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Unit 2 Opener

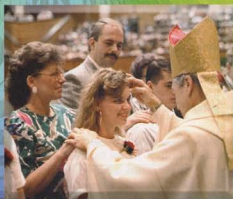
The unit opener pages are designed to assess, through a variety of questioning techniques, the children's prior knowledge about the key faith concepts presented in the unit. Processing these pages should not take more than ten or fifteen minutes.

USING ILLUSTRATIONS

Pictures help stimulate the religious imagination. The first page of the unit opener contains pictures that illustrate some of the important concepts in the unit.

- Invite the children to look at and think about the pictures.
- Ask volunteers to describe what each picture says to them.
- Invite the children to share a response to the question.

Unit 2 • We Worship



What are some times the Church celebrates as a community?

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Background: Liturgy

Joined to Christ. Spend a few moments in prayerful reflection as you prepare for the teaching of this unit. Recall that when the Church gathers for worship and the celebration of the sacraments, the whole Church—Christ the Head and we the members of the Body of Christ—offers praise and thanksgiving to God the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Getting Ready

What I Have Learned

What is something you already know about these faith words?

Paschal Mystery

The liturgical year

The Eucharist

Words to Know

Put an X next to the faith words you know. Put a ? next to the faith words you need to know more about.

Faith Words

- _____ liturgy
- _____ Eucharist
- _____ Blessed Sacrament
- _____ parable
- _____ Reconciliation
- _____ Holy Orders

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Questions I Have

What questions would you like to ask about the Eucharist?

A Scripture Story



Wedding in Cana

What did Jesus do at the wedding in Cana?

GETTING READY

The "Getting Ready" page invites the children to share prior knowledge and aids you in planning your lessons to meet their needs.

What I Have Learned

This section asks the children to share something they already know about the liturgy and the liturgical year. Read to the children the faith terms and ask volunteers to share ideas that they know about each term.

Words to Know

This section is a quick assessment of the children's familiarity with some of the faith vocabulary they will be learning. Have them put an X next to terms they already know and a ? next to the terms they need to learn more about. At the end of this unit, the children will be asked to return to this page and once again share their understanding of these faith vocabulary terms.

Questions I Have

This section provides an opportunity for the children to ask questions that they have about the Eucharist. Write their questions on a chart. As you work through the unit always refer back to the chart and ask volunteers to answer the questions. This affirms for the children what they are learning about their faith.

A Scripture Story

This section uses the wedding in Cana to introduce Scripture used in this unit. Have the children look at the picture and answer the question. Their responses will help you become more aware of their knowledge of Scripture.

Teaching Tip

Sensitivity to Diversity. The faith life of the families of the children in your class is more than likely quite diverse. Some families may participate in the liturgy and the life of the Church on a very regular basis; others may participate mostly on special occasions, such as the Baptism of children, the marriage of family members, and so on. It is your responsibility to remind the children and their families of their obligation to take part in the celebration of Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. Be aware of this diversity as you call for a sharing of the children's faith experiences. Try to provide clear clues that will help the children respond to the questions.

Background

A Celebration of the Paschal Mystery

The Church year revolves in an annual cycle of seasons and feasts that celebrate Christ's birth, life, Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. In each celebration and retelling of the mystery of Christ, the entire Christian story is remembered and its fountain of grace is continually poured out for all ages.

Sunday is the Lord's Day. The Church, since the days of the Apostles, has celebrated the Paschal Mystery of Christ on the first day of each week to commemorate the Lord's Resurrection. "Sunday must be ranked as the first holy day of all" (*General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar* 4).

Advent-Christmas

The liturgical year begins with the first Sunday of Advent. During the season of Advent the Church reflects on and anticipates for four weeks the coming of Christ among us—past, present, and future. The Advent season, which is filled with joyful expectancy and hope, gives way to Christmas, a festive season lasting from the celebration of Christ's birth on December 25 through the Epiphany. Over

the course of several weeks the Church celebrates the wonder of the Incarnation.

Lent-Easter

Lent is a period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that begins on Ash Wednesday. The weeks of Lent are a preparation for the celebration of the sacred Triduum and the Easter season. The Triduum is the sacred period of three days, beginning with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and climaxing with the celebration of Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday.

