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6. Have your child do the activities and/or do the activities with them.
7. If working with a parish return the appropriate material in the way they have requested.
Sample Script:
As we look to our world, we can understand that it is bigger than any of us. We look at everything around us and realize that there must be a God that created us. We might ask what this God is like. If we look at our world and also the bible that God has given us, we can find some of the answers to that question. We know that God is greater than any of us. In fact He is the greatest there is, so when we think of God we think in terms of ALL. We use titles like All-Knowing, All-Mighty, All-Loving, and All-Present. We use the term all, because He contains all of everything. So, let’s look at those phrases and try to understand. All-Knowing: Is there anything that God does not know? If God is the creator of everything, if he made everything, then He knows everything, right? He knows you. He made you. He knows what you like, how you think, what you don’t like. So, like me, your parent, I know a lot about you, but God He knows even more. What about All-Mighty? God is better and stronger than anything. Think of something that you might make. Are you stronger than what you made? In very similar ways God is like that, He is mightier, stronger, better, than anything He made. He is All-Loving, He loves us. Do you love me? I love you! In the same way and in many better ways God loves us. We are able to love because when God created us, He made us to be like Him. If He did not love, we would not be able to love. So, God loves but in a way that is better than any way we can. Finally, All-Present, God created time. Before God created anything, time did not exist. Now, that is hard to think of, right? Because God is ALL everything good, He is always present. Another way to think of this is that there was never a time when God did not exist. Can you remember when your brother (sister, pet, …) was not here, or did not exist? Well it is not the same with God. He always is.

Since, God is All-Knowing, All-Mighty, All-Loving, All-Present, we know that we can know things, we have strength, we can love, and we exist. We share in the fullness that God has, because He created us in His image. He loves us so much that He shares a little bit of who He is with us. Isn’t that great that God would love us so much? He thinks of you all the time. He gives you the ability to love, He shares with you His knowledge, and His strength. We have such a great God. God tells us in the very first chapter of the very first book of the Bible: “Let us make humans in our image, in our likeness” (Gen 1:26) He wants us to know this great truth from the beginning, and revealed it to us right away.

Jesus also reveals this to us, and showed us who God is when He was here. I want you to always remember that Jesus reveals to us who God is, and that God loves us enough to create us in His image.

Questions:
- What does it mean for God to be All-Knowing, All-Mighty, All-Loving, All-Present?
- Since God is All-Knowing what does that mean about what He knows about us?
- Since God is All-Loving what does that mean for us?
- God created us in His image, so what does that mean about us?
- God created us to Love like He loves, so how should we treat others?

Activities:
Have your student make a person out of clay. Have them describe it as they make it. What cool things are they giving this creation? In what ways is this creation like them? Talk to your student about how that creation has similarities to them but also has some differences. Let them know this creation could never be everything they are. Ask them to explain how that is like and not like God creating us.

Have your student list all the ways that we are made like God. Have them list ways we are not exactly like God.
When God created all things, He wanted to maintain a connection with His creation. Just like a loving family member who wants to know about your day and be involved in the activities of your life, God wants to be involved in His creation. Especially with humans, who are created very good, being in His image and likeness, God desires to be in a loving relationship with us.

When we receive the love of God in our life, we come to know and understand what love looks like and how we can imitate that love in our life. When we live a life of love, we are showing just how beautiful it is to be in relationship with God.

RELATES TO JESUS:
Jesus gives us knowledge of who God is so we can understand the relationship we should have with God, it is like His relationship with the Father.

RELATES TO MY FAITH:
Our relationship with God the Father helps us to know how we should love and treat others as well.
Did you know that our relationship with God grows stronger when we share the love He has for us with others? Because we are all our children of God, and remember that God wants to be in a relationship with all of His children, when we love our family members, friends, and classmates by being kind to them and show them respect, we communicate to them that they are loved. This makes God very happy and so He blesses us with His grace, just like mom or dad does by saying they are proud of you for helping your brother or sister or like your teacher does by saying good job for helping your classmate pick-up his or her spilled books. We can feel the grace of the love of God supporting us through our good works towards others.

Being Catholic Christians, we are blessed to have the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, which allows us a special point of contact with God the Father through the Sacraments. These seven sacraments are gifts from the work of Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, who wanted to make sure there was a direct way in which people could encounter the love of God in their lives. These are all important, but there are two that are especially important for you as a second grade student.

First, the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We have talked a lot about God loving us and living in God’s love and being loving towards others. But you know, all of us, even adults, do not always receive the love of God perfectly or act lovingly towards each other at all times. So, just like when we make a bad choice at home and need to say sorry, sometimes we need to say sorry to God and ask His forgiveness for our bad, or sinful, choices. Reconciliation allows us to say sorry to God and if we mean it, God the Father forgives us and brings back into His love so we can grow again in our loving relationship with Him and with others.

Second, the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ; it is Jesus Himself who seeks to be intimating, or lovingly, with us in our heart. The Eucharist gives us strength to be close to God’s love just as Jesus was close to God’s love. When we receive the Eucharist, we receive the grace to be the loving person God asks us to be to our family, friends, and classmates. In the Eucharist, we find that we are specially united in relationship to God who keeps us close in His love, helping us to be the best, the holiest, person that He wants us to be.

Questions:

- Why does the Father give us rules?
- What does it mean for God to be revealed as a Father?
- What are some ways we can see ourselves as children of God?
- What do we need to do when we break one of God’s rules?
- If God loves us as a Father what does that mean we should do for our family and friends?
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RELATES TO JESUS:
Jesus’ presence in the Eucharist and through a number of other means reminds us of His words in Scripture in which He told his disciples, and ultimately us, that He remain with us always, even until the close of the age (cf. MT 28:20).

RELATES TO MY FAITH:
The Church’s desire for us to stay close to her by living lives built on faith and morals gives us the confidence that, while the many voices of the world and of the Evil One will say otherwise, we are never alone in our pursuit of holiness.
**Sample Script:**

God’s everlasting love for His people is something that is well documented throughout the Old Testament. Through Abraham and Moses to the Psalms and the Prophets, God loves His people so much and wants what is best for them. He wants people to know what full love is; that being in right relationship with God puts on the path to happiness and peace.

Jesus comes as the fulfillment of God’s desire for His love to be ever-present to His people. Jesus’ life and work on earth reminded people of the gentle and loving presence of God. Having faith in Jesus, Scripture shows us, brought many to change the way they were living and to worship God, realizing that the presence of God’s love was the answer to all of their questions.

Now, while we don’t Jesus explicitly walking among us today, He is still present to us and calling us to be in a loving relationship with Him. When we pray, we can hear the voice of Jesus inspiring us and guiding us in a certain decision. When we talk to or play with our friends, we act like Jesus by being polite and showing kindness in sharing our toys. When we talk to mom or dad or grandma, we feel the presence of Jesus in the loving attention or hug shared. When we go to church to attend Mass, we listen to the words of Jesus and either watch people receive Jesus in Holy Communion or respectfully go to receive Jesus ourselves in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, allowing Jesus to be so close to us.

To close, God has always desired to be in relationship with His people so that they can encounter and live in His love. Jesus is the fulfillment of this desire, being the face of the loving God as God’s Son. Jesus, while coming at a certain historical moment, is ever-present with humanity in a number of ways, most especially in the Eucharist. This faithful knowledge of the presence of Jesus active in our lives is a great source of comfort knowing that our loving God is always near.

**Questions:**
- Why does God want to be in a relationship with us?
- Who best shows us what this relationship looks like?
- What are some ways that we see Jesus today?
- Why is the Eucharist the best way to experience Jesus?
- Is there ever a time when Jesus is not with us?

**Activities:**

Think of some ways that you can show Jesus to someone in your family and with the help of your parents, decide what this could look like.

As a family, spend some time visiting your parish tabernacle in prayer. Share ways that you each felt Jesus’ presence during this time.
During Jesus’s earthly life, He spoke of the sending of the Holy Spirit at the appropriate time. Part of Jesus’s mission in taking on human flesh like me and you is to assure all people that God cares for and loves everybody. And just like our parents or grandparents do for us in wanting to spend time with us and learn about us, so too does God want to spend time with us and learn about us and let us know that we are never alone in this life. So when Jesus ascended back to be with God the Father, He sent the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, to come down upon and be with Mary, the apostles, and the first disciples who made up the first Catholic Church.

It is pretty amazing to know that the same Holy Spirit that descended upon Mary and the apostles over 2,000 years ago is the same Holy Spirit that is active and working with us today. Jesus’ words in the Gospel of John are still true today, in that the Holy Spirit (or the promised Advocate) is with us today to walk the journey of faith, coming to know and love God, joyfully and lovingly.
promised Advocate) is with us today to walk the journey of faith, coming to know and love God, joyfully and lovingly serving our neighbor, and making good choices so that we ourselves can grow in holiness.

