love and our capacity to love—this is the light Jesus brings us. When we prepare for Reconciliation, we examine our conscience and how we are following Jesus' light in our choices and actions.



- **Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 30.** Share the roots of the word *conscience*: *con* (with) and *science* (knowledge). Invite your child to read the paragraph silently. Then use the paragraph to brainstorm a list of ways people can form their consciences.  
*Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Visions page 5.*

- **Our Catholic Faith • Celebrate a Lenten Reconciliation Service (page 5)** Celebrate this prayer service together as a family. If there are two of you, simply alternate the reading between you. Or, have your child assign the parts to family members. Emphasize that answers to the questions in the examination of conscience do not have to be shared. Play music in the background while your child writes a letter to God. Write a letter of your own too. Find out when Reconciliation is offered at your parish and make plans to receive the sacrament together.

## Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • How Do We Walk in the Light of Jesus? (pages 6-7)** Ask why, when we know right and wrong, making good choices can be so hard. Explain that practicing moral reasoning helps build moral character, just as building muscles takes repetitive exercises. Have your child read the first dilemma, "Really Good Shape," silently and respond to the steps. Talk about what your child thinks Connor should do. Repeat the process with "What Counts?" on page 7.
- **Puzzle • Taking a Risk to Grow and Change (page 8)** Have your child match the quote and famous risk taker. **Answers:** 1. Chávez, 2. Pimentel, 3. Edison, 4. Pope Francis, 5. Jesus, 6. Geisel (Dr. Seuss), 7. Saint Teresa, 8. Carter, 9. Keller, 10. Heaton.
- **Closing Prayer** Catholics pray the Lord's Prayer during Mass before receiving Holy Communion. It is a reconciliation prayer. In this spirit, pray the Lord's Prayer together. Then offer each other a sign of peace.



## 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.