Easter begins a season of fifty days, concluding with the celebration of Pentecost. Throughout Easter the Church rejoices. Joined to Christ in Baptism, we have passed from death to life, from slavery to freedom, and from sin to glory.

Ordinary Time

All the remaining weeks of the year—about 33 or 34 weeks—are known as Ordinary Time. Ordinary Time is a bridge, linking what has gone before and what is to come. Ordinary does not indicate that these weeks are



unimportant. Rather, the designation *ordinary* is derived from the Latin *ordo*, meaning "order." Ordinary Time indicates these Sundays and weeks are numbered in order.

For Reflection

In what ways does my participation in the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year enrich my life of faith?

What more can I do to make the Sunday celebration central to my life of faith?

First Thoughts

Holidays and Holy Days

The liturgical year is a celebration of the faith of the Church. Season after season, week after week, day in and day out, the Church gathers to remember and share in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. For children, holidays and holy days mark the passage of time from one season to the next. The rituals connected with each holiday, holy day, and season become highlights in the lives of third graders. The way a family celebrates special days and times of the Church year often includes customs, traditions, and rituals that are passed down from generation to generation.

Celebrate

One of the best ways you can teach children about the liturgical year is to celebrate it. As part of your discussion of each season of the Church year, ask the children to share what their families do to celebrate this time of the year. By giving children a chance to share their family traditions, you are enriching the experience of all the children.



The Church Teaches . . .

The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* [Sacrosanctum concilium] reminds us:

Holy Mother Church believes that it is for her to celebrate the saving work of her divine Spouse in a sacred commemoration on certain days throughout the course of the year. Once each week, on the day which she has called the Lord's Day, she keeps the memory of the Lord's resurrection. . . . In the course of the year, moreover, she unfolds the whole mystery of Christ. SC 102

That is why *Faith First* emphasizes the liturgical year through seasonal lessons and celebrations.

See the Catechism . . .

For more on the teachings of the Catholic Church on the liturgy and the liturgical year, see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1135–1186.

*Come, Holy Spirit,
fill our hearts with
gratitude to the Father
for the gift of Jesus,
his only Son. Help
us give thanks
for the gift of Jesus.
Amen.*

LESSON PLANNER

Chapter Focus

To identify ways the Catholic Church celebrates its faith in Jesus Christ throughout the year

Focus

DAY 1

Engage/Teach and Apply
Pages 139–141
Focus

To discover the meaning of the feasts and seasons of the liturgical year of the Church

Process

Opening Prayer

Discussion

What days you and your family like to celebrate and what are your favorite celebrations of the Church

Presentation

Read, discuss, and summarize content.

Scripture: Psalm 111:1

Activity

Identify seasons of the Church year.

Materials and Options

Materials

index cards and pencils or pens

Options

“We Celebrate” (TG page 498)
See section for appropriate liturgical lesson and prayer.

Called to Prayer Grades 1–3 booklet
See options for daily and seasonal classroom prayer.

DAY 2

Teach and Apply
Pages 142–143
Focus

To highlight the importance of the seasons of Lent and Easter

Prayer

Presentation

Read, discuss, and summarize content.

Faith-Filled People: The Elect

Activity

Describe the season of Easter.

Materials

- index cards
- pencils or pens
- crayons or markers

Options

Enriching the Lesson (TG page 235)
Celebrating the Triduum

DAY 3

Teach and Apply
Pages 144–145
Focus

To describe Ordinary Time

Prayer

Presentation

Read, discuss, and summarize content.

Our Catholic Faith: Liturgical Colors

Activity

Complete sentences about your favorite Gospel story.

Materials

- index cards
- pencils or pens

Options

Enriching the Lesson (TG page 235)
Literature Connection
Additional Activities booklet
Solve Liturgical Riddles (Activity 11)

DAY 4

Connect
Pages 146–147
Focus

To discuss the celebration of the feasts of the Lord

Prayer

Our Church Makes a Difference

The Catholic Church celebrates feasts of the Lord.

What Difference Does Faith Make in My Life?

Activity

Complete the sentences about living as a follower of Jesus.

Faith Choice

This week choose a way to celebrate that you are a follower of Jesus.