Now, you might be thinking, this all sounds pretty neat, but how do we know that the Holy Spirit is in the Church? Apart from the fact that Jesus told us so, there are a number of different ways we encounter the Holy Spirit in the Church. Let’s talk about a couple:

1. The Holy Spirit is seen through the people. Jesus taught, with His own baptism in the Jordan River, that baptism gives us or imparts the grace of the Holy Spirit. This gift of the Holy Spirit at baptism allows our very heart and soul to become a temple or a holy place where the presence of God in the Holy Spirit can live. We know the Holy Spirit is within us as He helps us to pray to God, especially when we don’t want to, and to be kind to our friends or siblings even when that is difficult for us. The Holy Spirit helps us to choose the good and to avoid evil. We want to do our best to not sin or intentionally choose to do bad so that we can keep our temple of the Holy Spirit in good order.

2. The Holy Spirit is seen through the clergy. In Jesus’ handing on of the mission to proclaim the Gospel to the Apostles, followed by the decent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, began the explicit presence of God with His ministers in the Church. With each new ordination comes a new handing on of the Holy Spirit to assist the bishops, priests, and deacons in preaching and teaching the faith in truth.

3. The Holy Spirit is seen through the Sacraments. Much like in Holy Orders or ordinations, all of the Church’s Sacraments offer an encounter with the Holy Spirit. The Sacraments are intimate or very special ways that God walks alongside us at special times in our life. Most importantly, the Sacrament of the Eucharist offers you and me a weekly opportunity to really and truly receive Jesus Himself directly into our very body, giving the grace and strength to be the holy daughters and sons that God has called us to be.

These are just some examples of how the Holy Spirit is present within the Church. The point to remember is that God, through the Holy Spirit, wants to be present to us at each and every moment of our lives. We are never alone! God loves you so much that He wants to experience life with you. We need to do our best to invite Him into the moments of our life and to live lives that are good and pleasing to Him.

Questions:
- How much time does God want to spend with you?
- What is the difference between the Holy Spirit who descended upon Mary and the Apostles and the Holy Spirit we receive at Baptism today?
- How do we see the Holy Spirit in people?
- How do we see the Holy Spirit in the clergy?
- How do we see the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments?

Activities:
As a family, pray for the Holy Spirit daily to bless your talents. As you use your talents in the coming days and weeks, what do you notice? Discuss and share daily as a family.

On your ride into church each Sunday, share as a family one way you hope to encounter God at Mass. Pray together that the Holy Spirit will show you what you hope to encounter and allow you to be open to speak to you. On your ride home from church, share as a family any graces received.
When we go to Mass on Sunday, we realize the important role that the Bible has to play. The Bible is the focus of the first half of Mass in which we generally read some from the Old Testament, a letter from the New Testament, and a passage from the Gospels that cover the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The Bible is so important because while it talks about historical things and offers nice words and lessons, it is so much more than that! The Bible is the very Word of God that speaks life and love into every moment of our lives. The Bible, in a very real way, is speaking directly to you and me so that we can each personally encounter the love of God and so that we can be directed to live in that love.

One of the cool things about the Catholic Church is that if you are able to go to Mass every day for the next three years, you will have ended up hearing most of the Bible read to you. The cool thing about this is that it points to the importance of having the words of the Bible present in your life. God’s word is a life-giving, loving word that desires to be with you and not leave you alone to experience life by yourself kind of word. God wants you to know and realize that He is always with you and that He has something specific to say to you about your life. The Bible truly reminds us that God wants to be very close and to be in relationship with you in your life and we should do the
very best that we can to live with the Bible being very familiar to us.

It is important to know too that the Word of God that we hear at the first part of Mass is speaking so as to show us how these words take action in the second part of Mass with the Eucharist. Jesus Christ, who is the fullness of God’s revelation of love to all people, is the eternal Word of God who speaks to us through the Bible. In the Eucharist, Jesus gives us the Word of God with His Body and Blood so that we each might be fully united to our loving God within our very person. God’s love for us is most clear through the revelation and gift of His Son Jesus Christ at the Holy Mass.

So, we see the importance of listening and doing the very best that we can to be attentive at Mass. Jesus comes to meet us at Mass and wants to fill us up with God’s love. Now, we will have times when we are distracted, when our minds wander, when we are confused about the readings or about what the priest is doing up there, or we’ll even have times when we plain just don’t want to be there and want to go do something else more entertaining. Remember that we go to church, we go to Mass worship God who freely gives us life and who freely offers us His love so that our life can find happiness and peace and joy and so many good things. So again, it is so important that we give our time at Sunday Mass the best that we can give. It is helpful to you and me but best of all it pleases God when we give Him what we can.

It is also important to do all that we can to think about and pray to God when we are not at church. God wants to be a part of our life and if we can open ourselves to think about Him, God will bless us with a deeper understanding of Him and help us to grow closer to Him in relationship. Anything that we can do is pleasing to God; praying to Him daily or praying to Him in addition to the prayers you say together with your family, reading the Bible either by yourself or reading together as a family, asking God’s help to understand something from the Bible or asking your family to help you understand something that you read in the Bible... These offer real ways to grow closer to God and to help make Him all the more real and special in your every day life.

Questions:

- The Bible is ______ word to us.
- What part of Mass is the Bible read during?
- Why does God give us the Bible?
- Other than praying to God what is a good way to show our love for Him and honor Him?
- How often should we read the Bible?

Activities:

Read the Gospel for next weekend (or have it read to you), think about how God is showing His love to you through that story, draw a picture about the Gospel.

If you have a bible at home make a cover for it, or just make a cover for a bible if you were going to be putting a bible together.
As humans, we are created with a body and with a soul. Having a body and a soul puts us in the image and likeness of God and allows for us to encounter Him in our life through prayer and works of service shown towards others. God also made us in such a way that we can receive love from others and even experience God through other forms of His creation, in the plants and animals around us.

We are special in our body/soul make-up, as our body and soul are in the image and likeness of God. No other member of creation can say that, showing us how special we are in the eyes of God. Angels are special in their make-up, being created as pure spiritual beings that do not have a body. Because of their special make-up, angels are able to serve God as His messengers to interact with humanity in working to carry out God’s plans for creation. Each human, upon our own personal creation, is assigned a guardian angel who walks with us throughout our life to assist us and protect us. We should make an effort each day to pray to our guardian angel and ask God to give them the grace to keep us in His loving care.

**Sample Script:**

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**RELATES TO JESUS:**

Our own creation points to Jesus’ love for us, we were created to know and love Him.

**RELATES TO MY FAITH:**

God created us special, and so our souls and bodies both want to reach out and give back to God in love.
One of the gifts of being human and knowing that we are loved by God who wants to be united in relationship with you and me is having the certainty that when we die, our soul leaves our body. While our body dies, our soul remains alive and awaits the day of the resurrection when all of our bodies will be reunited with our souls in eternity. This shows us again just how precious we are to God that even when we die, our body has tremendous dignity and worth. God does not want so special a gift to be taken from us forever and through the saving action of Jesus on the Cross, He conquered death so that our bodies won’t remain away from us forever.

So this really tells us a lot about the respect that we need to show our body and also the respect that we need to be showing towards one another. All human life is a gift from God and so we need to take care not to intentionally hurt, not be mean, and not make fun of anybody for any reason. God creates and loves each of us; we as children of God need to love and respect all that God created. This respect for creation extends beyond just humans too. God created the earth and the plants and the animals, and we need to take care of and respect these as well, allowing creation to be what it is intended to be.

What does this all mean for you and me? We need to be good stewards of our body and soul, which means we need to make sure that we take care of the gifts that we are. Taking rest, getting exercise, eating well, respecting our self and others, saying our prayers, helping others in need; these and so much more allow us to love what God has given to us. When we practice taking care of ourselves, it helps to take care of others and the rest of creation around us, being able to give and show respect in the way God has intended it.

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**Questions:**

- What are we created with? A _______ and a _________
- In whose image and likeness are we created?
- Why should we respect our bodies and others as well?
- Who created all the animals, plants etc.?
- Why is it important to take care of all of God’s creation?

**Activities:**

Draw what the world would look like if you created it.

Write a prayer that you can pray asking for your Guardian Angel’s help daily. Pray it this week (and longer if you want).
The first chapter of Genesis tells us that when God created human beings, he created them in his image and likeness. No other part of creation was given this special gift, which bestows on every person a unique dignity and honor. Although the sin of Adam and Eve brought death into the created world, it did not alter the truth that humanity is and always will be born with that gift of the divine image and likeness. It is part of who we are from the moment of our conception in our mother’s womb until the moment of death. It is our truest identity.

It is important to remember too that no one can take this gift away from us. In fact, you can’t choose to remove it from yourself either. Many things can happen to a person over the course of their lifetime that can injure his/her sense of human dignity. And some people grow up with no one to teach them about God or the special gift of how they were created. But no one and no thing can change how God created us. No one can undo what God has done!

RELATES TO MY FAITH:

The gift of life given to us by God comes freely out of His love and comes with responsibility as well; namely to care for ourselves and others and the world around us as He would through care and respect.
This also makes it even more important for each of us to act in ways that honor the dignity God has given to us and to all people. The way we treat people can build up their dignity or help them discover it. Sometimes we have to stand up for someone else and defend their human dignity. Our actions should display our love of God and gratitude for his gifts, including the gift of that other person.

