

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time—Baptism of the Lord

November 15, 2020–January 10, 2021

Volume 35, Number 2

Promise

Grades K, 1

Unit 2: We Prepare for Jesus' Coming

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Unit Overview
Webinars and Teaching
Guides available in
Spanish and English at
gospelweeklies.com



For Catechists and Teachers



Liturgical Catechesis

When the new *Directory for Catechesis* was released this past summer, our editorial team quickly found the directory's support for liturgical catechesis, the approach taken by the *Gospel Weeklies*. With lesson themes drawn from the Sunday Gospel, the *Weeklies* illustrate that "liturgy and catechesis are inseparable and nourish one another" (96). Liturgy and catechesis are both "oriented toward bringing to life the experience of God's love" (95).

The *Gospel Weeklies* both begin with and lead to the Sunday liturgy. The new directory states: "The liturgy is one of the essential and indispensable sources of the Church's catechesis . . . because the two belong to one another in the very act of believing" (95) and "catechesis reaches its true fulfillment when the one being catechized takes part in the liturgical life of the community" (96). The *Gospel Weeklies* strive to prepare children for the "full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations" called for in Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (14).

Ending One Church Year...

Unit 2 begins with the final two weeks of Ordinary Time. We first hear the Parable of the Talents. God entrusts each of us with life and unique talents to develop and use. God also entrusts us with the capacity to respect and treat one another with kindness.

In the Gospel for the Solemnity of Christ the King, Jesus welcomes into God's kingdom all who have lived the Works of Mercy. We learn that what we do for others, we do for Christ.

...Beginning Another

The Sundays of Advent prepare Christians to celebrate the coming of God among us in Jesus' birth—and for his return at the end of time. The Gospel for the First Sunday of Advent looks ahead to the culmination of all things in Christ at the Second Coming. "Be watchful! Be alert!" Jesus says in Mark's Gospel in a parable about servants who do not know when their master will return.

Two Sunday Gospels of Advent feature John the Baptist's preaching and the longing of Israel's people for the promised Messiah. As we hear John urge the people of his time to turn to God, we hear our own call to make time and space in our busyness to live the spirit of Advent—joyful anticipation.

This unit also belongs to Mary and features a picture story of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Gospels of the Annunciation and Christmas. Epiphany celebrates the revelation of the Jewish Messiah to all the peoples of the world.

Unit 2 concludes with the Baptism of the Lord—a good time to explore the meaning of Baptism and the Holy Trinity.

Date/Sunday	Sunday Gospels	Word of the Week	 Creed
November 15, 2020 33rd Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 25:14–30 Parable of the Talents	service	God gives us talents. (546, 1880, 2427)
November 22, 2020 Solemnity of Christ the King	Matthew 25:31–46 Jesus Teaches the Works of Mercy	saint	God judges us on love. (678, 682)
November 29, 2020 1st Sunday of Advent	Mark 13:33–37 Jesus Says, "Be Alert!"	Church Year	Jesus promises to come again. (524, 681–682, 2612)
December 6, 2020 2nd Sunday of Advent	Mark 1:1–8 Jesus Is the Good News	Holy Spirit	John announces the Good News. (718–719)
December 13, 2020 3rd Sunday of Advent/Gaudete Sunday	John 1:6–8, 19–28 John the Baptist Prepares Us for Jesus	Reconciliation	God sent Jesus, Emmanuel "God-with-us." (463, 744)
December 20, 2020 4th Sunday of Advent	Luke 1:26–38 Mary Says Yes to God	Mary	Mary models surrender to God. (490, 973, 2617, 2674)
December 25, 2020 & January 3, 2021 Christmas & Epiphany	Luke 2:1–14 Jesus Is Born & Matthew 2:1–12 Visit of the Magi	Jesus	Jesus is born in Bethlehem. (525) Jesus comes for all people. (528)
January 10, 2021 Baptism of the Lord	Mark 1:7–11 Jesus Is Baptized	Baptism	Baptism welcomes us into God's family. (265, 536, 985)

UNIT 2 OVERVIEW: We Prepare for Jesus' Coming

In this unit, the children will learn the following lessons:

- God gives us talents.
- God judges us on how we love.
- Jesus promises to come again.
- We grow as Jesus' followers.
- We wait with joy.
- Mary says yes to God.
- God has come to us in Jesus.
- Baptism welcomes us into God's family.

NEW Online Features

- Eucharist Quotes (gospelweeklies.com/eucharist)
- Word of the Week (gospelweeklies.com/promise/wow)
- Gospel Reflection Videos and Coloring Pages (gospelweeklies.com/catechists-and-teachers)
- Parent Teaching Pages (gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Additional Resources

- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Seasonal Resources (gospelweeklies.com/seasonal)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)
- Find resources at catholicv.org/masses/catholicv-mass to support or enhance your lessons.

Go to gospelweeklies.com

Go online to find helpful information to enhance your presentation of the *Pflaum Gospel Weeklies* in the classroom and support materials for parents. Visit our website to register and find:

- **GROW Newsletter and Blog** – Subscribe to our *GROW* blog for weekly reflections on Sunday's Gospel, activities, and a **Calendar of Saints and Feasts**.
- **Lesson Updates** provide corrections or helpful additions to printed materials.
- **Seasonal Activities and Catholic Resources** – Reproducible activities can be used in a classroom or at home.
- **Lesson Assessments** – We offer pretests, lesson review templates, and lesson and year-end assessments.
- **Unit Overview Webinars** – Editors present an overview of each unit.
- **User's Guide** – Learn about **Teaching Guide** features and the structure and flow of the *Gospel Weeklies* lesson plans.
- **Family Catechesis Resources**
The Gospel at Home is a weekly guide for parents with a Gospel summary, discussion starters, and activities in English and Spanish.
The Gospel for All Ages includes gathering rituals, discussion questions, and large-group sessions—all based on the *Gospel Weeklies* lessons. Includes a guide for planning four major seasonal events.
Parent Teaching Pages – Lesson plans help parents teach at home.
- **Scope and Sequence Chart** – gospelweeklies.com/promise



 Sacraments & Liturgy	 Life in Christ	 Christian Prayer
Church community	Sharing talents to bring happiness and help others	Thanking God for talents
Church as Body of Christ	Seeing Christ in our neighbor; doing Works of Mercy	Works of Mercy prayer
Church Year: Advent; Advent saints	Getting ready for Jesus' coming	Advent wreath prayer
Church Year: Advent; feast days of saints	Changing and growing as followers of Jesus	Advent wreath prayer; prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe
Church Year: Advent; Gaudete Sunday; Reconciliation	Preparing for Christmas; forgiving and asking for God's help	Advent wreath prayer—joy
Church Year: Advent; Annunciation	Saying yes to God	Advent wreath; Prayer to My Guardian Angel; Hail Mary
Church Year: Christmas and Epiphany	Telling the Christmas story	Singing our prayer; thanking God for Jesus
Baptism; sacraments	Living as members of Jesus' family	Sign of the Cross

Music CDs

The *Promise/Good News* music two-CD set is available at gospelweeklies.com. This set contains songs by John Burland that correlate to the times of the Church Year. The songs are easy for the children to learn through listening and singing along.

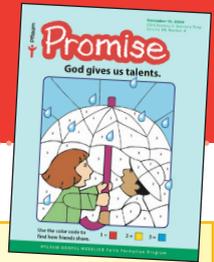
This music can also be downloaded at giamusic.com/pgw.



-  Facebook (@pflaumgroup)
-  Instagram (#gospelweeklies)
-  Twitter (@catechisthelp)

All numbers in parentheses refer to paragraphs in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

 Bayard supports Pope Francis' call to care for our common home. Please recycle this teaching guide properly. Thank you.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

Sunday's Gospel is a parable about an employer who is going on a journey. He entrusts money to three workers. When he returns, two of the workers have doubled his money, but one has simply buried it. The employer is irate. The message is clear: We are to use the talents we have been given.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

A servant is a helper. We are servants of God. We help one another as Jesus' followers. We can use the talents God gave us to do good.

"Through his parables [Jesus] invites people to the feast of the kingdom, but he also asks for a radical choice: to gain the kingdom, one must give everything. Words are not enough; deeds are required" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 546).

Sharing the Lesson with Families

Encourage parents to help their child recognize gifts and talents he or she possesses. Suggest that parents affirm their child's ordinary gifts of humor, energy, and thoughtfulness. They may also enjoy playing Hide It!, a game of sharing talents with others.

Materials

- *Promise* Student Lesson for 11/15
- Catechism handbook, page 11
- audio player & *Promise/Good News* CDs
- scissors, envelopes, pencils
- crayons, small boxes
- Church Year calendar

NOTE: Separate pages 1–2 from 3–4.

Suggested Music

- "Yes, Lord, I Believe" (CD-2, #26)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19)
- "CHOICES" (CD-1, #16)

Lesson Resources

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #29
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (20–25 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Yes, Lord, I Believe" (CD-2, #26)
- Activity • Everyone Has Talents
- Story • Friends Share with One Another (page 1)
- Activity • What do I like to do? (page 2)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (20–25 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Parable of the Talents
- Word of the Week • service (page 2)

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 11.

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Activity • Hide It! A Game of Sharing Your Talents (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "CHOICES" (CD-1, #16)

Take-Home

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #29
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (20–25 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Yes, Lord, I Believe" (CD-2, #26)
- Activity • Everyone Has Talents
- Story • Friends Share with One Another (page 1)
- Activity • What do I like to do? (page 2)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (40–45 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Parable of the Talents
- Word of the Week • service (page 2)
- Activity • Sway and Sing "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19)

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 11.

- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #29

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Activity • Hide It! A Game of Sharing Your Talents (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "CHOICES" (CD-1, #16)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Lesson Theme: God gives us talents.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • “Yes, Lord, I Believe” (CD-2, #26)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-6)
- Activity • Everyone Has Talents
- Story • Friends Share with One Another (page 1)
- Activity • What do I like to do? (page 2)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for giving us talents. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for giving us talents. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Gospel Ritual • “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Parable of the Talents
- Word of the Week • service (page 2)
- Activity • Sway and Sing “Serving Each Other” (CD-1, #19)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for making each one of us special. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for making each one of us special. Amen.* (Repeat.)

 **Distribute the students’ *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 11.**

- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #29
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for loving us as your children. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for loving us as your children. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Activity • Hide It! A Game of Sharing Your Talents (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to share our talents with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to share our talents with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-7)
- Closing Song • “CHOICES” (CD-1, #16)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Curriculum Connections

- ELA: Have the children identify a special talent. Then help them complete the following sentence starters: One thing I am good at is . . . One way I can share this with the world is . . . Have them create drawings that show their talents. Display responses and drawings around the room so the children can learn about their classmates’ talents. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.w.k.1)
- SS: Model giving compliments to the children. Encourage them to give sincere compliments to one another throughout the week. (D2.Civ.2.K-2)

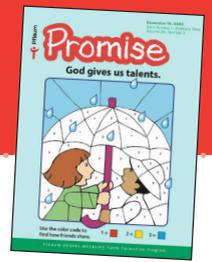
Extending the Lesson

Catholic Identity Project of the Week

Have the children celebrate their talents by organizing a talent show. Keep it easy and low-key. Invite the children to share a talent in front of their classmates and guests (such as parents, your pastor, and other members of your parish). If possible, invite your guests to participate in the talent show as well.

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- **November 15: World Day of the Poor** – Pray the Lord’s Prayer with special focus on “Give us this day our daily bread.” **Ask:** How can you help serve those who are poor in your community?
- **November 15–November 21: Discover Catholic Schools Week**
- **November 17: Saint Elizabeth of Hungary** – A queen who took bread to the hungry every day, Elizabeth died young but did much good in her short life. **Ask:** What good can you do even though you’re young?
- **November 18: Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne (USA)** – A member of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Rose was sent from her home in France to the United States in 1818. She founded many schools, did charitable work, and ministered to Native Americans.



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify talents they possess and activities they enjoy.
- Recognize that friends help one another.

 Begin *Promise* class by gathering in a prayer circle. Play and sing "Yes, Lord, I Believe" (CD-2, #26).

Gathering Prayer Invite a child to point to the current Sunday on a Church Year calendar. **Pray:** "Dear God, thank you for making each of us special. Thank you for making us members of this special group. Help us learn more about you today." The children respond, "Amen."

Activity • Everyone Has Talents **Ask:** Do you know what a talent is? Most children have heard of a talent show. They will define *talent* as some public activity a person is good at—singing, dancing, spelling. Help the children to expand their ideas of talent by asking the following questions and accepting answers from two children per question:

- Miller can spell *Mississippi*, and Julia can draw on a computer. Does Miller have a talent? Does Julia have a talent?
- Hailey can get her baby brother to drink his bottle, and Samuel can tap dance. Does Hailey have a talent? Does Samuel have a talent?
- Karlotta can help her grandma make braided rugs, and Isaiah can make his grandpa laugh. Does Karlotta have a talent? Does Isaiah have a talent?

Give more examples if you wish. Conclude by telling the children that a talent is anything good a person can do. God wants us all to use our talents to help one another, to get along with one another, and to have fun.

Story • Friends Share with One Another (page 1)

Ask: What makes someone a good friend? What do friends do with one another and for one another? *Share food and games; be loyal, not let one another down.* Tell this story about two friends:

Maria and Mateo live in San Francisco where it rains a lot. One day, Maria was over at Mateo's house playing in his backyard. They noticed the sky was getting dark, but they were having so much fun that they didn't notice the raindrops until they came down hard and fast. "Let's go!" Mateo yelled, and he took off running to the house. Maria followed right behind. By the time they got through the back door, Maria's hair was wet and Mateo's shirt was sticking to his back.