Materials

pencils or pens

Options

Enriching the Lesson (TG page 235)
Creating a Liturgical Dance

DAY 5

Pray and Remember
Pages 148–149

We Pray

Thanksgiving: “Thank You, God”

We Remember

To Help You Remember

Activity: Complete review exercises.

With My Family

Highlight features of the chapter family page.

Materials

pencils or pens and crayons or markers

Options

Additional Activities booklet
I Celebrate My Favorite Liturgical Season (Activity 11a)
Assessment Tools booklet
Administer chapter 11 test.

Music Connection (TG page 235)



Engage

PRAY

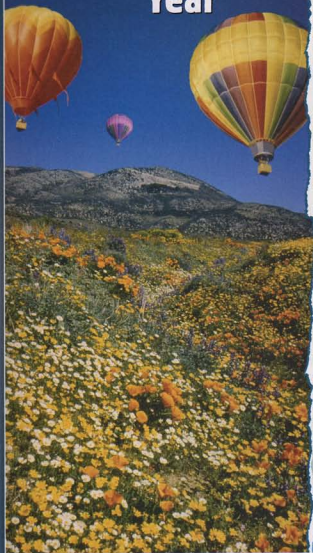
- Gather the children for prayer.
- Have a volunteer read the Psalm verse and then pray the opening prayer together.
- Begin and close by praying the Sign of the Cross together.

DISCOVER

Purpose: To assess what the children know about the Church year

- Invite the children to talk about celebrations they have with their families during the year.
- Read the introductory paragraph and invite responses to the question that follows.
- Invite the children to look at the picture. Ask them why they think this image of nature was chosen. *Spring is a sign of new life. We grow in the new life in Christ when we take part in the celebration of the Church year.*

The Church's Year



11

We Pray

With all my heart
I praise the LORD,
our God.
Based on Psalm 111:1

**Father,
always and
everywhere
we give you thanks
through Jesus
Christ, your Son.
Amen.**

*What days do you
and your family like
to celebrate?*

Celebrating special
times is fun. The
Church celebrates
too. We gather to
celebrate our faith
in Christ.

*What are your
favorite celebrations
of the Church?*

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National Directory for Catechesis

Implementing the National Directory for Catechesis: Learning Within the Christian Family. The National Directory teaches that the family is the “place in which the word of God is received and from which it is extended” (NDC 29D, page 101). Before class, make a “We Celebrate the Liturgical Year” worksheet for the children to complete with their parents. Divide the worksheet into three sections: Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter, and Ordinary Time. Briefly describe each season. Include the following question in each section: How does my family celebrate this time of the Church year? Provide blank space for written responses. End the worksheet by asking the family to name their favorite season and explain how it helps them to celebrate their faith.

Teach

FOCUS

- Read the “Faith Focus” question aloud. Invite the children to think silently about how they might answer it.
- Tell them that these two pages will help them learn more about the liturgical year of the Catholic Church.

DISCOVER

- Read and discuss the opening paragraph. Point out that the Church year helps us recall the important events in the life of Jesus.
- Invite the children to read silently “The Liturgical Year” to discover the meaning of the faith words *liturgy* and *worship* and to identify which seasons are part of the liturgical year.
- Read the last paragraph to the students to learn about the seasons of Advent and Christmas.
- Beginning with Advent, list the liturgical seasons on the board. Ask the children to tell you what the Church celebrates during each liturgical season.
- Discuss with the students how your parish celebrates the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

The Church Celebrates

Faith Focus

What is the liturgical year?

Faith Words

worship

Worship is the adoration and honor we give to God.

liturgy

The liturgy is the Church’s work of worshipping God.

Throughout the year you remember and celebrate many important occasions with your family. You celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. You celebrate other days on which something wonderful happened.

The Liturgical Year

The Church gathers all year long to celebrate her faith in Jesus Christ. We gather to **worship** God. Worship is giving adoration and honor to God. We call the Church’s work of worshipping God the **liturgy**.



The word *liturgy* means “the work of the people.” In the celebration of the liturgy the Church, the new People of God, joins in the work of worshipping God. The faithful, joined to Christ, the Head of the Church, and in unity with the Holy Spirit, give honor and glory to God the Father.