At creation God made Adam and Eve stewards of the rest of creation. A steward is someone who has been given a responsibility to care for and protect a particular thing. If your family has a pet, your family acts as stewards of that pet’s life and welfare. When your parents hire a babysitter to watch you when they go out, they are giving that person stewardship over your care. Being a steward is a huge responsibility!

How should we exercise our responsibility to be stewards of creation? We need to be careful and thoughtful with how we use and enjoy the resources of the natural world. We have to remember that the world was created for the good of all people, those living now and those who will live in the future. We need to be sure that what we have will be there for them too.

How would you feel if you gave your best friend a special gift and he/she didn’t take care of it? What would that tell you about how he/she values your friendship? One of the ways we express our love for God is by taking care of creation. If we are grateful we will show our gratitude in how we act and how we treat the world around us. We will be very careful so that our use and enjoyment of the natural world doesn’t leave it damaged or diminished for other people.

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**Questions:**

- Why is it true that no one can take your human dignity away from you?
- List examples of how you can build up the human dignity of another person.
- What does it mean to be a steward?
- How does our use and enjoyment of the natural world an expression of our love for God?
- How can we care for God’s creation?

**Activities:**

Talk with your family about ways you can care for God’s creation.

Create an image of yourself, either in drawing or clay or some other way, and think about how God created you in His image.
RELATES TO JESUS:
Jesus died to redeem us from our sins and enable us to be in friendship with God forever. He knows that sinful choices harm or completely cut off our relationship with Him, but He loves us anyway and because of his great mercy, he freely chose to die on the cross to overcome our sins and open a pathway back to God.

RELATES TO MY FAITH:
Serious sin that I commit cuts me off from my relationship with God. Yet, I must know that God forgives for my bad choices (sins) when I turn back to Him with a heart of sorrow for having offended Him. Because God forgives me, I must forgive others that hurt me. Instead of living in sin, God calls me to life of virtue.

Sample Script:
In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve as mankind’s first parents. Adam and Eve were intended to live in harmonious relationship with God, needing only to obey God and not eat from the tree in the middle of the garden. Tempted by the snake, Adam and Eve disobeyed God, eating from the tree and choosing to ignore this one command from God. This is the Original Sin of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-6).

Original Sin is passed on to each human in every generation. Original Sin disrupts our relationship with God and places our own desires ahead of His. We are freed from Original Sin (although not its effects - more to come below!) through the grace received at baptism, which cleanses us and claims us as a child of God and allows us to choose the good of relationship with God.
However, even with the grace of baptism, we are still affected by sin. While the damage to our relationship with God from Original Sin is restored through baptism, we are still imperfect and free to choose bad over good. When we choose to do wrong over that which is good, we are committing what is called personal sin. And just like the Original Sin of Adam and Eve, personal sin harms and damages our relationship with God. Our personal sin makes us disobedient to God and His loving plan for us. When we sin, we put ourselves ahead of God and others, saying that it is more about me than anyone else.

This desire to place ourselves ahead of God and others through an inclination to follow our own will and to sin is called concupiscence. Concupiscence is one of the effects that remains even after our baptism, being passed down from generation-to-generation. Unfortunately, concupiscence allows temptations to have greater appeal or to be more attractive, making it easier for you and I to fall into sin.

Thanks be to God, we are blessed to have the grace of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Catholic Church! While baptism gives us the initial grace to erase Original Sin, the death and resurrection of Jesus on the Cross overcame sin and death and by sending the Holy Spirit to be with and guide the Church, we are given the tools necessary to live a good life that keeps sin in check. Jesus’ entire earthly life was the perfect model of obedience to God for all Christians to follow. Jesus shows us that personal sin is overcome by lovingly following God and by making His plan for you and me our plan. Following Jesus unites us in relationship with God and keeps us away from sin. When we do sin, Jesus gives us the grace of the Sacrament of Reconciliation to say sorry and to have our sin washed away, restoring our relationship with God and being given the grace of strength to overcome our temptations the next time around. We might still fall into the same sin time and again, but by continually reaching out to God and continually seeking His loving and merciful forgiveness, we will conquer that which seeks to pull us away.

It is important to remember that God never desires any one of us to go astray with our sins. His loving mercy seeks to walk with us each step of our life to be one with us and to guide us to the life of fulfillment He has had for every single human, including Adam and Eve. This is why God asks us to be close to Him in prayer, be close to the Church, receive Jesus in the Eucharist (He who conquered sin and death), go to regular Reconciliation (once a month if you can), and seek to make good choices and practice doing good things (living a life of virtue). Our relationship with God is the best thing that we can have and how blessed we are to know He wants the same for you and I!

Questions:

- What is the Original Sin of Adam and Eve?
- When are we given the initial grace to erase Original Sin?
- Which Sacrament allows us the grace to have our sins washed away?
- When we sin, who are we putting first in our life?
- What should we practice every day to become closer to God?

Activities:

Think about a good choice that is difficult for you and work on making that choice every day.

Talk with your family about how they make good choices even when they don't want to.
CALL TO HOLINESS
Second Grade

Sample Script:

When God created humanity, He created us for a divine purpose. God is love, through and through, meaning that the only thing that God can do is love. So when we were created in His image and likeness, we were created to bring God’s image and likeness into a world that can often forget about the existence of the loving God. Further, even though we hold within us the image of God, we also carry within us an uneven heart that can be more focused on oneself than on God, allowing us to not recognize the image of God that is before me. I think that we all can think of times when we haven’t realized the image of God within me and that is within others.

RELATES TO JESUS:
Jesus is the second person of the Trinity, we know there is a trinity because of Jesus’ revelation. This shows us that God must be love (that is what binds the trinity) and reveals all of Jesus’s actions within a familial relationship of God.

RELATES TO MY FAITH:
There is only one God, we do not worship multiple gods, or seek God as a genie, but go to the one who created all things and shows us what love is.
So what is one to do? We need to seek to strive after and live holy lives. When we embrace and take on God’s desire for holiness in our life, we are saying to God that I want to be like you, I want to live a life full of love for others that seeks to know the good, true, and beautiful. We recognize the blessing that comes from God for trying to stay close to God and communicate His loving presence for the world to encounter. We recognize within ourselves a growing desire to be in deeper and deeper relationship with God and do holy things not just for ourselves but for God and others as well.

Once our quest for holiness comes to this level of putting the needs of God and others before our own, we are living lives that look very much like the lives of the saints. An important trait of the saint is that he or she seeks to conform or model his or her will after the example given by Jesus. The more we seek to live out this holiness in our life, the more we recognize the things in our life that we need to work on or change so we can continue to grow closer to God.

This is the challenge of desiring to live a life of holiness. It is a life-long process and journey! I have always found it interesting to think about that Pope Francis or Bishop Bradley or your parish priest are still on the journey to holiness. This is encouraging in at least two ways; one, you are never alone on this journey to be holy. Sometimes it might seem like you are the only trying, but know that there are a whole bunch of people trying to walk the journey to be closer to God. And two, no matter your age or education or vocation in life, our work towards holiness is an ongoing, daily, moment-by-moment commitment that truly takes a life time to figure out. The most important thing to do is to continually reach out to the Holy Spirit and ask for the grace to stay the course.

Questions:

- We are created in the image and likeness of God. How can we lose sight of this image?
- What are some things you notice about living a holy life?
- What is commonly found in the lives of saints in regard to holiness?
- Why is seeking holiness a journey?
- Name some things that are important to remember on the journey.

Activities:

Draw a picture of a girl or boy on a journey. Draw/write what are some of the things needed in order to pursue holiness well and also label spots along the journey in which you’d use these things and how?

As a family, discuss ways that together you could help one another achieve holiness.
We are blessed to have Jesus’ presence in the Church through the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is Jesus’ Body and Blood, the very real presence of Jesus, who is with us to be experienced when we go to Mass, to give us strength to love God when we can receive Him at Holy Communion, and to remain with us in adoration and prayer so He can be a part of our life at each moment. It is the desire of Jesus to be with all people so that our life might be connected to the love of God all of the time. God never wants us to be alone and it is such a gift that our faith teaches us to reach out for and invite God into our life at each moment so that we might be guided by His love and truth.

One of the many blessings that we have from Jesus’ presence in the Eucharist (and there are many!) is that the Eucharist is the Sacrament of our salvation. What does this mean? Jesus Christ’s mission is always to speak the Word of God to all people at all times. Jesus’ Word is the Gospel message that proclaims the love of God and despite our rejection of God’s love due to sin, He seeks to be one with our life through Jesus and ultimately His Church. This oneness, this unity is achieved by Jesus’ saving action of dying and rising
from the dead, winning for us our salvation by Jesus offering His Body and Blood in place of our own bodies for our sins. Jesus. That is a lot for sure... For the purpose of this lesson, let us just take a look at the meaning of salvation. Salvation is the forgiveness of our sins which allows for the restoration of our relationship with God. You and I, just by ourselves, are not able to fully forgive ourselves of our own sins. God in His love for us knows this and sends His Son to take on our human flesh, while still remaining fully God, and offers our sins perfectly to God the Father, who is able to forgive sin fully. Here, our relationship to God is restored.