Mateo's mother made hot chocolate for them. They watched the rain run down the windows as they drank the chocolate. "My mom said I should be home by 4:30," Maria said. "How can I walk home in

the rain?" Mateo laughed. "I know how you can get home," he said. "I will be right back." Maria heard Mateo talking to his mother. Then she heard cupboards opening and closing. "What is Mateo doing?" Maria wondered. Then Mateo appeared. He had a yellow raincoat, a yellow hat, and a big red and yellow umbrella in his hand. "I can walk you home," Mateo said. "The coat and hat will keep me dry, and the umbrella will keep the rain off you." Maria smiled. "Good idea!" she said. The two friends walked down the block to Maria's house.

Ask: When has a friend helped you out? Listen to two or three stories, then conclude by telling the children that being a good friend is a talent too. It is a talent God gave us that we can practice and get really good at.

Move to the work area. Distribute pages 1–2 of *Promise* and crayons. Invite the children to color the cover pictures.

Activity • What do I like to do? (page 2) Explain that God has given each of us special talents. Invite the children to name the special talents the drawings around the picture frame illustrate. **Ask:** Which one of these talents do you have? Talk together about other things they like to do. Distribute pencils and direct them to write a word or sentence about something they like to do. Then invite them to draw a picture of themselves doing that activity or something they use in the activity.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Recognize that God calls us to use our talents.
- Identify care for the earth and one another as ways to share our talents for good.

 Play and sing "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24) to prepare for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Sunday Gospel • Parable of the Talents Gather the children in a story circle. Tell them that our talents are gifts from God. God asks us to use these talents and share them with others. Tell them that Jesus once told a story about using our talents.

Once there was a man who decided to go on a long trip. He called in three of his servants and said: "I trust you with my business while I am gone. Amos, I give you five talents. Samuel, I give you two talents. Joshua, I give you one talent." A talent was a very large amount of money.

Then the man left on his trip. Amos said to the other servants, "I will take my five talents and use them to earn more." Samuel said, "I will use my two talents to earn more too." Joshua said: "I am going to bury my talent. I don't want to lose it."

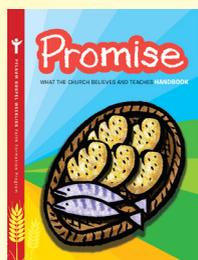
After a long time, the man came home. He called his workers together. Amos told him, "Look, you gave me five talents, and I have earned five more." The man said to Amos: "Well done, my good and faithful servant. I trust you to do important work for me. Come and share my joy." Samuel told the man, "I doubled the money you gave me too." The man said: "Well done, my good and faithful servant. I will trust you with more. Come and share my joy."

Joshua stepped up and said: "Sir, I know you are a tough boss. I was afraid I would lose your money, so I buried it. Here it is." The man said to Joshua: "What a lazy servant! Give your talent to Amos and leave me. I do not trust you anymore."

Word of the Week • service (page 2) Help the children locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition with them: *We offer service when we help one another.*

Activity • Sway and Sing Tell the children that Jesus washed the feet of his friends to teach them that he wanted them (and us) to be servants. Play "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19). Invite them to sing along and sway in place to the music.

 **Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks.**



What the Church Believes and Teaches

God Asks Us to Love (page 11)

Direct the children to turn to page 11 in their Catechism handbooks. Read aloud the title. **Ask:** Who knows the story of Noah? Invite a volunteer to share what they know. Assist as needed.

Explain that after the flood, God asked Noah and his family to take care of the earth. Just like the man in the Gospel who wanted his servants to use their talents to take care of his business, God wants his servants—us—to take care of his Creation today. **Ask:** How do you take care of the earth, water, and air? Plants and animals? God's people?

Invite each child to choose one way he or she takes care of the earth. Distribute crayons and direct the children to each draw a picture of that. Then invite each child to draw one way he or she takes care of another person. Encourage the children to illustrate things they really do, not things they may do someday.

Gather in a circle. Invite the children to take turns sharing their drawings. Let each child choose one picture to describe to the group. Follow each presentation with positive and encouraging comments.

 **Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, pages 3–4.**

Live the Gospel

Objective The children will demonstrate different talents.

Gospel Activity • Hide It! A Game of Sharing Your Talents (pages 3-4) Distribute pages 3–4 of *Promise*. Invite the children to look at all the picture cards on pages 3 and 4. Explain that each card shows a special talent. Read the words on each card with the children. Explain that the Hide It! card will be used in the game. Distribute scissors and direct the children to cut out the cards. Form groups of three, four, or five. Direct the children in each group to put their cards in a small box.

Players take turns drawing a card, choosing one of the two activities pictured (front or back of card), and pantomiming it so the other players can guess what it is. Demonstrate that pantomiming means doing an action without sound. When other players guess the activity, the player pantomiming may keep the card. A player who draws the Hide It! card must return all of his or her cards to the box. The winner is the player with the most cards when all the cards have been drawn or when time is up.

Provide envelopes so the children can take their games home to play with their families.

Closing Prayer Form a prayer circle and **pray:** "God gives us many talents. We thank God for these special gifts. We will try our best always to share." The children respond, "Amen."

 Conclude your prayer and gathering by playing and singing "CHOICES" (CD-1, #16).

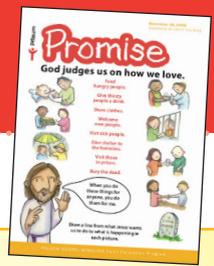
Family Corner

Remind the children to share their *Gospel Weeklies* with their families, do the Family Corner activities and prayer, and read the Eucharist Quote together.

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #29 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

Sunday's Gospel compares the Last Judgment to a shepherd separating sheep from goats. In the story, the shepherd distinguishes the sheep not by the curl in their woolly coats but by their merciful actions. The sheep are people who have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, sheltered the stranger, clothed the naked, and visited the sick and imprisoned. Jesus offers us a clear message for how we should treat other people.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

Jesus wants us to treat other people as he would treat them. The Works of Mercy show us practical ways to love others every day. When we show love to people who are in need, we show love to Jesus.

"On the Last Day Jesus will say: 'Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me'" (CCC, 678, citing Matthew 25:40). "When he comes at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, the glorious Christ will reveal the secret disposition of hearts and will render to each man according to his works and according to his acceptance or refusal of grace" (CCC, 682).

Sharing the Lesson with Families

Encourage parents to ask their child to lead them through this week's *Promise*. Suggest that they and their child identify ways members of their family perform the Works of Mercy. Encourage them to begin discussing a way to prepare for Christmas by doing a Work of Mercy during Advent.

Materials

- *Promise* Student Lesson for 11/22
- Catechism handbook, page 21
- audio player & *Promise/Good News* CDs
- pencils, crayons
- Church Year calendar
- story coloring page (one per child)

Suggested Music

- "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19)
- "God's Love Is..." (CD-2, #6)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)

Lesson Resources

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #22
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (10-15 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19)
- Story • The Thank-You Box

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (25-30 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches the Works of Mercy
- Cover Activity • What Does Jesus Want Us to Do? (page 1)

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 21.

- Word of the Week • saint (page 2)

Live the Gospel (15-20 minutes)

- Activity • I can do Works of Mercy. (pages 2-3)
- Activity • Make a crown for Jesus. (page 4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19)

Take-Home

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #22
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (15-20 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19)
- Story • The Thank-You Box
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "God's Love Is..." (CD-2, #6)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (40-45 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches the Works of Mercy
- Cover Activity • What Does Jesus Want Us to Do? (page 1)

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 21.

- Word of the Week • saint (page 2)
- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #22

Live the Gospel (15-20 minutes)

- Activity • I can do Works of Mercy. (pages 2-3)
- Activity • Make a crown for Jesus. (page 4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • “Serving Each Other” (CD-1, #19)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-10)
- Story • The Thank-You Box
- Activity • Stretch and Sing “God’s Love Is...” (CD-2, #6)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the people who help us. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the people who help us. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Gospel Ritual • “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches the Works of Mercy
- Cover Activity • What Does Jesus Want Us to Do? (page 1)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for showing us how to help others. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for showing us how to help others. Amen.* (Repeat.)



Distribute the students’ *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 21.

- Word of the Week • saint (page 2)
- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #22
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for giving us things we can share. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for giving us things we can share. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Activity • I can do Works of Mercy. (pages 2–3)
- Activity • Make a crown for Jesus. (page 4)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to find ways to help and share with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to find ways to help and share with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-11)
- Closing Song • “Serving Each Other” (CD-1, #19)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Curriculum Connections

- ELA: Have the children make a list of ways they help one another. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.w.k.7)
- SS: Read aloud a book that focuses on a character who needs and receives help (for example, in the book *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes, the title character needs help appreciating her name, and a teacher helps her). Discuss with the children why we should help one another and how a person who receives help may feel. (D2.Civ.2.k-2)

Extending Activities

(gospelweeklies.com/promise)

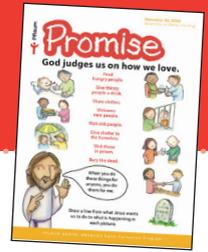
Catholic Identity Project of the Week

As a class, choose one Work of Mercy to do during Advent. Ideas could include drawing cards for people living in nursing homes, making sandwiches for a local soup kitchen, or collecting outgrown clothes to donate.

Extending the Lesson

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- **November 23: Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro (USA)** – Born in Mexico in 1891, Miguel became a Jesuit priest at a time when the Mexican government was very anti-Catholic. Miguel carried on his ministry undercover. Arrested and facing the firing squad, his last words were “Viva Cristo Rey!” which mean “Long live Christ the King!”
- **November 24: Saint Andrew Dũng-Lạc and Companions** – Father Andrew was among 117 people killed for their Christian faith in Vietnam between 1820 and 1862. He was tortured and beheaded in 1839. **Act:** Research Saint Andrew and his many companion saints.
- **November 28: Saint James of the Marche** – This fifteenth-century saint established “mountains of charity,” charitable pawnbrokers for people who needed low-interest loans. **Pray:** Dear God, bless those who do not have food, clean water, or housing. Amen.



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify ways they can share with people in need.
- Identify how they feel when they share.

 Gather in a prayer circle. Play and sing "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19) to begin your class session.

Gathering Prayer Invite a child to point to the current Sunday on a Church Year calendar. Explain that this Sunday is a special celebration of Jesus Christ as our King. Tell the children that this is the last Sunday of the Church Year. A new Church Year begins next Sunday. **Pray:** "Jesus our King, you taught us by your example that we are to serve others. Help us to always look for ways we can help." The children respond, "Amen."

Story • The Thank-You Box A coloring page to accompany this story is available at gospelweeklies.com/lesson-updates. Remain in the circle. Introduce today's story to the children:

I am going to tell you a story about two brothers named Dalton and Drew. I want you to pretend that you are Dalton as I read this story. Think about how you would feel and what you might say. Now listen carefully as I tell you the story.

Dalton Nelson had a problem. His brother Drew had made a project for his sixth-grade religion class. It was a Thank-You Box. On one side of a big cardboard box, Drew had drawn pictures of all kinds of food. On the other side, he drew pictures of mittens and hats, shoes and sweaters. On one end of the box, Drew had drawn a soccer ball and hockey skates. Drew wrote "Thank You, God!" in big letters on the other end of the box. Dalton helped him color the letters.

But now that the box was finished, Dalton had a problem. Drew wanted Dalton to put some of his own things in the box, and Dalton didn't want to. "You have two soccer balls," Drew said to Dalton. "Put one of them in the box. We will take the box to church. Father Bill will give the things in the box to a family that doesn't have toys or clothes." Dalton made a face. "What if my other soccer ball gets a hole in it?" he asked. "Then I won't have any at all." (Ask: Can you show me with your faces how Dalton is feeling?)

Drew pointed to the picture of the sweater he had drawn on the box. "What about your hockey sweater from last year?" Drew said. "It doesn't fit you anymore. It's just lying on the floor in your closet." Dalton said, "That's my favorite sweater. You can't take that."

Just then, Mom came in the room. "No one is going to take anything away from you, Dalton," Mom said, "but I did find all these

jackets and mittens and hats in the hall closet. Let's see which ones you will wear this year. You can choose what you want to put in the Thank-You Box. Then we will go to the kitchen and the family room and find food and toys for the box too. Is that OK?" (Ask: What might Dalton say to his mom?) Dalton went with Mom. Soon he felt happy and excited that the Thank-You Box was full. (Ask: Can you show me with your faces how Dalton feels now?)

Ask: Why didn't Dalton want to put his things in the box at the beginning of the story? How did Dalton feel about sharing his clothes and toys at the end of the story? What do you have that you could share with someone who doesn't have as much?

Activity • Stretch and Sing Move to an area where the children can stretch out their arms and not touch another child. Lead them in singing and moving to "God's Love Is..." (CD-2, #6).

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Recognize Jesus' call to act with mercy.
- Recognize the Corporal Works of Mercy.
- Dramatize how children follow Jesus' teachings.
- Identify saints as Jesus' followers in Heaven.

 Play and sing "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24) to prepare for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches the Works of Mercy Explain to the children that Jesus' friends often asked him who would be in his kingdom. In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus makes the answer very clear.

One day, Jesus told his followers what it will be like when he comes again.

He said: "I will gather all the people of the world together. Then I will say to some of them: 'You have my Father's blessing. Come to the kingdom we have prepared for you. I was hungry, and you gave me food. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you welcomed me. I was naked, and you gave me clothes. I was sick, and you took care of me.'

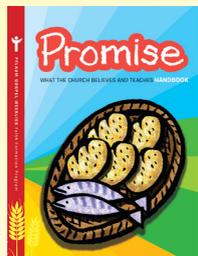
The people will ask, 'Jesus, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or sick or any of these things?' I will answer, 'Whenever you did one of these things for someone in need, you did it for me.'