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Liturgy Tip

A Year of Grace. Each liturgical year is a year of grace. Grace is a free gift from God. Grace makes us sharers in the life of God and helps us live as children of God and followers of Jesus. We celebrate God’s grace in our lives through the events of the Church year. Use the liturgical lessons beginning on page 347 of the student text to enrich the children’s understanding and celebration of the Church’s year of grace.

Apply

REINFORCE

Have the children make faith word cards for worship and liturgy.

INTEGRATE

- Read the directions to "The Liturgical Year" activity aloud.
- Have the children look at the pictures on page 140 and write the correct name of the season next to the corresponding number.
- Ask the children to share with a partner how they celebrate Advent and Christmas at home.

PRAY

Have the children echo this prayer after you:

Holy Spirit, we celebrate your presence throughout the year. Help us to know the joy of your love. For this we pray. Amen.

The Church's year of worship is called the liturgical year. The liturgical year is made up of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time.

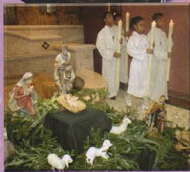
Advent and Christmas

Advent begins the liturgical year. We prepare for Christmas. We wait in hope for Christ's return in glory at the end of time. During Christmas we praise and thank God the Father for sending us his only Son, Jesus, to be the Savior of the world.



How does your parish celebrate Advent and Christmas?

Affirm appropriate responses.



The Liturgical Year

Each picture on page 140 reminds us of one of the seasons of the Church's year. Write the name of the season beside the correct number.

- _____ Advent
- _____ Christmas
- _____ Lent
- _____ Easter

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Teaching Tip

Extending the Activity. After the children complete the activity and name each of the pictures, take the time to go over each image with them. Divide the class into four groups and give each group a piece of poster paper. Assign each group one of the seasons. Ask the children to list the clues in the picture that they used to identify the season. Include the vestment colors, church decorations, and the celebration being depicted. Have each group share their work with the class.

Teach

PRAY

Have the children quiet themselves for prayer. Pray together the Glory Prayer.

FOCUS

- Remind the children that there are celebrations throughout the Church year.
- Read the "Faith Focus" question aloud and ask the children for possible answers. Tell them these two pages will help them learn that the highlight of the liturgical year is the Easter Triduum.

DISCOVER

- Have the students look at the pictures. Ask them if they have ever been to church services during Holy Week. Have them share what they remember about these liturgies.
- Write the faith words *Easter Triduum* on the board and next to it the words *three days*.
- Invite the children to read silently the first two paragraphs of "Lent and Easter" to discover what three days make up the Easter Triduum. **Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday.**
- Explain that during these three special days we celebrate and share in Jesus' Passion, death, and Resurrection.
- Share that there are fifty days of the Easter season.
- Invite a volunteer to read about the Elect in "Faith-Filled People" on page 143.

Faith Focus

When does the Church celebrate Lent and Easter?

Faith Words

Easter Triduum

The Easter Triduum, or "three days," is the center of the liturgical year. It begins on Holy Thursday evening and ends on Easter Sunday evening.



Holy Thursday



Good Friday

Just as our family and our country celebrate important times of the year, so does the Church.

Lent and Easter

During Lent we prepare for Easter. We join with those preparing for Baptism. We prepare to renew the promises we made at our Baptism. At the conclusion of Lent during Holy Week, the Church celebrates the Easter Triduum. The **Easter Triduum** is the center of the liturgical year. The word *triduum* means "three days."

Easter Vigil



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Teaching Tip

Discussion. Children at this age are already feeling pressure from peers. They may be hesitant to share with their classmates or the class as a whole. It can be helpful to share from your own experiences to elicit the children's interest and responses in class discussions. Self-disclosure can put children at ease and help them to identify with you. Use your best judgment when sharing personal information. Demand that the children listen respectfully to your stories and those of others.

Apply

REINFORCE

- Have students find the words that describe the faith word *Easter Triduum* and underline them. Then have them create a faith word card for *Easter Triduum*.

INTEGRATE

- Have the children complete the activity "Celebrating Easter" and share their work with a partner.
- Using their activity as a conversation starter, talk with the children about how their families celebrate Lent and Easter.