As we prepare to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we are good to think about how Jesus wants to be with us always. He wants to laugh with you, and be happy with you, and cry with you, and feel sad with you. He loves us so much that He wants to always be remembered by you, asking us to go to Mass each Sunday so we can carry Jesus with us throughout our week. So, the salvation that Jesus offers us wasn’t just the Son obeying the Father and doing what He was supposed to do; rather it was Jesus loving us just as much as the Father and desiring that each person be saved from their sin. From this salvation, each person would have the chance to enter into a real relationship with God that is supported and strengthened by the Eucharistic presence of Jesus Christ in our everyday life. This relationship is both for the betterment of our lives here and now and most importantly, for our eternal lives in Heaven.

**Questions:**

- How do we invite God everyday to be a part of our lives?
- What is the Eucharist for Catholics?
- How is one way we can carry Jesus with us throughout our week?
- What did Jesus’ death and resurrection give us?
- Who is ultimately able to forgive all of our sins?

**Activities:**

Share as a family your experience with the Eucharist. Share your encounters of how your faith has deepened and how you rely on the Eucharist for your day-to-day living. Discuss why it is important to have this closeness with our Savior.

We all have times in our life when we need to say sorry. Share as a family your experience with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Talk about your joys and struggles and why this practice of saying sorry to God is most important, giving us a model to practice and follow in saying sorry to our family and friends and those that we encounter.
Mary is a very special and important figure in our Catholic understanding of things. She plays a most critical role in assisting with God’s plan to bring humanity back into relationship with Him. It is very right to say that if there was no Mary, Christianity would have looked a lot different. We can never downplay the role that Mary plays, and still does play, in our Church.

From the very beginning of Mary’s life, she was destined to be a very special and important piece of the puzzle that makes up Catholicism. Mary was kept free from Original Sin and all the effects that sin has had on humanity, even though Mary herself is fully human just like you and I. This graced state that Mary finds herself in is known as the Immaculate Conception, which was a special gift given to Mary to assist her in her path to holiness in her life.

You see, you, I and every human that has ever and will ever walk this earth are called to live a life of holiness. This life of holiness is special and unique to each person in that we are given different gifts to help us live holiness out. No matter what God is calling us to,
He provides grace to help us use our calling to grow in holiness. The same was true for Mary.

For Mary, her gift was one of an extra special call. She was called to be the Mother of God by being the mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. For you and me, the call to be holy will be different because God calls all of us to do different things in his Kingdom. That will take time and practice to figure out, but we can start by doing the simple things like being holy, being obedient to our parents, and loving to our brothers and sisters and people we know, and to pray so we can grow closer to God. A virtue is a good habit. Humility is an important virtue. Humility means that we don’t think we are more important or better than other people. Mary is a woman of humility and prayer, and when we model ourselves after her by being humble and prayerful with God like Mary, you, too, will discover how God calls you to holiness in your own life.

Another special gift that God gave Mary was the gift of being free from Original Sin and the bad things it does to us. This special gift in Mary began when God first made her in the womb of her mother, Saint Anne. We call this special gift, the "Immaculate Conception." Even with this gift, Mary still needed to practice living a virtuous or holy life in humility and prayer so that she could do God’s will in all things. Doing good and saying "yes" to God became such a natural habit for her, that when it was time for Angel to ask her if she would become the Mother of God, she naturally, said, yes, by saying, "Let it be done unto me as you say." God’s plan for Mary to be the Mother of God was strengthened in Mary through her life of prayer and humble acceptance of what came her way. With Mary saying yes to the angel Gabriel and receiving the gift of a child from the Holy Spirit of God, we see in Mary the fulfillment of God’s promises to be with His people.

In the Old Testament, the blessings of God, as seen through things like the stones of the Ten Commandments, were kept in a very special and decorative chest, like a treasure chest, called an Ark. This was called, the Ark of the Covenant. A "covenant" is a special promise by God to his people if we do his will. The Ark symbolized God’s covenant. The contents (the things inside) of the Ark of the Covenant pointed to God’s presence among His people. Mary is sometimes referred to as the Ark of the New Covenant. The New Covenant is Jesus. Mary is called the Ark of the New Covenant because the treasure inside of her was Jesus, who is God, himself, in his Second Person. As we may be preparing for our first Holy Communion, we recall that like Mary, who is the Ark of the New Covenant who is Jesus, when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we, too, become a little Ark for him. This makes us very special because just like Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant, we will be holding Jesus inside of us. When we receive Holy Communion, we should ask Mary to be with us so that Jesus can come into through Mary, just like when he was born. This will make our Holy Communion even more special.

For us, Mary is the model for us to follow in how to receive our Lord Jesus Christ. Mary always brings us closer to Jesus, and always leads us to the Holy Eucharist, because that is where Jesus is most present to us in this life. By being good listeners and followers of our parents and family members and teachers, we show our humility by being kind in this way. By being consistent with our daily prayers to God, we open ourselves up to hear and receive the Word of God. When we go to Eucharist, or as we prepare to receive Eucharist for the first time, we can think of Mary holding Jesus within her and how special it is to have Jesus, who loves you and I so much, being so close to you, dwelling right within you!
Questions:

- Why was Mary like the Ark?
- What was Mary’s special call by God?
- Other than being the mother of God, how else was Mary different than all others when she was born?
- What does God ask of all of us including Mary?
- Who is Mary’s mother?

Activities:

Test yourself to see if you have memorized the Hail Mary by praying it out loud. If you still haven’t memorized it, memorize it so you can say it out loud without any help. After you memorize it, pray with great love for Mary in your heart.

Ask your mom or your dad to pray five decades of the Rosary family style. Use the Joyful Mysteries, perhaps after dinner before bedtime. Use a bible to read a couple of different verses from the first chapter of Luke before you begin each decade of the Rosary. Everyone take turns leading a decade.
When Jesus Christ came to the little town of Bethlehem as a newborn baby, He came with a mission, a divine task as the Son of God. Jesus came to talk about the love and mercy of God and to call people back into relationship with God, but this relationship was destroyed by sin and required the obedience of Jesus to God his Father, once he became an adult, in his suffering, death, and resurrection, as an offering to destroy the power of sin and death in the world. While this could have seemed something that just took place in the past and does not mean anything for you and me today, guess again! Jesus's suffering and death is still saving us today in every Mass offered. He came over 2,000 years ago for sure, but His desire and intent is for all people to hear His message and to know about the love and mercy that God has for all. So, Jesus chose 12 Apostles...
(see Matthew 10:1-4) to not only assist Him in speaking about God, but also to carry on His message after He had returned to Heaven.

Thus, after Jesus ascended to God the Father, the Apostles, being sent the Holy Spirit and guided by that same Spirit, took the lead role of proclaiming and teaching the faith. The Apostles thus were the first bishops of the Church, having the authority from Jesus Himself to go out and preach the Good News of the Gospel (see Matthew 28:16-20) just as our bishops today have been given. Much like the people who made up the Church during the Apostles time, the people that make up the Church today, like you and me, are called to hear the words proclaimed at Mass through our bishops (or through our priest who assist the bishop much like the Apostles assisted Jesus) and bring what we have received to all the people that we come in contact with.

So, to back up a little bit, remember that Jesus Christ came to save us from our sins, and thus come to be reconciled to God and experience His divine love. Jesus’ most profound work came through the sacrifice of His very self for our sake by dying on the cross. By offering His Body and Blood for our salvation, He won the possibility for you and me to go to Heaven. In the Gospel of John, in the sixth chapter, Jesus speaks about how His Body and Blood are to be consumed so that He who is life and love Himself might dwell within us and give us the grace necessary to live a life destined for eternity. At the Last Supper, Jesus shows the Apostles how communion with Jesus, through the Eucharist, is available within the Catholic Church and unites us together not only within the community of the Church but with God as well. Our life with the Eucharist is a tremendous gift that is the real presence of Jesus Christ dwelling within you and me. This experience with God is one that is given to every soul who reverently receives the Eucharist through the Church and connects every Catholic who has received throughout history with the Lord Jesus Christ in His body the Church.

All of this really shows us how Jesus Christ does not want any one of us to feel alone. He loves you and me so much that He instituted the Church for us to encounter Him in this life so that we can prepare to live our lives with Him for all eternity. The Eucharist is the ultimate gift of Jesus’ very Body and Blood, which unites us to Jesus and His Church so the life of grace and community might be with us through our good times and through our bad times. May you and I do our best to always stay close to Jesus and His Church so that we never lose the presence of God in our lives.
Questions:

- What group of men did Jesus choose as the bishops of the Church?
- How did Jesus reconcile (re-unite) us with his Father?
- How does the Church help us encounter Jesus?
- What sacrament unites us with Jesus most fully?
- What are we as Catholics called to do with what we hear and learn at Mass?

Activities:

Have your child draw a picture of Jesus speaking to His Apostles about setting up and continuing His Church. What are some of the things Jesus wants to make sure His Apostles know? Have them write down as many things that they can think of that they hear each time you go to church.