Then I will say: 'Not all of you can come into my kingdom. Some of you saw me when I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. You saw me thirsty and didn't give me a drink. I was a stranger, had no clothes, and was sick, and you didn't help me.'

Those people will ask, 'Jesus, when did we see you like this and not help you?' I will tell them, 'What you did not do for someone in need, you did not do for me.'"

Ask: What ways of helping others did Jesus give us in the Gospel? Read the Gospel again to remind the children of any ways they might not have remembered. Explain that these are some of the Works of Mercy. *Mercy* means being willing to forgive or help. It means treating others like God treats us. When we use the word *works*, we mean actions, things we do. So the Works of Mercy are actions Jesus wants us to do to help others.

Cover Activity • What Does Jesus Want Us to Do? (page 1) Move to the work area, distribute *Promise* and invite the children to look at the cover. **Ask:** What do you see? Are any of the people acting like Drew and Dalton's family? What other sharing things are happening? Call attention to Jesus and read aloud his words. **Ask:** What does Jesus mean when he says "these things"? Read aloud the Works of Mercy in red. Distribute pencils and direct the children to draw lines from the sentences to the pictures that match. Emphasize that what we do for others, we do for Jesus.



What the Church Believes and Teaches

Jesus Teaches Us (page 21)

Invite the children to open their Catechism handbooks to page 21. Read aloud the text to the children. When you get to the red hearts, invite them to close their eyes and imagine what each teaching of Jesus looks and feels like.

Invite volunteers to act out examples of these eight ways to follow Jesus. The rest of the class may guess which of Jesus' teachings is being demonstrated.

Read aloud the directions for the activity on page 21. Distribute crayons and give the children time to complete the activity. You may wish to go through this activity together as a class and discuss what is happening in each picture. Refer back to the list of eight teachings marked with red hearts. For each picture, **ask:** Which teaching is the child following? Which teaching is the child not following?

Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, page 2.

Word of the Week • saint (page 2) Help the children locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition with them: *A saint is a person who lived like Jesus and is now in Heaven.* Explain that following Jesus' teachings and doing the Works of Mercy will help them become saints in Heaven someday.

Live the Gospel

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify people doing Works of Mercy.
- Show that Jesus is their king through kind actions.

Activity • I can do Works of Mercy. (pages 2-3) Gather the children in the work area and direct them to open *Promise* to pages 2-3. Tell them this is a town where people help one another. Give them a moment to study the town. Then read aloud the question on page 2 and direct the children to find the people in the town who are doing each of the Works of Mercy. After the discussion, direct the children to look at the four small pictures on page 3. Tell them to find people in the town who are sharing what is pictured in each square.

Activity • Make a crown for Jesus. (page 4)

Explain that this Sunday is a special celebration of Jesus Christ as King. Read aloud the title and directions for this activity. Distribute pencils or crayons and direct the children to trace the letters of Jesus' name on the crown. Encourage the children to color in the jewels of Jesus' crown by doing kind actions this week.

Closing Prayer Gather in a prayer circle. **Pray:** "Jesus, thank you for all your gifts to us. Help us to show our love for you by doing the Works of Mercy for others." The children respond, "Amen."

 Play and sing "Serving Each Other" (CD-1, #19) to conclude your session and prayer.

Extending Activities (gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #22 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

On this Sunday, the Church begins preparing for the feast of Christmas, the celebration of God becoming human. Advent also exhorts us to prepare for Jesus' coming in glory at the end of time. Being ready for Christ's Second Coming is the theme of Sunday's Gospel.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

Jesus came over 2,000 years ago as a human baby. During Advent, we get ready to celebrate Jesus' birth. Jesus promises to come again at the end of time. In Advent, we make sure that we are ready to welcome him when he comes again. We call that his Second Coming.

"[Jesus] calls his hearers to conversion and faith, but also to watchfulness. In prayer the disciple keeps watch, attentive to Him Who Is and Him Who Comes, in memory of his first coming in the lowliness of the flesh, and in the hope of his second coming in glory" (CCC, 2612).

Sharing the Lesson with Families

Encourage parents to talk with their child about the Advent calendar and complete a square each day. Suggest that they tell the stories of the saints on their feast days and make an Advent wreath for their home, lighting a new candle each Sunday.

Materials

- *Promise* Student Lesson for 11/29
- Catechism handbook, page 18
- audio player & *Promise/Good News* CDs
- crayons, pencils
- scissors, tape or stapler
- large envelopes, heavy paper/cardboard
- Church Year calendar, paper candles

NOTE: Separate pages 1–2 from 3–4. Cut pinwheels in advance. (optional)

Suggested Music

- "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)

Lesson Resources

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #31
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (20–25 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Word of the Week • Church Year (page 4)
- Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time to Get Ready (page 1)
- Story • We Get Ready for Christmas (page 2)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (15–20 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Will Come Again



Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 18.

Live the Gospel (20–25 minutes)

- Activity • Advent Booklet (pages 3–4, top)
- Activity • Our Class Advent Wreath (pages 3–4, bottom)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)

Take-Home

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #31
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 4 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (25–30 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Word of the Week • Church Year (page 4)
- Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time to Get Ready (page 1)
- Story • We Get Ready for Christmas (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (35–40 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Will Come Again



Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 18.

- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #31

Live the Gospel (20–25 minutes)

- Activity • Advent Booklet (pages 3–4, top)
- Activity • Our Class Advent Wreath (pages 3–4, bottom)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 4 together.

Lesson Theme: Jesus promises to come again.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • “The Promise, Part 2” (CD-1, #2)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-14)
- Word of the Week • Church Year (page 4)
- Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time to Get Ready (page 1)
- Story • We Get Ready for Christmas (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing “Walk on to Bethlehem” (CD-1, #6)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for all the good things we wait for. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for all the good things we wait for. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Gospel Ritual • “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Will Come Again
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the gift of Jesus, our brother. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the gift of Jesus, our brother. Amen.* (Repeat.)



Distribute the students’ *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 18.

- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #31
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for Jesus, the Light of the World. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for Jesus, the Light of the World. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Activity • Advent Booklet (pages 3–4, top)
- Activity • Our Class Advent Wreath (pages 3–4, bottom)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to shine the light of love brightly. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to shine the light of love brightly. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-15)
- Closing Song • “The Promise, Part 2” (CD-1, #2)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 4 together.

Curriculum Connections

- ELA: As a class, write a prayer to Jesus expressing the children’s excitement about celebrating his birth this Christmas. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.w.k.1)
- Sci: Ask the children for ways they can mark the passage of time. Identify several suggestions (e.g., the position of the sun, the temperature in your classroom) and, for a few days, mark the passage of time using these suggestions instead of the clock. Direct them to observe the seasonal patterns of sunrise and sunset by recording times, describing and predicting what will happen the next day. (ESS1.B)

Extending Activities

(gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Catholic Identity Project of the Week

We do not always know when we will be able to see the people we care about. Invite each child to draw a picture to send to a family member or friend he or she has not seen in a while. Send these drawings home and ask the families to help the children mail them.

Extending the Lesson

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- December 1: Blessed Charles de Foucauld
Born in 1858 to a French aristocratic family, Charles rejected the Catholic faith as a teen and joined the French army. Jews and Muslims he met in Algeria and Morocco inspired his return to Catholicism. He wished to imitate the “hidden life”—the ordinary life—of Jesus in Nazareth. He was shot to death at his hermitage in 1916. He will be canonized soon.
- December 3: Saint Francis Xavier – Francis was born to a noble family in Spain. He was one of the first Jesuits and became a missionary to Asia, traveling first to India and later Japan. He died on his way to China to share the Good News there. He is the patron saint of foreign missions.



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objectives • The children will:

- Explore what Advent means to them.
- Identify Advent as a time of getting ready for Jesus.

 Play and sing "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2) to begin each Advent session. It will help the children understand Advent as a time of preparing for our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Gathering Prayer Invite a child to point to the current Sunday on a Church Year calendar. **Pray:** "Jesus, we are getting ready to celebrate your birthday at Christmas. We know you came to be with us because you love us. We love you too. Come, Lord Jesus." The children respond, "Amen."

Word of the Week • Church Year (page 4)

Help the children locate the Word of the Week on page 4. Explain that we start a new Church Year on the First Sunday of Advent. Share this definition with them: *The Church Year helps us to remember and celebrate Jesus' life.*

Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time to Get Ready (page 1) Move to the story circle. Before distributing *Promise*, **ask:** Does anyone know what Advent is? Print the word *Advent* on the board.

Distribute pages 1–2 of *Promise*. Invite volunteers to tell about one of the cover photos and read the caption below it. **Ask:** What is the child waiting for? What do we wait for during Advent? What is different about the candles in the picture? What kind of songs might the girl be singing? What does that photo tell us about Advent? What might be in the gift box?

Story • We Get Ready for Christmas (page 2)

Direct the children to place their copies of *Promise* so they can see the photos on the cover. Tell them you will share a story about a brother and sister who wanted Christmas to come.

Todd and Kayla were two children who had a big problem. Christmas was too far away. "I want Christmas to be tomorrow," Todd told his mom. "Why can't we have our presents now?" Kayla asked her dad. "Christmas is four weeks away," Mom said. "This is only the First Sunday of Advent." Kayla whined, "I want Christmas to come fast." Dad and Mom didn't know what to do with such impatient children.

That night after supper, Dad cleared a space on the kitchen table. He put down a big piece of paper. He used a ruler to make lines going across the paper and then lines going up and down. "You are making a calendar," Todd guessed. "Yes, I am," Dad said.

"I am making an Advent calendar. It will help make Christmas come faster." Dad wrote the days of the week across the top of the calendar page and put numbers in the squares.

"Now we need to fill in the squares," Dad said. "What is something you like about getting ready for Christmas?" Todd said, "I like baking Christmas cookies." Kayla said, "I like putting up the Nativity scene." Mom said, "I like getting Christmas cards from our friends and family. I even like writing Christmas cards." Dad smiled. "You have the right idea. We will write all those ideas and more on our Advent calendar. When we do them all, Christmas will be here."

Ask: What would you add to the Advent calendar? When all who wish have contributed, invite them to turn over their copies of *Promise* and look at the calendar on page 2. Take plenty of time to allow them to absorb all that is pictured. Then start with the single candle at the top left and the picture next to it. The boy is lighting one candle for the first Sunday of Advent. Distribute a red, orange, or yellow crayon to each child and direct them to color the flame on the single candle.

Go through the Advent calendar square by square, identifying the actions that are happening or the saint the children will learn about later in the lesson. Note that Saint Nicholas's feast day is really December 6, but it falls on a Sunday this year, so he appears on December 5—the day children put out shoes or stockings for his visit that night. Tell the children that each time they do an action, they may color the frame around the little picture. Since they lit the first candle, they may take their crayons and color the frame around the first picture. It really does not matter if they do the actions on the days specified.

Give each child a big envelope with his or her name on it. Direct the children to slip the pages you have been using inside the envelope. At the end of this session, they can also put their booklets in the envelopes so that all the pages get home safely.

Activity • Stretch and Sing Invite the children to walk in place while singing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6).

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Recognize that Jesus will come again.
- Identify ways to get ready for Jesus' coming.

 Play and sing "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24) to help the children prepare for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Sunday Gospel • Jesus Will Come Again The Gospel for the First Sunday of Advent is always about Jesus' Second Coming in glory at the end of time. This can be confusing for children, who do not have much sense of time and historical eras. Introduce this Gospel by reviewing the Gospel stories of the October and November *Promise* lessons. Jesus knew he wouldn't be around all the time to tell us stories and answer questions.

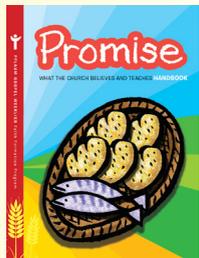
Jesus told his friends that he would come again.

He said: "Get ready! Pay attention! You do not know when this time will be. It will be like a man who puts his servants in charge when he goes on a trip. He gives them work to do. He tells them to always be ready for him to come home. Do not let me find you sleeping when you should be working."

Ask: What can we do to get ready for Jesus? What will Jesus want to know when he comes again? What would you like to be doing when Jesus comes?



Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks.



What the Church Believes and Teaches

Holy Seasons: Advent and Christmas (page 18)

Ask: What are some special celebrations you remember and look forward to every year? Point out that many of these are *holidays*, but first of all they are *holy days*. Their celebrations should include going to church.

Remind the children of the Advent calendar on page 2 of *Promise*. Then show them the Church Year calendar. It is full of holy days and holy times. Help them find the Sundays of Advent and the days of Christmas Time.

Direct the children to turn to page 18 in their Catechism handbooks. Distribute crayons and talk about the pictures for the matching activity for *Advent* and *Christmas*. Make sure the children understand:

- We light one candle of the Advent wreath each Sunday of Advent until, on the fourth Sunday, we light all four candles. As the light from the Advent wreath grows, we are getting closer to Christmas. The wreath is round and green, to represent eternal life and God's never-ending love.
- A Nativity scene (also crèche, crib, manger scene), shows the birth of Jesus as described in the Bible.



Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, pages 3–4.

Live the Gospel

Objective The children will create an Advent booklet and contribute to an Advent wreath.

Activity • Advent Booklet (pages 3–4, top) Gather in the work area. Distribute pages 3–4 of *Promise* and scissors. Show the children how to make the one horizontal cut on the heavy black line. Set the Christmas wreath activity aside. Show the children how to fold the page they have to make a booklet. Read the Our Advent Prayer together.