Jesus desires to be with you and me throughout each moment of our life. Interview 5 people who are older than you and ask to tell you about moments in their life when they have experienced Jesus' presence in their lives.
Sacraments are gifts from the Holy Spirit that allow us to personally encounter and experience Jesus Christ. Jesus gave us the gift of the Sacraments so that we might know of His presence that is available to us in the life of the Church. It is through the Church that we find and develop our relationship with God and the sacramental life provides intentional moments that support and strengthen us on this spiritual journey.

The Sacraments, officially, are outward signs that speak to an inward reality. What does this mean? Each Sacrament uses physical materials, things that we can touch and feel (outward signs), to tell the meaning of what is happening at the spiritual level (the inward reality). Jesus Christ, in setting up the Sacraments, knows that humans are physical beings who most readily experience the world around them through the material. By using the material world, or matter, Jesus wants us to feel and smell and use our senses of the created world around us to help us realize the spiritual reality of the grace of God working in nature. Further, Jesus uses words to form the prayer that gives the grace of each Sacrament, using our speech and sense of hearing to show how God encounters you and me in every aspect of our humanity.

RELATES TO JESUS:
Jesus desires to be with us so much he established a way for us to continue to receive His grace. He wants us to be brought into His family as brothers and sisters through the sacraments of initiation and be with us physically and spiritually our entire lives.

RELATES TO MY FAITH:
The are both body and spirit. God established a way to unite our bodies and spirit together to receive grace. The sacraments are ways in which we encounter the very life of God and grow in holiness.
So, each Sacrament offers us a participation in the divine life. This is to say that the grace given by the sacraments help us to experience the love God has for us and invites us deeper into the relationship that God desires to have with you and me. Let’s look at the three Sacraments of Initiation of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist to help us understand how the visible signs point to the grace given.

In the Sacrament of Baptism, the visible signs used are water, oil, and fire. The water symbolizes cleansing, washing us clean of Original Sin. The oil symbolizes anointing, marking us as daughters and sons of God. The fire symbolizes the light of Christ, which is now alive within us and burns to keep us ever focused on Jesus.

In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the visible signs used are oil. The oil symbolizes being sealed with the Holy Spirit, being strengthened to live the life of faith, and receiving the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to live life well.

In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the visible signs used are bread and wine. The bread symbolizes the substance and fullness that Jesus Christ offers in life with Him. The wine is similar, symbolizing the fruitfulness of life with Jesus that gives joy and brings life.

The Sacraments always point us to Jesus Christ, because the Sacraments are His signs for us that remind us of His loving presence. It is important to remember that Sacraments are more than just signs or symbols. They are the actual encounters with the grace of God who walks beside us in our journey to be in loving relationship.

**Questions:**
- What is a sacrament?
- What are the visible signs in the Sacrament of the Eucharist?
- What do the visible signs of the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion point to?
- What are the Sacraments of Initiation?
- Why do you think they are considered the Sacraments of Initiation?

**Activities:**
What are you most excited about in receiving your First Communion (or if you already have received your First Communion, what were you most excited about)? Write down what you are excited about and share with your family.

With your family, discuss the Sacraments of Initiation as described above. What about these Sacraments helps your understanding about Jesus Christ? How do these Sacraments bring you closer to Jesus?
Baptism is the first sacrament a person receives, and we may not remember it because sometimes people receive baptism when they are a baby! But why do we need baptism, even when we’re a baby? Just like there are things that you need Mom or Dad’s help to do, like reaching high places or reading, there are things that we cannot do by ourselves and we need special help from God!

Do you remember the story of Adam and Eve, when they disobeyed what God had asked them to do? We know that when we disobey God it is called a sin. Adam and Eve were the first people that God created, so when they disobeyed God it was the very first sin, and so it is called the original sin. Now think of some traits that you have in common with your parents—do you have the same hair color as them? The same eye color, or maybe you act like them? There are many things that we have in common with our parents. Some traits were passed from your grandparents, to your parents, and down to you. Sometimes, things like sickness can be passed down as well. When Adam and
Eve disobeyed God, their relationship with God was hurt, and some of the gifts that God had given them were lost. Like a sickness can be passed down, original sin is passed down from our first parents, Adam and Eve, because they were the very first people. Our relationship with God is hurt, and we lack the gifts that God created Adam and Eve with.

Original sin isn’t something that we can cure on our own or just by our actions. Fixing our relationship with God isn’t something we could do by ourselves! But God loves us so much that he gave us his Son, Jesus to come and save us! Jesus restored our relationship with God, and he gave us graces that we can receive to heal us! This is what God gives us in the sacrament of Baptism. When we are baptized God takes away the guilt of Adam and Eve’s sin that we share with them, and gives us sanctifying grace. Sanctifying grace is like a superpower that stays with us our whole lives, and it aids us in overcoming concupiscence. Concupiscence is the temptation to keep sinning, because once we sin it becomes easier to sin again. It’s like the feeling when we are tempted to eat another cookie after eating a really tasty cookie, and then another, and another until we get a stomach ache. It is easy to do, but it isn’t good or healthy for us. Similarly once we sin it can become easier and easier to sin again. Concupiscence comes with original sin, and it stays with us even after baptism, but thankfully sanctifying grace helps us to overcome concupiscence! Though our actions alone cannot take away original sin, our actions can help us fight concupiscence! Receiving the other sacraments, living virtuously and praying everyday all help us win the fight against concupiscence!

**Questions:**

- Why do we need baptism, even when we’re a baby?
- Who restored our hurt relationship with God?
- What is concupiscence?
- What special gift do you have, and some actions that you can take to fight concupiscence?
- What is sin?

**Activities:**

- Draw a superhero battle, with the evil villain “Concupiscence” vs. you, with all that you have to fight concupiscence.
- Read together the story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:26-3:24), remembering that they are our first parents and why we know we need Baptism from this story.
Think of your favorite hero, in one of their greatest battles. Whether it’s literally a battle of superhero vs. supervillain, or maybe your hero must overcome some great obstacle or curse, or stand up for the good--they each face difficult challenges. Our challenges may look a little different from theirs, but we have challenges to face as well. Baptism is just the beginning of our life as Christians, and we need a sacrament that will strengthen us in our battle against sin when times are tough. That is why we have the sacrament of Confirmation.

The sacrament of Confirmation strengthens the graces that we receive in Baptism, so that when we need to be really courageous to do the right thing without worrying about what others think of us, we have what we need! Big tasks call for big muscles, and in this case big spiritual muscles! Our biggest challenge that we must work hard to tackle is sin. Sin can be very difficult to tackle because it can be very easy to do! We never want to hurt our relationship with God, but sometimes we may want to do something that God or our parents don’t want us to do. Both God and our parents love us very much, and to show them we love them too we must try our best not to sin. When we are tempted, we can wrestle against our temptations to sin and win!

RELATES TO JESUS:
Jesus’ love and mercy for humanity affords us the knowledge that we are never left alone. Confirmation, like all of the Sacraments, is Jesus’ presence intentionally with us to assist in keeping us in His love and mercy.

RELATES TO MY FAITH:
Confirmation gives the recipient the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which further the witness of the baptized and allow them to operate more deeply in the life of the Church.
very much, and to show them we love them too we must try our best not to sin. When we are tempted, we can wrestle against our temptations to sin and win! And Confirmation gives us a special strength that is much bigger than ourselves. When we receive the sacrament of Confirmation we receive in a special way the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit comes to our aid to make us very strong, and he lives inside of us! He is there to help us, and we can always pray to ask for help when we need extra strength.

For an example of how the Holy Spirit can work in us, we can look at Pentecost! After Jesus rose from the dead, he continued to travel with the apostles for 40 days and then ascended into heaven to be with the Father. Though Jesus gave the apostles a mission, they could not do it on their own. They were afraid of what others would say about them or do to them, so Jesus had promised his apostles, “you will receive my power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). When the time came, it is recorded in Scripture that “suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them” (Acts 2:2–3). Both fire and wind are symbols of the Holy Spirit, they can show us that the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles! After this, the apostles left the room from where they hid and began to tell everyone about Jesus and that heaven was open for all! They were no longer afraid of what anyone thought, they only wanted people to know how much God loved them! The Holy Spirit strengthens us like this when we receive the sacrament of Confirmation, and we can rely on the Holy Spirit to help us when we face our own challenges.

Questions:

● Which sacrament strengthens us when we face challenges?
● Who do we receive when we receive the sacrament of Confirmation?
● What are two symbols of the Holy Spirit?
● What story from Scripture can show us how the Holy Spirit works in us?
● Who can we pray to when we face our own challenges?

Activities:

Read in your own Bible the story of Pentecost, from Acts 2:1 through Acts 2:12. In the apostles case, what did the Holy Spirit enable them to do?

Draw yourself in a situation where you can ask the Holy Spirit to come to your aid!
When we make choices, we know that we can make good ones and bad ones. The bad ones are called sins, and they hurt our relationship with God, so we need the sacrament that will heal our personal relationship with him--Reconciliation.

Reconciliation is a liturgical act, which means it is not something that we do at home but at church like when we receive all the other sacraments. We go to our church building to remind us that Reconciliation is a sacrament from the Church (big “C”). Jesus is the one who established that sins be forgiven through a priest who is “in persona Christi”, that means “in the person of Christ”. When we speak to the priest during Reconciliation, it is as if we are talking to Jesus himself, and we are asking healing and forgiveness from Jesus. When the priest says absolution (which is when our sins are forgiven), it is Jesus forgiving our sins by the power of the Holy Spirit!

**RELATES TO JESUS:**
Jesus forgives our sins through the priest in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, restoring the grace that was lost and allowing us greater ease to turn away from temptation and sin and live the divine life of grace offered through Jesus Christ.

**RELATES TO MY FAITH:**
The Catholic Church offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation as the means by which souls are freed from sin and the chains of vice.

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Sample Script:

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Though it can be scary to tell our sins to the priest, he will only give us guidance to help us make the right choices, and he can never tell anyone else your sins. This is called the sacramental seal of Confession, that a priest who hears Confession must keep them absolutely secret with no exception. All we need to focus on when we go to Confession is that we are truly sorry for the sins we committed that have hurt our relationship with God, and to be excited to receive the healing power of the sacrament!

It is good to make a habit of going and receiving Reconciliation. Imagine what would happen if you didn’t shower for a month. You would be super dirty and stinky! When we sin over and over again a similar thing happens to our soul—it gets gunky and stinky. It is good to make a habit of going every month to receive Reconciliation to get a shower for your soul! You will leave with a clean slate, fresh and ready to tackle those choices!

**Questions:**
- Which sacrament can we receive that will heal our relationship with God after we have sinned?
- Is Reconciliation something we can do from home? Why or why not?
- What is the sacramental seal of Confession?
- What do we focus on when we go to receive Reconciliation?
- How often should we go to Reconciliation?

**Activities:**
Plan a time with your parents to go and receive Reconciliation, and also plan something fun to do together afterwards to celebrate!

Think about a particular sin that seems more like a habit for you. What can you do to change so that you recognize in the moment that you have a choice to sin or not?
Recall the sign of the Cross and make it on yourself. The second person of the Trinity, the Son, is Jesus! He has always been God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, but at a point in time he became man, died on the cross, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. Though he no longer walks around on earth like we do, Jesus is present to us. He is present in Scripture, in the priest at Mass, the whole community at Mass, and the Altar. And different from these, he is present in a special way in the Eucharist!

Sample Script:

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The Eucharist is Jesus. His Body, Blood, Soul and his Divinity. When you will receive the Eucharist at Mass, you will receive Jesus himself! The bread is transformed during Mass through transubstantiation (trans-sub-stan-ti-a-tion) when the priest or the bishop says the words the Jesus said at the Last Supper, "This is my body which will be given up for you," then, "This is my blood...". Though they look the same, there was a real difference between the altar bread and the Eucharist.

When we receive the Eucharist, we are changed in a way that we can't see either-- we become living tabernacles with Jesus dwelling in us! So after communion it is important to take quiet time and prayer to thank Jesus for being present in you! When we receive Jesus we receive fruits as well. The fruits of receiving the Holy Eucharist are becoming more fully joined to Christ, more fully united to the Church which is God's family, we are freed from all venial sins, preserved from mortal sins, and our faith in God made more solid. These are incredible fruits, and in order to receive them before we receive the Holy Eucharist we must be free from mortal sin, make sure we observe the fast by not eating or drinking anything except water for one hour before receiving Communion, and we want to listen and respond during Mass. When we are more present to Jesus, she is able to be more present to us!

Questions:

- How is Jesus present to us in Mass?
- Where is he fully present in Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity?
- When at Mass is the altar bread transformed into Jesus himself?
- Who do we receive when we receive the Eucharist?
- What are the fruits of receiving the Eucharist? What must we do to receive these fruits?

Activities:

Make a chart with those things that we must do to receive the fruits of the Eucharist that you can check off each Sunday before going to Mass to remind yourself what needs to be done! Below, make a checklist of the fruits you will receive in the Eucharist that you can check off when you come home!

Read with your parents the Last Supper discourse from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 22:14-20). This is when Jesus instituted the Eucharist. Does it sound familiar?
The Mass focuses on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Let’s review who Jesus is. He is the eternal Son of God and the second person of the Trinity. Jesus is the fullest revelation of God. He is fully divine, and also fully human. That is a truth that God has revealed to us that is hard to understand. Because of God the Father’s great love for humanity, he sent His Son Jesus to become human and live among us. Jesus was carried in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph was his foster father. We celebrate his birth on Christmas Day.

Jesus loved God the Father, and he taught us about who God is and how to follow him. Jesus loved humanity so much that he gave his life on the cross and died for our sins. Three days after his death on the cross he rose from the dead. He appeared to his apostles after he rose. Remember that they ate with him, and St. Thomas touched his wounds. Jesus was physically present to his
apostles, he had a body; he wasn’t a ghost. Forty days after he rose from the dead Jesus ascended to heaven. Just before he ascended Jesus promised the apostles that he would be with them always, even until the end of time (Mt 28.20). That promise wasn’t just to the apostles, but to all those they would teach, and those Christians who would come after them across the centuries right to Christians in our time. The promise was to us!

How is Jesus present with us today? In the Mass, we encounter Jesus in several ways. Can you tell me any of them? Jesus is present to us in the people gathered for Mass. We encounter Jesus in the Word of God, especially in the Gospel. We should always try to listen very carefully to God’s Word when it is proclaimed at Mass. We encounter Jesus in the person of the priest, who acts in the person of Christ (in persona Christi) during Mass. In a very special and unique way, Jesus is present to us in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is his very Body and Blood, given to us in the form of bread and wine. This is really Jesus, not just a symbol of him. The Eucharist is the most personal encounter with Jesus we can have on this earth since he gives himself, body, blood, soul and divinity, to us.

Remember the night before Jesus died when he ate the Last Supper with the apostles? That wasn’t just any meal, but a very special meal that was eaten once a year on the Jewish Feast of Passover. This feast recalled the actions of God in bringing the Hebrew people out of slavery in Egypt. Jesus instituted both the Mass and the Eucharist at the Last Supper. Read Luke 22.19-20. This passage records the words of Jesus as he prayed over the bread and wine at the Last Supper, transforming them to His Body and Blood. These words should sound familiar to you, because they are the words the priest, acting in the person of Christ, prays over the bread and wine at Mass. By speaking these words, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the priest changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

The Mass is a memorial of Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection. It is a very special type of memorial, because it is much stronger than just remembering an event that happened long ago. It’s not like remembering your birthday party last year, or the vacation we took last summer. In our faith life, memorial and remembering have a much deeper meaning, like it did for Jesus and the Jewish people. This type of remembering, through the power of God, makes the event present to us now. When we remember the events that led up to Jesus being nailed to the cross (which we call his passion), his death on the cross, and his resurrection from the dead, we become present at those events. The Last Supper, Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection are all made present to us at Mass. The power of God allows us to be present to that historical event. You can see why it is very important to give our full attention to what is happening at Mass.
The Mass is our most perfect prayer. We know that because Jesus gave us the Mass at the Last Supper, and he told the apostles to “do this in remembrance of me.” At Mass, the bread and wine become Jesus’ body and blood, and we are united with Jesus when we receive the Eucharist. The word “Eucharist” comes from the Greek language and it means “thanksgiving.” We are thankful to God for many things, but the most important reason is that he gives his very self to us in the Eucharist. Coming to Mass and participating in the prayers as fully as we can is an opportunity to give thanks and praise to God in the most perfect way possible. When we think of the gift we receive at Mass, the very body and blood of Jesus, it should help understand why it is so important that we come to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. We have an obligation to come together to give thanks and praise to God. That is so important to our relationship to God that it is a sin if we fail to come. God works through the Church to bring us his special graces through the Sacraments and the prayer of the Church. To not be a part of that is to like telling God we don’t want or need his gifts.

Questions:

● What would you say to a friend who says it is not necessary to attend Mass every Sunday?
● How do we encounter Jesus Christ at Mass?
● What do we remember at each Mass? What is extra special about what we remember?
● What is the Eucharist?
● Why is it so important to come together to worship God at Mass?

Activities:

The next time that you go to Mass, pay attention throughout the entirety of Mass and take note of the number of things that remind you of Jesus. Write these down when you get home and make this a practice each you go to Mass.

Ask your family, on the way home from Mass, to each talk about a thing or two that struck them about Mass. How did they experience Jesus speaking to them through the Mass?
You know how there are five different seasons in the year for the Church? There’s Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, Lent, and Easter. Each year we go through the same five seasons which helps us to learn about the entire life of Jesus! In Advent, we focus on the time leading up to Jesus’ birth, which we celebrate during Christmas time! This is one of the most amazing events in all of human history! God loves you so much and He wanted to be as close to you as possible. He also wanted to save all of us from our sins. Because of His great love for us, God decided to become a human being! He became human to show us how much He cares and so He could die on the cross for us to set us free from sin. Christmas time is when we remember the awesome gift of Jesus being born.