Invite the children to open the booklet. Read aloud the title. Some of the little pictures are the same as those on the Advent calendar. Read the stories of the saints. Note that Saint Lucy's feast day is on a Sunday this year, so she is not pictured on the calendar.

Conclude this activity by reading the directions for the word search on the back page of the booklet. Distribute pencils and direct the children to work alone or in pairs to find the hidden words.

Activity • Our Class Advent Wreath (pages 3–4, bottom) Distribute scissors if you have not already cut the activity in advance. Lead the children through cutting and folding their pinwheels. Then help them print their names. Tape or staple the pinwheel wreath on heavy paper or cardboard so you can carry it. Add four candles made from rolled paper (three violet, one rose). "Light" a violet candle for the First Sunday of Advent. Direct the children to put the Family Corner and Eucharist Quote in their envelopes.

Closing Prayer Invite the children to bring their Advent booklets to the prayer circle. Gather around the Advent wreath and pray the prayer together. Distribute the envelopes with the Advent calendars and have the children tuck their booklets inside.



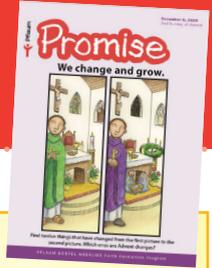
End your gathering and prayer by singing "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2).

Extending Activities (gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #31 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

In Sunday's Gospel, John the Baptist tells people to prepare for someone powerful and good who is coming. "Be ready for him," John says, echoing the words of the prophet Isaiah.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

John the Baptist used water to baptize people who were sorry for their sins. John said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. We are baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

"The fire of the Spirit dwells in [John] and makes him the forerunner of the coming Lord. In John, the precursor, the Holy Spirit completes the work of [making] ready a people prepared for the Lord" (CCC, 718, citing Luke 1:17).

Sharing the Lesson with Families

Encourage parents to praise their child for the ways he or she shows growth—sharing with others, helping at home, forgiving, and joining in family meal or bedtime prayers. Suggest that they affirm their child for doing the actions named on Advent Calendar picture squares this week.

Materials

- Promise Student Lesson for 12/6
- Catechism handbook, page 22 (top)
- audio player & Promise/Good News CDs
- pencils, scissors
- Advent calendar from 11/29
- Advent wreath, Church Year calendar

NOTE: Separate pages 1–2 from 3–4.

Suggested Music

- "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)

Lesson Resources

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #7
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (15–20 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time of Change and Growth (page 1)
- Activity • I grow up! (page 2)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (20–25 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Make a Straight Path for God
- Word of the Week • Holy Spirit (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 22.

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Saint Story • Our Lady of Guadalupe (pages 3–4)
- Activity • Advent Calendar
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)

Take-Home

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #7
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (20–25 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time of Change and Growth (page 1)
- Activity • I grow up! (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (45–50 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Make a Straight Path for God
- Word of the Week • Holy Spirit (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 22.

- Activity • Promise Activity Book, Activity #7

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Saint Story • Our Lady of Guadalupe (pages 3–4)
- Activity • Advent Calendar
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-18)
- Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time of Change and Growth (page 1)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for sending Jesus to be our friend and brother. Amen. (Repeat.)*

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for sending Jesus to be our friend and brother. Amen. (Repeat.)*
- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Make a Straight Path for God
- Word of the Week • Holy Spirit (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for people who help us prepare for Jesus. Amen. (Repeat.)*

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for people who help us prepare for Jesus. Amen. (Repeat.)*



Distribute the students' *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 22.

- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #7
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for Mary, our mother. Amen. (Repeat.)*

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for Mary, our mother. Amen. (Repeat.)*
- Saint Story • Our Lady of Guadalupe (pages 3–4)
- Activity • Advent Calendar
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to say yes to you like Mary did. Amen. (Repeat.)*

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to say yes to you like Mary did. Amen. (Repeat.)*
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-19)
- Closing Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Curriculum Connections

- ELA: Have the children complete two sentence starters:
To prepare for guests, my family _____.
My favorite thing to do with guests is _____.
(CCSS.ELA-Literacy.w.k.8)
- SS: Explain to the children that many people waited for Jesus to be born (Mary, Joseph, his cousin John, Jewish prophets, etc.). Ask them to make a list of people who waited for them to be born (e.g., parents, grandparents, friends, neighbors, doctors). (D2.Civ.2.K-2)

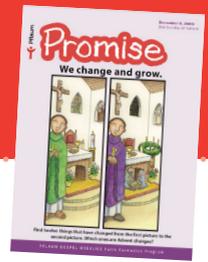
Catholic Identity Project of the Week

As a group, identify things the children can do for their families or in their communities to prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas. Activities could include cleaning, donating gifts to the needy, baking cookies for loved ones, or making cards.

Extending the Lesson

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- **December 8: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary** – This Holy Day of Obligation celebrates Mary's conception without sin by the power of the Holy Spirit. Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception is patron saint of the United States. **Pray:** Hail Mary . . .
- **December 10: Our Lady of Loreto** – During the Crusades, the home of Mary and site of the Annunciation was brought to Loreto, Italy. It has become the third largest shrine to Mary in Europe. **Ask:** How can you imitate the virtues of Mary?
- **December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe** – Our Lady appeared to Saint Juan Diego near modern-day Mexico City. It took two miracles to convince the local bishop to believe Juan's story. **Act:** Share your faith with someone this week.



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify Advent changes in the church.
- Identify signs of their own physical growth.

 Gather in a circle. Play and sing "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2) to begin your class gathering. As you finish the song, "light" the second violet candle on your Advent wreath.

Gathering Prayer Invite a child to point to the current Sunday on a Church Year calendar. The children respond, "We are waiting" to each line of the prayer: Come, Jesus, come. / Mary and Joseph are ready. / The crib is ready for you. / And we are ready too.

Cover Activity • Advent Is a Time of Change and Growth (page 1) Gather in a storytelling circle and distribute pages 1–2 of *Promise*. Invite the children to look at the cover pictures. **Ask:** Do you see any changes from the first picture to the second picture? Look for them as a group. There are twelve changes. As you find each one, **ask:** Is this an Advent change? Explain the Advent changes very simply to the children. **Answers:** (1) The priest's chasuble is now violet (purple). (Advent) (2) A different saint is on the wall. (3) The chair is different. (4) An Advent wreath replaced the Easter candle. (Advent) (5) A Nativity scene replaced some of the flowers. (Advent-Christmas) (6) The flowers are now red. (Poinsettias are a common Christmas flower.) (7) Who moved the chalice? (8) The symbol on the priest's chasuble is different. (9) The priest changed his shoes. (Advent is in December, a colder time.) (10) The priest's hands look more relaxed. (11) It is night outside the window. (Advent is in December, a darker time.) (12) There is one fewer step into the sanctuary.

Activity • I grow up! (page 2) Move to the work area. **Ask:** How do you know that your body is growing? Direct the children to look at the top part of page 2 and identify the actions. Distribute pencils and direct them to check the box next to each picture that shows something they can do. Then have them look at the box about teeth on the bottom part of the page and read aloud the sentence. Invite the children to count the number of teeth they have that are either loose or missing, write the number, and circle that number of tooth shapes.

Invite the children to look at the ruler on the top of page 2. Direct them to look at the handprint and footprint at bottom left. Distribute scissors and direct them to cut out the ruler, use it to measure the length of their hands and feet, record the measurements, and add today's date.

Ask: What are some other ways we can grow? *Knowledge, kindness, love for God, abilities, etc.*

Activity • Stretch and Sing Lead the children around the room as you play and sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6).

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify that obeying God gets us ready for Jesus.
- Recognize that we grow when we ask God to forgive our sins.

 Play and sing "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24) to prepare for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Sunday Gospel • Make a Straight Path for God Gather the children and tell the Gospel:

Long ago, the prophet Isaiah wrote about a messenger from God.

Isaiah wrote: "God's messenger will shout in the desert, 'Get a road ready for God. Make God a straight path.'"

This is just what John the Baptist did. He lived in the desert. He wore a shirt made of camel hair and ate grasshoppers and honey. People came to him to find out how to get ready for God.

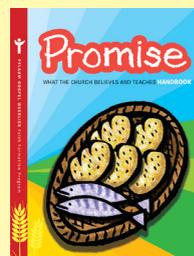
John told them: "I baptize you with water to show you are sorry for your sins. Someone who is more powerful is coming. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Ask: What do you think people thought about John the Baptist? How do you think people could get ready for Jesus back then? How do we get ready for Jesus today?

Word of the Week • Holy Spirit (page 2) Help the children locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition with them: *When Jesus went back to Heaven, he gave us a special helper. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray and do what is good.*

Activity • Stretch and Sing Lead the children to their worktables while singing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6).

 **Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks.**



What the Church Believes and Teaches

Jesus Wants Us to Do the Right Thing (page 22, top)

Direct the children to find page 22 in their Catechism handbooks. Read aloud the title, then **ask**: What are some of the ways that Jesus obeyed his Father in Heaven?

- He came to earth as a human child.
- He preached the Kingdom of God.
- He showed us the love of the Father.
- He died on the Cross to save all of us.
- He returned to his Father in Heaven.

Read aloud the first paragraph on page 22. Help the children understand that we can choose to obey God every day. We can choose to do what is right and good. This is an important way we can get ready for Jesus.

Ask: Do we always obey God? *No.* Read aloud the second paragraph on page 22. Explain sin as freely choosing to do what we know is wrong. It is going against what God wants and disobeying God. Tell the children that we can't judge whether an action is a sin by looking at how big a mess we made or how angry someone is with us. What makes an action a sin is choosing to do what we know is wrong.

Reread the last two lines of the second paragraph on page 22. Direct the children to sit very quietly and close their eyes. Invite them to think of a time they disobeyed God and sinned. Suggest that in their hearts, they tell God they are sorry and ask him to forgive them for their sins. Invite them to open their eyes when they are ready. Discuss their experience, focusing on their feelings.

Refer back to the definition of *Holy Spirit* and tell the children that they can pray to the Holy Spirit to help them do what is right and good.

 **Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, pages 3–4.**

Live the Gospel

Objective The children will relate the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe to one another.

Saint Story • Our Lady of Guadalupe (pages 3–4) Tell the children a special feast day for Mary is December 12. It is the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Read this story:

A long time ago, a poor Aztec Indian in Mexico was walking to Mass. His name was Juan Diego. It was December, and Juan was cold. All of a sudden, Juan heard birds singing and a voice calling him. "Juan," the voice said. "Little Juanito." It was a woman's voice, and she was speaking in the Aztec language. Juan looked up the hill, and there was a beautiful woman with a turquoise cloak full of stars. She had dark skin and dark eyes, just like Juan had.

The woman said, "Juan, I am Mary, the Mother of God. I want you to tell the bishop to build a church here in my honor."

Juan said, "Mother, he will not listen to me. I'm just a poor Indian. But I will go." Juan was right. The bishop wouldn't listen to him. "Go home. Don't waste my time," he said to Juan.

When Juan told the beautiful woman he had failed, she asked him to try again. So Juan went to the bishop a second time. The bishop said, "Bring me a sign to prove this woman is the Mother of God."

When Juan got back to the beautiful lady, he said, "Mother, you will have to send someone more important." "I have chosen you, Juanito," the lady said. "I will give you a sign for the bishop. Gather roses and take them to him." "But, Mother," Juan said, "roses don't grow in December." Then Juan looked around him. He saw bushes full of roses. He picked so many that he had to use his cloak to carry them. Juan took the roses to the bishop's house.

"What are you carrying in your cloak?" the bishop asked. Juan opened his cloak, and the roses spilled out. The bishop got down on his knees. Juan looked down and saw a picture of the woman on his cloak.

"I will build a church where the Mother of God appeared to you," the bishop told Juan. The church is still there today, and Juan Diego's cloak with the picture of the Mother of God is there too.

Invite the children to express their feelings about the story. Lead them in telling it to you, scene by scene. Emphasize that the Mother of God asked someone with no power to help her. Mary and Jesus both like little people.

Distribute pages 3–4 of *Promise* and scissors. Show the children how to make the horizontal cut. Then demonstrate how to fold the two pieces to make a booklet. Read through your booklets once together. Then invite the children to read the story with a partner.

Activity • Advent Calendar Call the children's attention to the Advent calendar from last week's *Promise*. **Ask**: Which getting-ready activities have you done? Encourage them to show their families Mary and Juan Diego's pictures on the Advent calendar and to read their storybook to them.

Closing Prayer Gather in a prayer circle. **Pray**: Our Lady of Guadalupe, please ask your son, Jesus, to help us grow as his followers." The children respond, "Amen."

 Close your prayer and gathering by playing and singing "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2).

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #7 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

This Sunday's Gospel again features John the Baptist who tells the Jews who come to listen to him that he is not the Messiah they are waiting for. *Promise* does not use this story but tells instead the part of the Christmas story that tells of Mary and Joseph's preparation for the birth of Jesus.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

Mary and Joseph prepare with joy for the birth of Baby Jesus. We prepare our homes and hearts for the celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas. We do this through acting with love, choosing to do what's right, obeying, asking for forgiveness when we've done wrong, and forgiving others.

"When the Church celebrates *the liturgy of Advent* each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming" (CCC, 524).

Sharing the Lesson with Families

Encourage parents to ask their child to tell them the story of the Just-Right Christmas Plate in which the littlest child makes a just-right plate. Suggest that they display their child's Getting-Ready Mobile.

Materials

- *Promise* Student Lesson for 12/13
- Catechism handbook, page 22 (middle)
- audio player & *Promise/Good News* CDs
- pencils, tape, Advent calendar from 11/29
- Advent wreath, Church Year calendar
- coat hangers or dowel rods, scissors
- yarn of varying lengths (five per child)
- aide(s) to help with mobile activity

NOTE: Separate pages 1–2 from 3–4.

Suggested Music

- "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)

Lesson Resources

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #18
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (15–20 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Cover Activity • We wait with joy. (page 1)
- Story • The Just-Right Christmas Plate (page 2)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (20–25 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Mary and Joseph Get Ready for Jesus

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 22.

- Word of the Week • Reconciliation (page 3)

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Activity • A Getting-Ready Mobile (pages 3–4)
- Activity • Advent Calendar
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)

Take-Home

- *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #18
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (20–25 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Cover Activity • We wait with joy. (page 1)
- Story • The Just-Right Christmas Plate (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Walk on to Bethlehem" (CD-1, #6)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (40–45 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Mary and Joseph Get Ready for Jesus

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 22.

- Word of the Week • Reconciliation (page 3)
- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #18

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Activity • A Getting-Ready Mobile (pages 3–4)
- Activity • Advent Calendar
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

Lesson Theme: We wait with joy.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • “The Promise, Part 2” (CD-1, #2)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-22)
- Cover Activity • We wait with joy. (page 1)
- Story • The Just-Right Christmas Plate (page 2)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing “Walk on to Bethlehem” (CD-1, #6)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to prepare for your coming with loving words and actions. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to prepare for your coming with loving words and actions. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Gospel Ritual • “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Mary and Joseph Get Ready for Jesus
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to prepare our hearts for your coming. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to prepare our hearts for your coming. Amen.* (Repeat.)



Distribute the students’ *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 22.

- Word of the Week • Reconciliation (page 3)
- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #18
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help our loving actions show our love for you and others. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help our loving actions show our love for you and others. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Activity • A Getting-Ready Mobile (pages 3–4)
- Activity • Advent Calendar
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to share the joy of Christmas with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to share the joy of Christmas with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-23)
- Closing Song • “The Promise, Part 2” (CD-1, #2)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

Curriculum Connections

- ELA: Have the children write and draw thank-you cards to God for all that God has made. Use them as prayer prompts in class. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.w.k.2)
- SS: Discuss with the children what kind of loving actions they can do to prepare their hearts for Jesus. Ask the children to tell you how they will perform those actions inside and outside of school. (D2.Civ.3.k-2)

Extending Activities

(gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Catholic Identity Project of the Week

Invite a priest to your class for a question-and-answer session. Help the children generate questions they would like to ask him. If you are unable to have a priest visit, send their questions to a retired priest or deacon.

Extending the Lesson

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- **December 13: Gaudete Sunday** – *Gaudete* (gow-DEH-tay) means “rejoice.” It’s also the first word in the entrance antiphon for today’s Mass: *Gaudete in Domino semper* means “Rejoice in the Lord, always.” **Pray:** Lord Jesus, we joyfully wait to celebrate your birth. Amen.
- **December 13: Saint Lucia** – In Sweden, Saint Lucia’s Day begins the celebration of Christmas. The oldest daughters dress in white robes and wear evergreen crowns filled with candles. Research Sweden’s Saint Lucia Day traditions.
- **December 14: Saint John of the Cross** – Saint John is one of thirty-six Doctors of the Church whose writing or preaching is relevant in all times. **Pray:** Lord, remind me to always speak (text, post, and tweet) in ways that honor you. Amen.



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objective The children will identify ways to prepare for Christmas with joy.

 Gather in a circle to sing “The Promise, Part 2” (CD-1, #2). As you finish the song, “light” the rose candle on your Advent wreath. Explain that rose is a color of joy. We light the rose candle this week because Christmas is getting closer.

Gathering Prayer Invite a child to point to the current Sunday on a Church Year calendar. Explain that this Sunday is also called Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete* means “Rejoice.” We feel joy because Christmas is almost here. Our waiting is almost over. **Pray:** “Dear Jesus, come into our hearts. Help us to know your love and share it with others. Help us to be kind and respectful as we wait with joy for your Christmas birthday.” The children respond, “Amen.”

Cover Activity • We wait with joy. (page 1) Gather the children in a circle. **Ask:** What do you do to get ready for birthdays? Visitors? A new baby? Vacation? Recall that Advent is the time for getting ready for the birthday of Jesus. Distribute pages 1–2 of *Promise* and pencils. Read aloud the title. **Ask:** What does *joy* mean? *Joy is a happiness that doesn't go away. Joy comes from knowing God, enjoying what God has done for us, and believing that God always cares for us.* **Ask:** How can we wait for Christmas with joy in our hearts? *Cooperate, be patient, enjoy all the preparations, smile, be kind and loving.*

Direct the children to look at the left side of the page. **Ask:** What do the six little pictures show about waiting with joy? Give the children time to draw lines between the getting-ready materials and the results.

Story • The Just-Right Christmas Plate (page 2) This week's story is in rebus form. If the children in your *Promise* group are reading well, you may wish to turn them loose with the page. Or you may decide to read the story aloud together. If your children enjoy being told a story, you can tell the story first and then show them how to retell it using the rebus.

After the story, **ask:** Why was Jon's plate the just-right Christmas plate? How do you think Jon felt when Madeline and David laughed at his plate? Do you think Madeline and David wished they had acted differently? What makes Christmas full of joy—all the presents or the loving ways people act toward one another?

Activity • Stretch and Sing Lead the children around the room as you play and sing “Walk on to Bethlehem” (CD-1, #6).

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Reflect on Mary and Joseph's feelings as they waited for Jesus.
- Identify actions that get their hearts ready for Jesus.

 Gather in the Gospel storytelling area and sing “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24).

Sunday Gospel • Mary and Joseph Get Ready for Jesus Gather the children in a story circle. Sunday's Gospel again features John the Baptist. He is telling people who come to listen to him that he is not the Messiah they are waiting for. *Promise* does not use this Gospel but tells instead the part of the Christmas story about Mary and Joseph's preparation for the birth of Jesus.

In the days before Jesus was born almost two thousand years ago, only Mary and Joseph knew how important Mary's baby was going to be. But before the baby came, Joseph had to take Mary on a trip to the town of Bethlehem. Joseph had to write his name in a book because the leader was counting all the people in the country. The trip took three days.

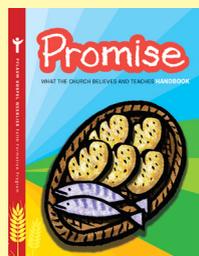
The town of Bethlehem was crowded. Joseph couldn't find any place to stay except a stable for animals. Oxen munched on hay out of a manger in the cave. In the fields nearby, shepherds watched their flocks of sheep. Lambs nursed at their mothers' sides. The evening was beautiful. Stars filled the sky. Joseph put straw in the manger to make a soft bed for the new baby. Everything was ready for the birth of Jesus. All that was left was waiting.

Ask: What did Mary and Joseph do to get ready for the birth of Jesus? How do you think Mary and Joseph felt after their three-day trip? What do you think Mary and Joseph felt as they waited for Jesus to be born?

Explain that we have to wait until Christmas to hear the rest of the story. We also wait every year to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We get our homes ready, make presents, and get our hearts ready by saying and doing loving things for one another. When we obey God by choosing to do the right thing, we are getting our hearts ready for Jesus. Forgiving others and asking for forgiveness are other ways to get our hearts ready for Jesus.



Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks.



What the Church Believes and Teaches

Jesus Wants Us to Do the Right Thing (page 22, middle)

Direct the children to turn to page 22 in their Catechism handbooks. Read aloud the two lines next to the first heart.

Ask: In what prayer do we say something like this? *Our Father (Lord's Prayer): "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."*

Ask: Is it easy to forgive someone who hurts you? *No.* Read aloud the next four lines. Explain that Jesus asks us to do hard things—like forgiving people who hurt us and obeying God and doing what's right. The good news is that he will help us do these hard things!

Teach the children a simple prayer to pray when it is hard to forgive someone who has hurt you: "Dear Jesus, thank you for forgiving me. Help me to forgive. Amen."



Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, page 3.

Word of the Week • Reconciliation (page 3)

Help the children locate the Word of the Week on page 3. Share this definition with them: *Reconciliation celebrates God's forgiveness of our unloving choices.* Explain that they will get to celebrate Reconciliation when they are older, but they are already old enough to know when they have done something wrong and ask God and those they've hurt to forgive them.

Live the Gospel

Objective The children will identify preparations for Jesus' birth.

Activity • A Getting-Ready Mobile (pages 3-4)

Distribute pages 3–4 of *Promise*. Direct the children to look at page 4. Identify the shapes as Christmas ornaments. Explain that each ornament shows something or someone ready and waiting for Jesus to come. Turn to page 3 and read the sentences on the ornaments together.

Have aides or older children help cut out the ornaments and put them in a pile. Make sure to save the leftover section of the page that contains the Family Corner, Word of the Week, and Eucharist Quote. Send this home with the children. Explain that you will come around with yarn that the children can tape to the tops of the ornaments. Distribute yarn and small pieces of tape so that the children can do their own taping. If time allows, tie the yarn to hangers or dowel rods to make mobiles. If time is limited, you may wish to have the children take the ornaments home to hang on their Christmas trees.

Activity • Advent Calendar Call the children's attention to the Advent calendar from *Promise* from two weeks ago. **Ask:** How have you practiced the getting-ready activities at home? Color the three candles on your classroom copy. Tell the children to color the three candles on their copies at home.

Closing Prayer **Pray:** "Dear Jesus, we wait for you with joy in our hearts. We like celebrating your birthday at Christmas. Help us to be loving and forgiving." The children respond, "Amen."



Bring your prayer and session to a close by playing and singing "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2).

Extending Activities (gospelweeklies.com/promise)

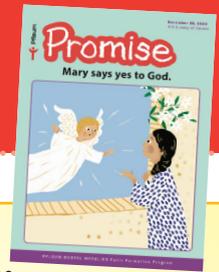


Remind the children to share their *Gospel Weeklies* with their families, do the Family Corner activities and prayer, and read the Eucharist Quote together.

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #18 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

In Sunday's Gospel, an angel tells Mary that God has chosen her to be the mother of Jesus. Mary agrees to be part of God's plan even though she doesn't see how it can be possible. She says yes because of her great faith and trust in God.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

God invited Mary to be the mother of his Son. She said yes. Mary helped bring Jesus to us. We bring Jesus to the world through our loving words and actions.

"[Mary] was a unique vessel of God's Revelation, obediently bringing forth his Word in human flesh in order to establish his kingdom for ever" (*National Directory for Catechesis*, 16A).

Sharing the Lesson with Families

Encourage parents to use the cover illustration of the Annunciation and their child's Getting-Ready Mobile from last Sunday to tell the story of the world getting ready for Jesus' birth. Remind them to help their child keep up with the Advent Calendar.

Editor's Note: *If you will not meet for Sundays 12/27 or 1/3, send home the lesson for Christmas & Epiphany and its Parent Teaching Page for the children to complete with their families.*

Materials

- Promise Student Lesson for 12/20
- Catechism handbook, pages 25 & 29
- audio player & Promise/Good News CDs
- crayons, scissors, tape, glue sticks
- Advent wreath, Church Year calendar
- story coloring page (one per child)
- drawing paper, aide(s) to assist with cutting
- small plastic or paper cups (two per child)

NOTE: Separate pages 1–2 from 3–4. Prepare one set of Magi in advance.

Suggested Music

- "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- "Happy Birthday, Jesus" (CD-1, #9)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- "Mary, O Blessed One" (CD-1, #3)

Lesson Resources

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #11
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: *These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.*

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (10–15 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Story • What Will I Say?

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (25–30 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Mary says yes to God. (page 1)
- Word of the Week • Mary (page 3)
- Song • "Mary, Mary said, 'Yes'"

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 25.

Live the Gospel (20–25 minutes)

- Activity • My "Yes" Christmas Tree (page 2)
- Activity • Magi follow a star. (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "Mary, O Blessed One" (CD-1, #3)

Take-Home

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #11
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (15–20 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "The Promise, Part 2" (CD-1, #2)
- Story • What Will I Say?
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Happy Birthday, Jesus" (CD-1, #9)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (45–50 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Mary says yes to God. (page 1)
- Word of the Week • Mary (page 3)
- Song • "Mary, Mary said, 'Yes'"

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 25.

- Activity • Promise Activity Book, Activity #11

Live the Gospel (20–25 minutes)

- Activity • My "Yes" Christmas Tree (page 2)
- Activity • Magi follow a star. (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "Mary, O Blessed One" (CD-1, #3)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

Lesson Theme: Mary says yes to God.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • “The Promise, Part 2” (CD-1, #2)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-26)
- Story • What Will I Say?
- Activity • Stretch and Sing “Happy Birthday, Jesus” (CD-1, #9)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to always listen and learn. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to always listen and learn. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Gospel Ritual • “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Mary says yes to God. (page 1)
- Word of the Week • Mary (page 3)
- Song • “Mary, Mary said, ‘Yes’”
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to say yes to you. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to say yes to you. Amen.* (Repeat.)



Distribute the students’ *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 25.

- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #11
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help our families be holy. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Extending Activities

(gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Catholic Identity Project of the Week

Brainstorm the ways that we share our good news with others—Skype, Facetime, phone calls, social media, or texting. Invite the children to act out the Sunday Gospel, giving everyone the opportunity to play Mary and the angel Gabriel.