Ordinary time helps us to learn about the rest of Jesus’ life. It goes over what Jesus did when He started teaching and inspires us to be more like him. Lent is the time when we get ready to celebrate Easter. We spend 40 days making sacrifices to remember the sacrifices Jesus made for us and so we can more easily let go of our sins. During Lent we learn about how Jesus died for us on the cross so that we could be saved. Easter is the
source of Christian joy and peace, because when Jesus rose, He opened the way into Heaven so we can be with Him forever after we die. There is no gift more amazing than what Jesus gives us on Easter!

The liturgical year covers the whole life of Jesus from His birth, His life, to His death, and resurrection. Even though it’s very important to go to Mass to learn about all these amazing things, we also need to put them into practice at home. Christian families get to go to Mass together, learn about Jesus’ life in the reading of Scripture, and then receive Jesus’ body and blood in the Eucharist so we can be more like Him. Then they get to go into the world and their homes and live out the teaches along with their new strength from the Sacrament!

One way that families participate in the liturgical life of the Church includes fasting during lent and making small sacrifices. They can also light advent wreaths to prepare for Jesus’ coming during Christmas. Some families put up manger scenes around Christmas to remind them of Jesus’ humble birth. It’s always good to spend time with friends and family during these seasons so we can celebrate together and help each other to grow. During the whole year, it’s also good to look for acts of service or little ways that family members can live the message of the Gospel we hear about in Church. Some families volunteer at soup kitchens, or sponsor children in foreign countries who can’t afford to go to school.

The best way for a family to live the liturgical life of the Church is by making sure they are loving and caring for one another. This is so important because the life of Jesus isn’t meant just to be learnt about. We are supposed to follow Him and try to live the same way that He did. We can only do this when we put it into practice and try to love the people around us like Jesus did. Living out the message of Jesus will help us to better understand the mysteries of His life, death, and resurrection.

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**Questions:**

- What is significant about each of the five Church seasons?
- What are some ways that families can live out the Liturgical year?
- What is the best way for the family to live out the Liturgical year?
- What does it tell you when the priest wears green at mass?
- What does the Liturgical year cover?

**Activities:**

Think about your favorite Church season. What do you like so much about it? Talk with your parent about what you already do to live out the season? What other small thing can you do to help live it out?

Work on making a “Liturgical Calendar” with your child. This can be done with color coated markings or with pictures on a homemade calendar or any blank calendar. Include one or two things that your family does to live out the season on the calendar. Have your child keep this in their room and try to keep track of what season we’re in and which one is coming up next!
God made us out of pure love. He created us so that we could be in relationship with Him and live our lives with Him. When God first created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, they lived together perfectly. They made the right choices, working with God, and living holy lives. But then something terrible happened. The devil tempted Adam and Eve to make the wrong choice and disobey God. It brought sin into the world. This hurt mankind’s relationship with God. But the good news is, God has given us a way to make things better!

When Jesus came into the world, He went on a mission to save us from our sins. When He spent time in the desert, the devil tempted Him just like the devil tempted Adam and Eve, but Jesus made the right choices even though it was hard, and He stayed obedient to His Father. Jesus lived a holy life and sacrificed His life by dying on the cross and rising so that we could be freed from our sins. By doing this, He won the war against sin and death and allowed us to access incredible graces. These graces help us to make the right choices.
We can always ask for these graces by praying to the Holy Spirit! The most powerful way to access these graces is through the gift of the Sacraments. Receiving the Sacraments bring us closer to God and help us to be holy! We can also ask our guardian angels to help us fight temptations from the devil. God has given us each our own special guardian angel to help us on our journey to heaven. Our guardian angel is like a superhero who helps to save us from trouble. Our angel is meant to be our friend and teacher. Praying for help to our guardian angel is always a good idea!

God wants us to be holy and repair our relationship with Him. Our sins hurt us and our relationship with God. By coming back to Him and saying we are sorry in the Sacrament of Confession, He will forgive us and we can receive the graces He won for us so we can stay away from sin. By always coming back to God and asking for His help, we can overcome the temptations from the devil, and choose to live holy lives which will lead to us becoming Saints in Heaven one day!

Questions:
- How was our relationship with God damaged?
- How did Jesus save us from our sins?
- What should we do when we sin?
- How can we fight temptation?
- What guidance to do what is right did God send to us through Moses?

Activities:
Say a prayer to your guardian angel. Thank him for watching over you and taking care of you all your life. Ask him to continue to guide you and help you to fight temptation.

Think about a recent time that you did not make a good choice. What could you have done differently? Talk to a parent or someone you respect about what they think you could have done.
Our Christian life usually begins with our baptism, in which our parents offer us into the hands of Jesus Christ and ask that we be made a child of God through the Sacrament as offered through the Catholic Church. The reality received in our baptism unites us to Jesus in a special way but also calls us to take an active role in developing, supporting, and living out our relationship with Jesus Christ. Our Christian life needs to be practiced so that we can come to know the One who calls us His child.

Being baptized into the Church, the Church offers us a number of ways to stay in relationship with Jesus. The four points below are of particular importance, especially as you prepare to take the next step in being initiated into the Church through reception of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

First, we need to make sure that we are praying daily. Prayer is a communication between the individual and God. Prayer involves both an offering of the things that are on your mind and heart and also consists of being quiet and listening to what God has to say to you. When we pray, we should be able to tell God everything - saying thank you for the many blessings in your life, saying sorry and asking forgiveness for the bad, sinful choices that were made, offering God

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**RELATES TO JESUS:**

Jesus is our supreme role model in how to live a Christian life. Following Jesus provides the map for how to live a life of selfless love shown towards God and others.

**RELATES TO MY FAITH:**

The more we come to know God through prayer and our neighbor through service, the more we come to know and live the mission of the Church to proclaim the Kingdom.
worship for being God who loves us completely, and petitioning or asking God to heal the hurts in your life, to cure the sick family and friends that you know, to have knowledge to know Him more fully, etc. Like children to a parent, we should trust in God and go to Him with what’s on our heart.

Second, we need to listen to our parents/guardians. The fourth commandment tells us to honor our father and mother and our Christian life needs to reflect this. Our parents/guardians love us and have brought us into this world, with the help of God, so that we can experience love and live a life that leaves the world in a better place. We owe our guardians respect and love for the blessings that have been given to us. This respect and love that we show them is to be the same love and respect that we show to God.

Third, we need to help others. Throughout the history of the Church, the holy men and women who make up the list of Saints, not to mention Jesus Christ Himself, have spoken of the importance of assisting and helping others in selfless love. When we help others, we don’t just help them by taking care of the need in front of us, we communicate to them the love God has for them by saying you are worth my time and I want to help you have more peace in this life. Our help to others offers a great moment for others to encounter God and allows us to grow closer to God ourselves in our life.

Fourth, we need to go to Mass every Sunday. The Mass is so important as it is the way that we worship God best. God comes to us in the Mass through word and sacrament, meeting us where we are at, and inviting us into His life. We need to pay attention and offer ourselves back to God and state with our mind, body, and soul that “you are God of my life”! The Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus, is the most intimate and real way that we invite Jesus into our life. Through the things listed in this lesson, if we practice these with our whole heart, we will come to invite Jesus in the Eucharist into a place of residence in our body and soul, enabling us to live a truly authentic Christian life.

Questions:
- What usually gets us started in our Christian life?
- What is one thing about prayer that I would like to do more of?
- What is one thing about listening to my parents/guardians that I want to do better at?
- What is one thing about helping others that I would like to do more of?
- What is one thing about going to Mass that I want to do better at?

Activities:
As a family, discuss Mass and share what are some of your favorite parts. Discuss too what are some of the most difficult parts. In prayer, talk to God about both the favorite and the difficult, and as you to Mass each week, take note of any changes.

As a family, talk about how you each can help each other around the house. Make a list and commit to the list!
God has an amazing plan for your life. His plan is something that only you can do using your gifts and talents. Even before He created you, He knew the amazing things He wanted you to do. When we take time to be quiet and still to listen to God in prayer, it gives Him the opportunity to shape us into the people we’re supposed to be. By asking for His help in prayer and listening to what He has to say, little by little He gets to work His plan for us in our lives.

It might be easy to say “but I don’t have time to pray” or “I don’t know when is a good time to pray.” The good news is, there is never a bad time to pray! Everything in your life can be a prayer whether it’s doing your schoolwork, playing a game, eating your food, or spending time with your friends. Sometimes we just feel called to pray at a time we didn’t even plan to pray. This is called “spontaneous prayer.” During this time, we just talk to God and open our hearts to Him, spending time with Him and sharing what we are going through. It doesn’t have to be long. It can be just a few seconds or can be a whole hour if you want. The most important part is that you try to pray often and focus on God.

We should never be afraid to pray, because whenever we pray, we are never alone. Even something as simple as saying a prayer can be hard and we need help. Our
prayers are always meant to be inspired and strengthened by the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit who lives in us through our Baptism helps us to pray. He helps us to know what we should ask God for, the words we should use, and when we should be quiet and still. He is like a special teacher for our prayer life that we always have with us, who always wants to teach us, and who we can always ask questions to!