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help our families be holy. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Activity • My “Yes” Christmas Tree (page 2)
- Activity • Magi follow a star. (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the gift of Jesus. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the gift of Jesus. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-27)
- Closing Song • “Mary, O Blessed One” (CD-1, #3)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

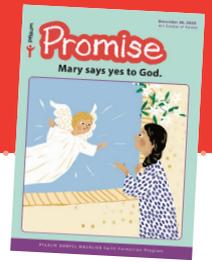
Curriculum Connections

- **ELA:** Explain to the children that names are important. Have the children practice writing their own names and their classmates’ names. Direct them to draw a picture of themselves with their full name on the page. How many letters are in their names? Ask them to include that number. (CCSS.math.content.K.CC.B.4)
- **Math:** Have the children generate number questions (number of children, ages, etc.) about the families in your class. Be sensitive to those who have blended or nontraditional families. With the children, brainstorm ways they can organize and represent the data they collect from these questions. (CCSS.math.content.K.CC.B.4)

Extending the Lesson

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- **December 21: Saint Peter Canisius** – Born in 1521, four years after Martin Luther wrote his *Ninety-Five Theses*, Saint Peter Canisius worked to reform the Church during the Counter Reformation and was involved in the Council of Trent. A Doctor of the Church, he wrote catechisms to share the faith with children. **Act:** Thank someone who teaches you about God.
- **December 23: Saint John of Kanty (Cantius)** John was a Polish theologian and professor of Scripture in Kraków. Unjustly fired from his university position, he was assigned as pastor in a rural parish. John lived very simply and gave most of his salary to the poor. **Pray:** Dear God, open our eyes to ways we can help those who are poor. Amen.



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objective The children will identify ways to say yes.

 Gather in a circle to play and sing “The Promise, Part 2” (CD-1, #2). “Light” the final candle on the Advent wreath.

Gathering Prayer Invite a child to point to the current Sunday on a Church Year calendar. The children respond, “We are waiting” to each line of this prayer:

Come, Jesus, come. / Mary and Joseph are ready. / The crib is ready for you. / We are ready too. Amen.

Story • What Will I Say? A coloring page to accompany this story is available at gospelweeklies.com/lesson-updates. Play a “Yes or No” game with the children to warm them up for today’s story. Ask silly questions to which they respond yes or no. For instance, **ask:** Do you want me to pour syrup on your heads? After a few more questions, **ask:** Do you want Christmas to come soon? Tell the children you know a poem about ways to say yes. Pause at the end of each stanza so the children can guess the word(s).

*What will I say when my mother asks me
to clean up my watercolor mess?
Will I say, “I don’t want to do it!”
or will I smile and say, “Yes?”*

*What will I say when my teacher tells us
we can’t play outside for recess?
I can stamp my feet and cry like a baby
or I can just say, “Yes.”*

*What will I say when my grandpa asks me
to help him for just a minute?
I can hide in the closet so he can’t find me
or I can say, “I’ll do it.”*

*What if my brother’s stroller needs a push
to get him up the hill?
I can make a face when my dad asks for help
or I can say, “I will!”*

*When we’re building a house out of Legos—
me and Jason and Ann—
and Mom calls from the kitchen, “Will somebody help me?”
I will say, “I can!”*

Review the poem and **ask:** What words did the child use to say yes?

Activity • Stretch and Sing Invite the children to stand and stretch. Join them in pretending to put ornaments on a

Christmas tree. Play “Happy Birthday, Jesus” (CD-1, #9) during this stretching activity.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify Mary as Jesus’ mother.
- Recognize that God calls them to say yes.
- Identify angels as God’s messengers.

 Invite the children to sit in a circle. Sing “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24) to prepare for the Gospel.

Sunday Gospel • Mary says yes to God.

(page 1) Distribute *Promise*, pages 1–2. Identify Mary and the angel Gabriel in the cover scene. Explain that this picture shows a messenger from God bringing a message to Mary, the woman who will be Jesus’ mother. **Ask:** What is happening? How does Mary seem to feel in the picture? Share the Gospel:

Mary lived in a town called Nazareth. She was engaged to Joseph, who belonged to the family of David. One day, the angel Gabriel came to Mary.

The angel said, “Hail, Mary, you are full of grace! God is with you.”

Mary was afraid and wondered what the angel meant.

The angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Mary. You will have a baby and give him the name Jesus.”

Mary asked: “How can this happen? I am not even married.”

The angel said: “God will send the Holy Spirit to you. Your child will be God’s Son. Your cousin Elizabeth will have a baby too even though she is old. God makes everything possible.”

Mary said, “I will do what God asks.”

Invite the children to think quietly about the news the angel brought to Mary. Direct their attention to the cover again. Have them look at Mary’s face. **Ask:** What is Mary thinking? Do you think it was hard for Mary to say yes to God? Why or why not? Why did God choose Mary to be the mother of Jesus?

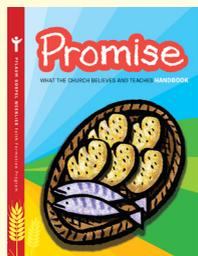
Word of the Week • Mary (page 3) Help the children locate the Word of the Week on page 3. Share this definition with them: *Mary is Jesus’ mother. Mary is our mother, too. She hears us when we talk to her in prayer.*

Song • “Mary, Mary Said, ‘Yes.’” Sing the following song to the tune of “Happy Birthday”:

Mary, Mary said, "Yes."
Mary, Mary said, "Yes."
She would have Baby Jesus.
Mary, Mary said, "Yes."



Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks.



What the Church Believes and Teaches

Angels Guide Us (page 25),
Hail Mary (page 29)

Direct the children to turn to page 25 in their Catechism handbooks. **Ask:** Who brought a message to Mary in the Gospel? *The angel Gabriel.* **Ask:** What are angels? *God's messengers and helpers.* Read aloud the title on page 25. Then invite volunteers to read aloud the first four paragraphs.

Explain that God gives each of us a guardian angel to watch over us and protect us. Read aloud the three lines that begin "Your angel." Invite the children to look at the Prayer to My Guardian Angel. If time permits, distribute drawing paper, crayons, and pencils. Direct the children to copy the words of this prayer. They may decorate it with a drawing of their own guardian angel.

Ask: To whom did the angel Gabriel bring a message from God? *Mary.* Point out that the first words the angel said to Mary are the beginning of the Hail Mary prayer. Direct the children to find the Hail Mary on page 29. Pray this prayer together.

 Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, page 2.

Live the Gospel

Objectives • The children will:

- Recognize that people all over the world say yes to God.
- Identify the Magi as visitors to Baby Jesus.

Activity • **My "Yes" Christmas Tree (page 2)**
Discuss Mary's response of yes to God. **Ask:** What are ways you say yes to God? Is it always easy to say yes? Tell the children that people all over the world choose to say yes to God. Explain that every yes is like a present to God.

Direct the children to look at the gifts at the top of page 2. Identify the word *yes*. The boxes have *yes* printed in English and four other languages. Distribute crayons, scissors, and glue. Direct the children to cut out the gift boxes. Give them time to color and decorate the tree on page 2 and glue the *yes* gift boxes under the tree.

Invite the children to think of God's friends all over the world as they sing the song about Mary saying "yes." This time, replace *yes* with:

Spanish: "Si" sounds like "see."

German, Dutch, Norwegian: "Ja" sounds like "Yah."

Japanese: "Hai" sounds like "Hi."

Swahili: "Ndio" sounds like "nn-DEE-oh."

Activity • Magi follow a star. (pages 3-4)

Distribute pages 3-4 with page 4 faceup. **Ask:** Who are these people? *Magi (wise men, kings) from far away who came to visit Jesus.*

Direct the children to cut out the figures. Show the children how to roll the figures into cone shapes and tape them. If you have small paper or plastic cups, demonstrate how to wrap a figure around the cup and tape it in place.

If your class meets for January 3, keep the Magi figures in the classroom. If you do not meet, send them and next week's *Promise* home with the children.

Closing Prayer Stand in a prayer circle. Pray the Sign of the Cross and lead the children in praying the Hail Mary line by line. End your prayer with the Sign of the Cross.



Conclude your class session by playing and singing "Mary, O Blessed One" (CD-1, #3). Remind the children to do their Advent calendar activities and wish them a Merry Christmas.

Extending Activities (gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Family Corner

Remind the children to share their *Gospel Weeklies* with their families and to do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer together.

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #11 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

The Christmas narrative in the Gospel of Luke emphasizes the humble circumstances in which God took on human flesh. Luke also tells of the great joy with which ordinary shepherds and the angels of Heaven welcomed this event. Matthew's story of the Magi who seek the new king of Israel shows that Jesus came for all people.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

We celebrate the coming of our Savior at Christmas. Jesus saves us from sin and death. Our unloving and selfish choices—our sins—hurt our friendship with God and others. Jesus leads us back to God. He opened the gates of Heaven so that we can live with God forever after we die.

"In the mystery of his incarnation, Christ has united himself to every human being. He is the perfect man who reveals to all human beings their own true nature and their eternal destiny in communion with God" (NDC, 25H).

Editor's Note: If you will not meet for Sundays 12/27 or 1/3, send home this Promise lesson and the Parent Teaching Page for the children to complete with their families.

Materials

- Promise Student Lesson for 12/25 and 1/3
- Catechism handbook, page 20
- audio player & Promise/Good News CDs
- crayons, pencils, lined writing paper
- Church Year calendar
- Magi completed in the last lesson

NOTE: Fold one Nativity scene in advance.

Suggested Music

- "Christmas Time" (CD-1, #14)
- "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- "The Holy Family" (CD-1, #10)

Lesson Resources

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #2
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (15-20 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Christmas Time" (CD-1, #14)
- Activity • We Celebrate Christmas
- Cover Activity • We Know the Christmas Story (page 1)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (25-30 minutes)

- Gospel Warm-Up • Nativity Scene (pages 1 and 4)
- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Gospel • God Has Come to Us in Jesus (page 4)
- Word of the Week • Jesus (page 3)

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 20.

Live the Gospel (15-20 minutes)

- Story • Dear Whiskers (page 2)
- Activity • I Can Share the Good News
- Closing Prayer & Song • "Christmas Time" (CD-1, #14)

Take-Home

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #2
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (15-20 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Christmas Time" (CD-1, #14)
- Activity • We Celebrate Christmas
- Cover Activity • We Know the Christmas Story (page 1)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (55-60 minutes)

- Gospel Warm-Up • Nativity Scene (pages 1 and 4)
- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Gospel • God Has Come to Us in Jesus (page 4)
- Word of the Week • Jesus (page 3)
- Activity • Gospel Creative Drama

 Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 20.

- Activity • Promise Activity Book, Activity #2

Live the Gospel (15-20 minutes)

- Story • Dear Whiskers (page 2)
- Activity • I Can Share the Good News
- Closing Prayer & Song • "Christmas Time" (CD-1, #14)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • “Christmas Time” (CD-1, #14)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-30)
- Activity • We Celebrate Christmas
- Cover Activity • We Know the Christmas Story (page 1)
- Activity • Stretch and Sing “Glory to Our God” (CD-1, #11)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the gift of Jesus and the celebration of Christmas. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for the gift of Jesus and the celebration of Christmas. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Gospel Warm-Up • Nativity Scene (pages 1 and 4)
- Gospel Ritual • “Gospel Acclamation” (CD-2, #24)
- Gospel • God Has Come to Us in Jesus (page 4)
- Word of the Week • Jesus (page 3)
- Activity • Gospel Creative Drama
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us share the Christmas story with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us share the Christmas story with others. Amen.* (Repeat.)



Distribute the students’ *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 20.

- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #2
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to love others as you love us. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to love others as you love us. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Story • Dear Whiskers (page 2)
- Activity • I Can Share the Good News
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to share your love with everyone we meet. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to share your love with everyone we meet. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-31)
- Closing Song • “Christmas Time” (CD-1, #14)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 3 together.

Curriculum Connections

- **ELA:** Have the children write and draw Christmas cards to send to residents of a local nursing home. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K-2)
- **Tech:** Lead the children in writing a script for a Christmas greeting. Record the greeting and email it to their families or post it on a private YouTube channel. (ISTE2016.6d)

Extending Activities

(gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Catholic Identity Project of the Week

In the hustle and bustle of the holiday, the sacredness of Christmas can sometimes be overshadowed. Organize a prayer service with your class to experience the sacredness of the Incarnation. Invite other classes to pray with you.

Extending the Lesson

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- **December 26: Saint Stephen** – Saint Stephen was one of seven deacons in charge of distributing food and aid to widows. He was stoned to death in A.D. 34, making him the first Christian martyr. **Act:** Follow Stephen’s example and forgive others.
- **December 27: Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph** – This feast celebrates the Holy Family as a model for all Christian families. **Pray:** Holy Family, pray for all families that struggle to follow your holy example. Amen.
- **January: Poverty Awareness Month**
- **January 1: Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God** – On this Holy Day of Obligation, we honor Mary, the Mother of God.
- **January 1: World Day of Prayer for Peace** Pray for peace in the world, in our homes, and in our hearts.



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify ways they celebrate Christmas.
- Recall and relate what they know of the Christmas story.

 Gather the children in a circle in the open area. Lead them in singing "Christmas Time" (CD-1, #14).

Gathering Prayer Invite a child to point to Christmas and Epiphany on a Church Year calendar. **Pray:** "Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be with us. We are so happy he came. We will try to act like him and be kind and loving to one another." The children respond, "Amen."

Activity • We Celebrate Christmas Invite the children to describe how they celebrate Christmas. Let them talk about presents and food and family but be sure they include attending Mass, visiting the Nativity scene, and hearing the story of Jesus' birth. Let the children enjoy the memories of this happy day but make sure they remember that Christmas is first and foremost the celebration of Jesus' birthday.

Cover Activity • We Know the Christmas Story (page 1) Distribute *Promise* and have the children tell you about the cover picture. From last week's mobile activity and lesson about Mary, they will remember the trip to Bethlehem, the shepherds in their fields, and the city of Bethlehem. Compliment the children on all they know about Jesus' birthday.

Activity • Stretch and Sing Direct the children to follow you as you lead them around the room, playing and singing "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11).

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Recognize that Christmas is a celebration of Jesus' birth.
- Identify members of the Holy Family.

Gospel Warm-Up • Nativity Scene (pages 1 and 4) Show the children how you have folded your copy of *Promise* to make a Nativity scene. Go around the room, helping them make the folds as illustrated on page 3. When all the Nativity scenes have been folded, invite the children to take them to the Gospel area.

 Play and sing "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24) to prepare the children for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Gospel • God Has Come to Us in Jesus

(page 4) Invite the children to sit with their Nativity scenes on the floor in front of them. From the back of your Nativity scene, proclaim the Christmas Gospel of Jesus' birth, the announcement of the angel, and the shepherds' visit.

Continue with the Epiphany Gospel—Matthew's telling of the coming of the Magi. Distribute the children's Magi figures so they can add them to their Nativity scenes. Matthew's Gospel tells us that the visitors who followed the star to find Jesus were wise men or Magi. The word *magi* is often translated as "astrologers." They were people who studied the stars and other signs in nature to find God and God's will. Over the centuries, we have made these astrologers into kings. Since the Gospel mentions three gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh, we imagine them as three kings. We even give them names and different ages and races. Traditionally, Melchior is old with a gray beard. Gaspar is young, and Balthazar is black. Send the children's Magi figures home along with their Nativity scenes.

Word of the Week • Jesus (page 3) Print the name *Jesus* on the board. Share this definition with the children: *Jesus is God's Son. He is true God. He is also human like us. Jesus' Father is God in Heaven.*

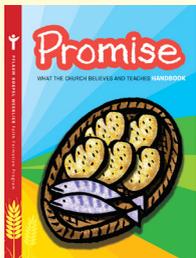
Activity • Gospel Creative Drama Invite the children to show with their faces and bodies how:

- Joseph and Mary felt when they couldn't find a place to stay / when the innkeeper said they could stay in his stable / when Jesus was born
- The shepherds felt when the angels appeared / when the angel told them the news about Jesus' birth / when they found Jesus in the stable
- The Magi felt when they saw a special star in the sky / when they traveled a long way to Bethlehem / when they found Jesus in the stable





Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks.



What the Church Believes and Teaches

Jesus Is God's Son
(page 20)

Invite the children to share loving stories about their families. Be sure to share a story about your own family. Explain that Jesus belonged to a family too.

Turn to page 20 in the Catechism handbook. Read aloud the page title. Direct the children to cover the two paragraphs with a hand. Review the key points in the two paragraphs by reading each sentence aloud and leaving out the last word. Invite the children to fill in the missing words. Distribute pencils and read aloud the directions below the activity. **Answer:** *The Holy Family*.

Ask: What kinds of things do you think the Holy Family did every day? Help them think of ordinary things their families also do—eat together, share news, pray, and work. Mary worked at home—cleaning, baking bread, washing clothes, and so on. Joseph was a carpenter. Jesus helped Mary and Joseph. He played with his friends. Play and sing “The Holy Family” (CD-1, #10) as time permits.



Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, page 2.

I am going to read a letter to you that talks about what a cat might have thought if the cat was in the stable with Mary and Joseph when Jesus was born. As I read the letter, I want you to close your eyes and imagine you are the cat in the stable. Think about what you are seeing, smelling, hearing, and feeling in the stable. I will stop a few times as I read the letter to ask: What do you see? What do you smell? What do you hear? How are you feeling?

Read aloud the letter from Paws to Whiskers on page 2. This experience should stretch the children's imaginations and help them connect their senses and feelings to the Nativity story.

Ask: How did it feel to pretend you were a cat in the stable when Jesus was born? What would you write back to Paws if you were Whiskers and you just received the letter? What questions do you have about what it was like when Jesus was born?

Activity • I Can Share the Good News **Ask:** With whom can you share the story of Jesus' birth? Distribute lined writing paper, pencils, and crayons. Invite the children to write or draw a simple letter to share the Good News that Jesus is born. You may wish to print the following words on the board: *Jesus, Christmas, Mary, Joseph, stable, Bethlehem, angels, shepherds*. The children may also refer to the Gospel on the back of their Nativity scenes. Adjust this activity to fit the skill level of the children.

Closing Prayer Invite the children to bring their copies of *Promise* to the prayer circle. **Pray:** “Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be with us. We are so happy he came. We will try to act like him and be kind and loving to one another.” The children respond, “Amen.”



Play and sing “Christmas Time” (CD-1, #14) or a favorite Christmas carol.

Extending Activities (gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Live the Gospel

Objectives • The children will:

- Imagine being present at Jesus' birth.
- Relate the Good News of Jesus' birth in writing or drawing.

Story • Dear Whiskers (page 2) Gather back in the work area. Show the children how to unfold their Nativity scenes to look at page 2. **Ask:** How many of you have a pet at home? Have you ever wondered what your pet is thinking or what it would say if it could talk like we can? Imagine that there are two cats that live far away from each other and they write letters to each other to talk about what is going on in their lives.



Remind the children to share their *Gospel Weeklies* with their families, do the Family Corner activities and prayer, and read the Eucharist Quote together.

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #2 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.



For Catechists and Teachers

Scripture Background

In Sunday's Gospel, John baptizes Jesus in the Jordan River. As Jesus comes out of the water, the Gospel gives us a family picture of the Holy Trinity. The heavens open, a voice proclaims Jesus as God's beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit—in the form of a dove—hovers over Jesus.

Connecting Scripture and Doctrine

At Jesus' baptism, God the Father calls Jesus his "beloved Son." The Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, comes down to Jesus. This is a sign of Jesus being chosen (anointed). God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit are the Holy Trinity. They are united in love.

"By the grace of Baptism 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' we are called to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity" (CCC, 265).

Sharing the Lesson with Families

Encourage parents to share photos and memories of their child's Baptism, including the white garment and candle if possible. Suggest that parents also share why they wanted their child to be baptized. Remind parents to practice praying the Sign of the Cross with their child.

Materials

- Promise Student Lesson for 1/10
- Catechism handbook, pages 13 & 14
- audio player & Promise/Good News CDs
- scissors, pencils, crayons, Church Year calendar
- aide(s) to help with cutting, envelopes
- parent notes about Baptism activity
- copies of page 14 of Catechism handbook

NOTE: Separate pages 1–2 from 3–4.

Suggested Music

- "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11)
- "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- "The Baptism of Jesus" (CD-2, #16)
- "The Trinity" (CD-2, #19)

Lesson Resources

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #15
- Lesson Assessment (gospelweeklies.com/assessment)
- Video Links (gospelweeklies.com/weekly-videos)

Single-Session Lesson Pacing Guides

Note: These pacing guides are suggestions for how to present the lesson. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

60-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (20–25 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11)
- Activity • Introducing . . . My Family
- Activity • That's My Family
- Story • Sarah becomes part of Jesus' family. (page 2)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (20–25 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is God's Beloved Son (page 1)
- Cover Activity • I Pray the Sign of the Cross (page 1)
-  Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 13.
- Word of the Week • Baptism (page 2)

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Activity • We celebrate Baptism. (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Trinity" (CD-2, #19)

Take-Home

- Promise Activity Book, Activity #15
- Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

90-Minute Lesson

Share Experiences (25–30 minutes)

- Gathering Song & Prayer • "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11)
- Activity • Introducing . . . My Family
- Activity • That's My Family!
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "The Holy Family" (CD-1, #10)
- Story • Sarah becomes part of Jesus' family. (page 2)

Discover Gospel and Doctrine (40–45 minutes)

- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is God's Beloved Son (page 1)
- Cover Activity • I Pray the Sign of the Cross (page 1)
-  Distribute the students' *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 13.
- Word of the Week • Baptism (page 2)
- Activity • Promise Activity Book, Activity #15

Live the Gospel (15–20 minutes)

- Activity • We celebrate Baptism. (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer & Song • "The Trinity" (CD-2, #19)

Take-Home

Remind the children to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Lesson Theme: Baptism welcomes us into God's family.

Five-Day Lesson Pacing Guide

Note: This pacing guide suggests how to present the lesson over five days. Please adapt the lesson to suit your needs.

Day 1

Share Experiences

- Gathering Song • "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11)
- Gathering Prayer (see page TG2-34)
- Activity • Introducing . . . My Family
- Activity • That's My Family!
- Activity • Stretch and Sing "The Holy Family" (CD-1, #10)
- Story • Sarah becomes part of Jesus' family. (page 2)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for welcoming us into your family through Baptism. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 2

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, thank you for welcoming us into your family through Baptism. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Gospel Ritual • "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24)
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is God's Beloved Son (page 1)
- Cover Activity • I Pray the Sign of the Cross (page 1)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, we praise you as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 3

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, we praise you as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.* (Repeat.)

 **Distribute the students' *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks. Turn to page 13.**

- Word of the Week • Baptism (page 2)
- Activity • *Promise Activity Book*, Activity #15
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to grow as Jesus' followers. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 4

Live the Gospel

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to grow as Jesus' followers. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Activity • We celebrate Baptism. (pages 3–4)
- Closing Prayer • *Loving God, help us to live always as your children. Amen.* (Repeat.)

Day 5

- Gathering Prayer • *Loving God, help us to live always as your children. Amen.* (Repeat.)
- Weekly Lesson Assessment
- Closing Prayer (see page TG2-35)
- Closing Song • "The Trinity" (CD-2, #19)

Friday Take-Home

Remind the students to share their lesson with their families and do the *Family Corner* activities and prayer on page 2 together.

Curriculum Connections

- **ELA:** Gather the students for a read-aloud of a picture book about Baptism. After the story, invite them to share the stories they know about their Baptisms or know about the Baptisms of younger relatives. Where did the Baptisms take place? Who was there? What happened during the Baptism? Draw the different elements on chart paper to help them construct a visual storyteller about their Baptisms. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.10)
- **Tech:** Direct, assist, and guide the students to use graphic art/word processing tools to create baptism announcements for Jesus. (ISTE2016.3a)

Extending Activities

(gospelweeklies.com/promise)

Catholic Identity Project of the Week

Create class cards to welcome newly baptized children and adults to the parish. Parish staff can present them as the Baptisms occur. Sign the cards "From Mrs. ____'s First Grade Class."

Extending the Lesson

Saints and Feast Days to Celebrate

- **January 13: Saint Hilary of Poitiers** – Hilary was a gentle man who disturbed the peace. He spoke out against the Arian heresy, which claimed that Jesus Christ was only human, not divine. This position brought him opposition and even exile, yet he persisted in teaching the truth of Jesus being fully human and fully divine. **Ask:** How do you stand up for the truth?
- **January 16: Saint Berard and Companions** Saint Berard and his brother Franciscans were killed when they refused to stop preaching the Gospel in Morocco. Their lives inspired many others to become missionaries, including Saint Anthony of Padua. **Pray:** *Loving God, give safety and strength to those who serve as missionaries and relief workers around the world. Amen.*



Teaching This Week's Lesson

Share Experiences

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify characteristics of their families.
- Identify Baptism as making them part of God's family.

 Gather in a circle in the open area. Invite a child to point to the current Sunday on a Church Year calendar. Explain that the Baptism of the Lord is the last day of Christmas Time. Play and sing "Glory to Our God" (CD-1, #11).

Gathering Prayer Pray: "Thank you, God, for welcoming us into your family. Help us to follow you and share your love with others." The children respond, "Amen."

Activity • Introducing . . . My Family Direct the children to sit in a circle in chairs or on the floor. Invite them to tell about their families: how many members, the work they do, where they live, what they enjoy doing together, what makes their family special, etc. Many children will have an extended family member living with them. Encourage them to tell about anyone who makes a home with them.

Activity • That's My Family! Lead the children in playing a game called That's My Family. It will help them learn more about one another's families. Explain that you will say some things that families might do together and the children will stand up and say "That's My Family!" if the statement you read is true for their family. Remind them that there is nothing wrong if they don't stand for every statement because all families are different and like to do different things. You and the children can add other ideas to the following:

- My family eats together.
- My family likes to sing.
- My family likes to go swimming.
- My family likes to play games.
- My family has a pet.
- My family likes to go fishing.

After the game is finished, discuss family differences and similarities. Be especially sensitive if any of the children have been removed from their families or have recently lost a family member. Ask: What is the most important thing a family shares? Love.

Activity • Stretch and Sing Ask: What do we call the family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph? *The Holy Family*. Invite them to stretch and move in place as you play and sing "The Holy Family" (CD-1, #10).

Story • Sarah becomes part of Jesus' family.

(page 2) Distribute *Promise* and direct the children to turn to page 2. Ask: When did you become a member of God's family? *Baptism*. Ask: How old were you? Most children were babies or toddlers when they were baptized. Explain that an older child, like the seven-year-old in this story, also celebrates Confirmation and First Communion right after being baptized.

Read this story aloud together, with individual children reading the copy that goes with each photo. Review the story by asking:

- What sacraments did Sarah celebrate?
- Whom did she invite to be with her?
- How did Sarah feel about becoming a member of the Church?

Check the children's comprehension of the signs and symbols of Baptism by asking:

- Why does the priest pour water over Sarah's head? *Water is a sign of life and washing. Sarah's old life and her sins are washed away. She is a new person, a member of God's family.*
- Why does she put on a white dress? *A white garment is a sign that she is putting on a new life as a follower of Jesus.*
- Why does Sarah receive a lighted candle? *It is a sign that Jesus is her light.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

Objectives • The children will:

- Identify the Holy Trinity at Jesus' baptism.
- Identify that we are baptized in the name of the Trinity.