Listening to how the Holy Spirit guides you in prayer will always help you to pray better! The Spirit helps us to pray in the different kinds of prayer: giving thanks to God for the good things in our life, asking God for help with the things we need, adoring the pure goodness of God, asking for God’s forgiveness whenever we do something wrong, and just sitting and listening to what God has to say. These different kinds of prayer help to different parts of our relationship with God! The Holy Spirit always knows what kind of prayer we need most and what is the right thing to do. We can always ask the Holy Spirit to help us to pray.

By giving God a little bit of time every day and inviting Him to spend time with us when we go to do the other parts of our day, God helps us to be better people and to figure out what His plan is for us. There is never a bad time to pray and if we need help, we always have the Holy Spirit there to guide us!

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**Questions:**

- Does God have a plan for your life? How do you figure it out?
- When can you pray?
- What is spontaneous prayer like?
- How does the Holy Spirit help us to pray?
- What is a prayer that Jesus gave us?

**Activities:**

Each day this week, try to ask God what His plan is just for the day. If He tells you something, do your best to do it! If He doesn’t give you a plan, just ask Him to help you live your day well and to be able to do something good today!

Try praying spontaneously at some time this week. Even if it’s just for a few seconds, invite God to spend time with you wherever you are! Whenever you pray this week, ask the Holy Spirit to help you!
Have you ever watched the priest closely during Mass? He plays a special role at Mass, and many things show this – his special clothes, how he sits in front, and the way he leads everyone else. The priest has received a special sacrament that gives him a role at Mass different from everyone else, called the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Bishops, priests, and deacons all receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders, but in different degrees.

Because he has received this Sacrament, the priest acts “in persona Christi” which is Latin language for “in the person of Christ.” This means that he truly represents Jesus, and acts in the place and power of Jesus! This is how the priest says “This is my body” at Mass. The priest is in the person of Christ offering Himself as a Sacrifice.
This is something only a priest or bishop can do but all of us are still called to imitate Christ, which means to act like him by taking care of those around us. A husband and wife who are married have a special way of imitating Christ. A husband loves his wife like Jesus loves us, his Church – he loves us so much that he died for us! In turn, a wife loves her husband by following his lead like we do with Jesus! And together they care for children – a Dad, Mom, and baby share a love between them like the Trinity!

Right now, you and I can pray and for what our future role will be, and it’s important to be a son/daughter, brother/sister and friend, and to take our role worshipping God during Mass!

Questions:
- What sacrament do bishops and priests receive that allows them to act "in persona Christi"?
- What does this mean?
- Do you act "in persona Christi"?
- How are you called to act, and how do married people do this in a special way?
- What can you do right now?

Activities:
- Draw a priest "in persona Christi" and draw yourself imitating Christ. What is the difference?
- Talk with your parents about what marriage means to them.
Every Christian is on a mission to live like Jesus and to love the people around us just like He loves them. Whenever we have a mission in life, it’s helpful to look to our role models to learn how they succeeded, so that we can imitate them. A Saint lives a holy life and serves as a great role model to you and me. A role model is someone that you can look up to, and someone who we want to act like because we admire them. In life we have all different kinds of role models like fire-fighters, doctors, nurses, superheroes, our friends, our teachers, and especially our parents. These people do amazing things, they are very smart, and they inspire us to be better people!

As Catholics, we need role models too, because they help us to learn how to live a holy life and make the right choices even when it’s hard. The Saints are role models because they live lives of virtue following Jesus Christ. Virtue means they have good qualities like being patient, caring about others more than ourselves, and being strong in doing the right things through hard times. But sometimes even the smartest, the strongest, and the nicest people don’t know what to do or aren’t able to do certain things without some help from others. That’s why we have the Saints to show us the right way to live, to remind us that we are not alone, and to give us the help that we need by praying for us.

Sample Script:

Every Christian is on a mission to live like Jesus and to love the people around us just like He loves them. Whenever we have a mission in life, it’s helpful to look to our role models to learn how they succeeded, so that we can imitate them. A Saint lives a holy life and serves as a great role model to you and me. A role model is someone that you can look up to, and someone who we want to act like because we admire them. In life we have all different kinds of role models like fire-fighters, doctors, nurses, superheroes, our friends, our teachers, and especially our parents. These people do amazing things, they are very smart, and they inspire us to be better people!

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Just like you have best friends who help you out when you need something and help you to be a better person, the Catholic Church offers us Saints to become good friends with, so they can help us to be better followers of Jesus Christ!

Every person is different, completely unique even. Everyone has different strengths, almost like superpowers, that let them do awesome things with their lives. God loves to see us use the gifts He has given us to do amazing things with our lives! When someone asks God to help them in life and becomes very close friends with Him, they are able to become a Saint in Heaven with Him after they die. They try their best to spend their whole lives following Jesus just like you and I are trying to do, and even though they make mistakes, God helps them to succeed and they accept His help, so they can be with Him after they die. Even though they aren’t on earth anymore, they get to live forever with God in the most beautiful place you can imagine.

The Saints are always praying for us while in Heaven and trying to help us become Saints too, so that we can be in that wonderful place with them and with God. Since they are still living with God, even though they aren’t on earth anymore, we can become friends with them, by praying to them, asking them for help, and taking time to learn about their lives and the amazing things that they did. When we do this, it’s just like becoming good friends with somebody on earth. We can learn from each other, help each other when things are hard, and we can even play and have fun together.

When you become good friends with somebody, don’t you want to share that gift with your other friends? Isn’t it so great when you can have all your friends together? Following the Saints and growing close to them is very similar! When you start to become friends with a Saint, it’s a great idea to share that gift with your other friends by telling them about it! You can talk to them about why you are friends with this Saint and the amazing things that he or she did in their life of following Christ. Maybe they’re already friends with a great Saint that they can tell you about too! Learning about different Saints is an awesome way to learn about all the different ways that you can be holy. The best thing about the Saints is that they show us how to follow Jesus. They help us to find the amazing and unique way that you can follow Jesus with your own gifts.

Questions:

- How is a Saint like a friend?
- Why is it so great to tell other people about the Saints?
- What is the best thing about the Saints?
- What does virtue mean?
- Are we able to pray to the Saints or not?

Activities:

Ask your child about some things they like about their friends or that they like to do. Talk about a few Saints they might like to learn about and pick one to read about with them a few nights this week. Spend some time praying to that Saint with them.

Have your child practice telling you about a Saint as if you were one of their friends. Encourage them to share with someone else they feel close to.
Just like you have best friends who help you out when you need something and help you to be a better person, the Catholic Church offers us Saints to become good friends with, so they can help us to be better followers of Jesus Christ! What are some good things you like about your best friends or something you would look for in a good friend you would want to be around? Maybe you’d like them to be kind to you, someone you can have fun with, someone really funny, really smart, or very helpful? Maybe it’s hard to describe why you like your best friend so much, because they’re so special to you and they are so unique that it’s hard to describe it with words!

Every person is different, completely unique even! Everyone has different strengths, almost like superpowers, that let them do awesome things with their lives. God loves to see us use the gifts He has given us to do amazing things with our lives! He wants to help us by working with us to do those amazing things and even give us more gifts! When someone asks God to help them in life and becomes very close friends with Him, they are able to become a Saint in Heaven after they die. They try their best to spend their whole lives following Jesus just like you and I are trying to do, and even though they make mistakes, God helps them to succeed and they accept His help, so

Sample Script:

RELATES TO JESUS:

Jesus is the second person of the Trinity, we know there is a trinity because of Jesus’ revelation. This shows us that God must be love (that is what binds the trinity) and reveals all of Jesus’s actions within a familial relationship of God.

RELATES TO MY FAITH:

There is only one God, we do not worship multiple gods, or seek God as a genie, but go to the one who created all things and shows us what love is.
they can be with Him after they die! Even though they aren’t on earth anymore, they get to live forever with God in the most beautiful place you can imagine.

The Saints are always praying for us while in Heaven and trying to help us become Saints too, so that we can be in that wonderful place with them and with God. Since they are still living with God, even though they aren’t on earth anymore, we can become friends with them, by praying to them, asking them for help, and taking time to learn about their lives and the amazing things that they did. When we do this, it’s just like becoming good friends with somebody on earth! We can learn from each other, help each other when things are hard, and we can even play and have fun together.

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**Questions:**

- How is a Saint like a friend?
- Why is it so great to tell other people about the Saints?
- What is the best thing about the Saints?
- How can you become a Saint?
- What is one of your strengths?

**Activities:**

Ask your child about some things they like about their friends or that they like to do. Talk about a few Saints they might like to learn about and pick one to read about with them a few nights this week. Spend some time praying to that Saint with them.

Ask your child to draw a picture of what they think Heaven will be like with all their friends, the Saints, and Jesus together.

Have your child practice telling you about a Saint as if you were one of their friends. Encourage them to share with someone else they feel close to.