 Invite the children to come to the Gospel area and sing "Gospel Acclamation" (CD-2, #24).

Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is God's Beloved Son

(page 1) Direct the children to turn *Promise* to its cover and place it faceup on the floor in front of them as you proclaim the Gospel:

John the Baptist baptized many people in the Jordan River. People wondered if John was the Messiah.

John said: "I baptize you with water. Someone is coming who is much more important and powerful than I am. I am not good enough to undo his sandal straps. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

One day, John baptized Jesus. When Jesus came out of the water, the skies opened up. The Holy Spirit came down to Jesus in the form of a dove. A voice spoke from Heaven. The voice said, "You are my beloved Son. I am pleased with you."

Invite the children to look at the picture in the middle of page 1 of *Promise*. Review what the children heard and see by **asking**: Which man is Jesus? Who is the other man? Whose voice came from Heaven? What did the voice say to Jesus? Who is shown as a bird? Make sure the children do not think the Holy Spirit is really a bird. Use the example of teams called Tigers or Pirates. These images tell us what the teams are like, but the people who on the team aren't really tigers or pirates.

If time allows, move to the work area and distribute crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of Jesus' baptism. Play "The Baptism of Jesus" (CD-2, #16) as they work.

Cover Activity • I Pray the Sign of the Cross (page 1) Invite a volunteer to show the class how to pray the Sign of the Cross (words and gestures). Direct the rest of the children to pray the Sign of the Cross. **Ask**: What do the words we say mean? *The Father is God the Creator. The Son is Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the One who came to Jesus in the form of a dove at his baptism. We honor these three Divine Persons—God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit—when we pray the Sign of the Cross. They are Three Divine Persons in One God. We call this the Holy Trinity.*

 **Distribute the children's *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks.**

will send a copy of this page home for their parents to fill out. Encourage the children to ask their parents to share the story of their Baptism with them. Plan to collect and display the pages at your next *Promise* class.

 **Have the children close the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbooks and return to *Promise*, page 2.**

Word of the Week • Baptism (page 2) Help the children locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition with them: *Baptism makes us children of God and members of God's family, the Church.*

Live the Gospel

Objective The children will reenact a baby's Baptism.

Activity • We celebrate Baptism. (pages 3-4) Gather in the work area and invite the children to examine the pictures on page 3. Identify the individual pictures as mother, father, baby, the priest, baptismal font, white garment, and candle. Distribute scissors and direct them to cut out the pictures. Cutting lines are on page 4.

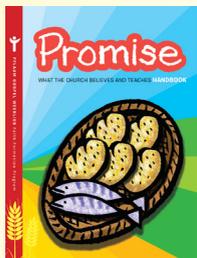
When the children have finished cutting, direct them to lay out the pictures on their desks or worktables, identify them again, and turn them over one by one to see what is on the other side. The parent figures have two other people on their reverse sides. These can be the godparents. Invite the children to use the cutouts to tell the story of a Baptism to a partner.

Provide envelopes so the children can take their figures home and show their families what they know about Baptism.

Closing Prayer Gather in the prayer circle. **Pray**: "We thank you, Loving God, for making us all members of your family." The children respond, "Amen." Conclude by praying the Sign of the Cross.

 Play and sing "The Trinity" (CD-2, #19) to end your *Promise* session.

Extending Activities (gospelweeklies.com/promise)



What the Church Believes and Teaches

Baptism Is a Sacrament (page 13), Your Baptism (page 14)

Direct the children to turn to page 13 in their Catechism handbooks. Read aloud the title. Distribute pencils and direct the children to draw a line under the words you tell them to as you read the top two paragraphs: *love, holy, God, family*. These underlined words will help them complete the crossword puzzle.

Invite the children to look at the words of Baptism in the third paragraph. **Ask**: What prayer is like these words? *The Sign of the Cross.*

Make sure the children know how to do a crossword puzzle. Divide the children into groups of three or four to solve the puzzle. **Answers**: Down—1-holy, 4-love; Across—2-God, 3-family.

Tell the children that you will make a display about their Baptisms. Invite them to turn to page 14. Explain that you

Lesson Wrap-Up

Visit gospelweeklies.com/assessment to download this week's lesson assessment.

Use Activity #15 from the *Promise Activity Book* as a take-home activity or lesson wrap-up.

LITURGICAL YEAR			DOCTRINAL CONTENT				
	Date/Sunday	Sunday Gospels	Word of the Week	Creed	Sacraments & Liturgy	Life in Christ	Christian Prayer
ORDINARY TIME	September 20, 2020 25th Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 20:1–16a Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard	Bible	God abounds in love. (50, 214, 221)	Church as a community of believers; Mass: readings from the Bible	Learning about Jesus together	Praying with song and gestures
	September 27, 2020 26th Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 21:28–32 Parable of Two Sons	Ten Commandments	God gives us free will. (1704, 1711, 1731, 1853)	Celebrating as a community; Mass: Sign of the Cross	Choosing loving actions	Sign of the Cross
	October 4, 2020 27th Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 21:33–43 Parable of the Vineyard	God	God cares for Creation. (41, 239, 301, 421)	Baptism	Caring for Creation	Thanking God for Creation and for creating us
	October 11, 2020 28th Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 22:1–14 Parable of the Wedding Feast	marriage	Jesus invites us to his table. (1396)	Eucharist; Baptism	Celebrating friendship; going to Sunday Mass	Amen
	October 18, 2020 29th Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 22:15–21 Give to Caesar and God	Old Testament	Baptism welcomes us to God's family. (265, 804, 985)	Baptism	Baptized into Jesus' family; belonging; trusting in God's promises	Prayer booklet
	October 25, 2020 30th Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 22:34–40 The Great Commandment	New Testament	Jesus' Great Commandment is love. (1970–1972)	Gathering as a community of love	Loving and unloving actions; showing love to God and others	Thanking God for people in our lives; Short Prayer of Love
	November 1, 2020 Solemnity of All Saints	Matthew 5:1–12a The Beatitudes	Beatitudes	Jesus leads us to happiness. (1716–1719)	Saints; sacramentals: images of saints	Following Jesus' path to happiness	Praying to saints; Lord's Prayer
	November 8, 2020 32nd Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 25:1–13 Parable of Wise and Foolish Girls	neighbor	God gives us freedom to choose. (1732–1734, 2612)	Mass: Prayer of the Faithful	Making loving choices; avoiding sin	Prayers of petition; Sign of the Cross; thanking God for life
	November 15, 2020 33rd Sunday Ordinary	Matthew 25:14–15, 19–21 Parable of the Talents	service	God gives us talents. (546, 1880, 2427)	Church community	Sharing talents to bring happiness	Thanking God for talents
	November 22, 2020 Solemnity of Christ the King	Matthew 25:31–46 Jesus Teaches the Works of Mercy	saint	God judges us on love. (678, 682)	Church as Body of Christ	Seeing Christ in our neighbor; doing Works of Mercy	Works of Mercy prayer
ADVENT-CHRISTMAS	November 29, 2020 1st Sunday of Advent	Mark 13:33–37 Jesus Says, "Be Alert!"	Church Year	Jesus promises to come again. (524, 681–682, 2612)	Church Year: Advent; Advent saints	Getting ready for Jesus' coming	Advent wreath prayer
	December 6, 2020 2nd Sunday of Advent	Mark 1:1–8 Jesus Is the Good News	Holy Spirit	John announces the Good News. (718–719)	Church Year: Advent	Changing and growing as followers of Jesus	Advent wreath prayer; prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe
	December 13, 2020 3rd Sunday of Advent	John 1:6–8, 19–28 John the Baptist Prepares Us for Jesus	Reconciliation	God sent Jesus, Emmanuel "God-with-us." (463, 744)	Church Year: Advent; Gaudete Sunday; Reconciliation	Preparing for Christmas; forgiving and asking for God's help	Advent wreath prayer—joy
	December 20, 2020 4th Sunday of Advent	Luke 1:26–38 Mary Says Yes to God	Mary	Mary models surrender to God. (490, 973, 2617, 2674)	Church Year: Advent; Annunciation	Saying yes to God	Advent wreath prayer; Prayer to My Guardian Angel; Hail Mary
	December 25, 2020 & January 3, 2021 Christmas & Epiphany	Luke 2:1–14 Jesus Is Born & Matthew 2:1–12 Visit of the Magi	Jesus	Jesus is born in Bethlehem. (525) & Jesus comes for all people. (528)	Church Year: Christmas and Epiphany	Telling the Christmas story	Singing our prayer; thanking God for Jesus
ORDINARY TIME	January 10, 2021 Baptism of the Lord	Mark 1:7–11 Jesus Is Baptized	Baptism	Baptism welcomes us into God's family. (265, 536, 985)	Baptism; sacraments	Living as members of Jesus' family	Sign of the Cross; Glory Be to the Father
	January 17, 2021 2nd Sunday Ordinary	John 1:35–42 Jesus Calls His First Followers	Sunday	Jesus gathers a community. (752, 805)	Church as community; Mass: Sign of Peace	Acting as Jesus' followers; following good examples	Prayer of peace; prayer for help to follow Jesus
	January 24, 2021 3rd Sunday Ordinary	Mark 1:14–20 Jesus Calls Four Fishermen	mission	Jesus calls disciples. (542, 804–806)	Using our senses in worship; Mass: listening	Listening; following; praying	Prayer of thanksgiving
	January 31, 2021 4th Sunday Ordinary	Mark 1:21–28 Jesus Teaches with Authority	Gospel	Jesus heals and teaches. (156, 548–550, 581)	Mass: Liturgy of the Word	Following good teachers	Jesus teaches me...
	February 7, 2021 5th Sunday Ordinary	Mark 1:29–39 Jesus Raises Up, Heals, and Frees People	anoint	Jesus' healings are signs of the Kingdom. (517, 1503, 1505)	Anointing of the Sick	Doing what Jesus says; helping	Praying for the sick
LENT	February 14, 2021 6th Sunday Ordinary	Mark 1:40–45 Jesus Heals a Man with Leprosy	respect	Jesus' healings return outcasts to community. (605, 1421, 1443, 2616, 2792)	Anointing of the Sick; Church as universal, including all	Showing we care; including others	Thanking Jesus
	February 21, 2021 1st Sunday of Lent	Mark 1:12–15 Jesus Is Tempted	creed	Jesus is faithful to God. (538–540, 566, 2157)	Church Year: Lent; Lenten practices	Praying, doing loving actions	Lenten Prayer Box; Sign of the Cross; Lord's Prayer
	February 28, 2021 2nd Sunday of Lent	Mark 9:2–10 Jesus' Friends See Him Transfigured	Heaven	The Transfiguration is a promise of our own resurrection. (460, 556, 1000)	Church Year: Lent	Making loving choices; growing; changing	Prayers of petition
	March 7, 2021 3rd Sunday of Lent	John 2:13–25 Jesus Cleanses the Temple	prayer	Jesus teaches us to pray. (576, 583, 584, 2750, 2765)	Church Year: Lent	Lent: making loving choices; asking for forgiveness	Prayer for forgiveness; Lord's Prayer
	March 14, 2021 4th Sunday of Lent	John 3:14–21 Jesus Gives Us Light	mercy	Jesus forgives our sins and saves us. (545, 620, 2839)	Church Year: Lent; Reconciliation	Forgiving; praying with others; saying to Jesus	Lord's Prayer; Prayer of Sorrow
	March 21, 2021 5th Sunday of Lent	John 12:20–33 Jesus Is Like a Grain of Wheat	Church	Who serves Jesus must follow him. (805, 2253, 2449, 2466)	Church Year: Lent; Eucharist; saints	Showing love	Growing prayer
	March 28, 2021 Palm/Passion Sunday	Mark 15:1–39 Jesus' Passion	Holy Week	Jesus suffers and dies for us. (478, 542, 618, 1329, 2305)	Church Year: Holy Week; Mass as meal and sacrifice	Remembering the life of Jesus	Blessing Before Meals; prayer of thanks
EASTER	April 4 & April 11, 2021 Easter Sunday & 2nd Sunday of Easter	John 20:1–9 & John 20:19–31 Jesus Is Risen and Greets His Friends	Mass	God raises Jesus from death to eternal life. (638, 989)	Church Year: Easter	Noticing and celebrating the new life of spring and Easter	Alleluia
	April 18, 2021 3rd Sunday of Easter	Luke 24:35–48 Jesus Appears to His Disciples	Holy Communion	Jesus gives us peace. (624, 813, 2304–2305)	Mass: Sign of Peace	Bringing peace to others; making peace	Sign of Peace; Lord's Prayer
	April 25, 2021 4th Sunday of Easter	John 10:11–18 Jesus Is the Good Shepherd	pastor	Jesus is our Good Shepherd. (754, 764, 2415–2418)	Parish as a community of caring	Following Jesus; caring for Creation	Good Shepherd prayer; Psalm 23
	May 2, 2021 5th Sunday of Easter	John 15:1–8 Jesus Is the Vine; We Are the Branches	parish	Jesus unites the Church. (736, 755, 820, 960, 2074)	Mass; Church as community	Building church community; staying connected to Jesus	Vine and branches prayer
	May 9, 2021 6th Sunday of Easter	John 15:9–17 Jesus' Great Commandment: Love One Another	Confirmation	Jesus' rule is love. (459, 592, 1823, 1970, 2745)	Church Year: honoring Mary in May	Showing love to others	Hail Mary

All numbers in parentheses refer to paragraphs in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The topics included in this Scope and Sequence chart are subject to minor changes, which will be reflected in the Teaching Guides throughout the catechetical year. To print copies of this chart, visit gospelweeklies.com/promise.

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