PRAY

- Gather the children for prayer and pray the Sign of the Cross.
- Have the class pray the Psalm verse on page 139 together.
- Conclude by praying the Sign of the Cross together.

The Easter Triduum begins on Holy Thursday evening and ends on Easter Sunday evening. It includes the celebrations on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday. During these three days we celebrate and share in Jesus' Passion, death, and Resurrection.

The fifty days of the Easter season are celebrated next. During the Easter season we celebrate and remember Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension.



Why are the seasons of Lent and Easter important?

Affirm appropriate responses.

Faith-Filled People

The Elect

At the Easter Vigil you may see a special group of people. They are called the Elect. They have accepted God's invitation to become members of the Church. At the Easter Vigil they receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Celebrating Easter

Draw a picture, write a poem, or tell a story about Easter.

Responses will vary.



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Background: Faith-Filled People

The Elect. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is a time for evangelization and conversion. It is a formation process by which adults and children are received into full communion with the Catholic Church. The word *elect* signifies that they have accepted God's invitation to be baptized. The Rite of Election takes place at the beginning of Lent. Thus Lent becomes a time of spiritual formation to help candidates prepare for full initiation into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil.

Enriching the Lesson

The "Celebrating the Triduum" activity on page 235 is related to today's content. You may wish to include it in today's lesson.

Teach

PRAY

Invite the children to quiet themselves for prayer. Have them echo this or a similar prayer after you.

Lord, we thank you for the chance to get to know you better each day. For this we praise you and thank you. Amen.

FOCUS

- Remind the children that the liturgical year has five seasons.
- Have a volunteer read aloud the "Faith Focus" question and invite the children to think silently about how they might answer it. Tell them that these two pages will help them understand that Ordinary Time is the longest season in the Church year.

DISCOVER

- Ask the children what the word *ordinary* means to them. Explain that the word *ordinary* that is used to describe this season does not mean that this season is less important. Rather, it is used to show that the weeks are numbered in order, such as the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Have the children read the first two paragraphs of "Ordinary Time" to learn about the two parts of Ordinary Time.
- Explain that the Church's longest season is called *Ordinary Time*.
- Invite volunteers to read the last paragraph of "Ordinary Time" to find out what the Gospel stories during Ordinary Time tell us about Jesus.

Faith Focus

What is the longest part of the liturgical year?

Faith Words

Ordinary Time

Ordinary Time includes the weeks of the liturgical year that are not the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, or Easter.

Ordinary Time

The remaining weeks of the liturgical year are called **Ordinary Time**. Ordinary Time is the longest part of the liturgical year. Ordinary Time includes the weeks that are not part of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, or Easter.

Ordinary Time has two parts. The first part begins after Christmas and continues to Lent. The second part begins after the fifty days of the Easter season and continues to Advent.

The Raising of Lazarus,
John 11:1-45



The Widow's
Offering,
Mark 12:41-44



The Sower and the Seed,
Mark 4:2-9



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Background: Church Tradition

Ordinary Time. Throughout the liturgical year various aspects of the Paschal Mystery unfold. During Ordinary Time, the Gospels continue to teach us more about Jesus' life and his saving work on earth. Hence, we who are gathered to hear God's word and receive the Eucharist come to know Jesus more intimately. We are challenged by his work and the love he shares with each of us.

Apply

REINFORCE

- Have the children turn to page 348 in their text to look at the liturgical calendar. Tell them to look at the pictures and notice how the pictures represent the seasons.
- Invite a volunteer to read "Our Catholic Faith."

INTEGRATE

- Explain the activity and have the children complete it independently.
- Invite volunteers to share their favorite story with the class.
- If time permits, choose one of the Gospel stories from page 144 and read it from the Bible. Have the children identify the picture that goes with the story you have read.

PRAY

Pray together the Glory Prayer on page 387.

During Ordinary Time we listen to stories from the Gospels that tell us about Jesus' life and saving work while he was on earth. We come to know Jesus more and more. We learn how we can live as his followers.



What does the Church celebrate during Ordinary Time?

Affirm appropriate responses.



Our Catholic Faith

Liturgical Colors

The Church uses colors to remind us of the liturgical seasons. Purple or violet is used for Advent and Lent. White or gold is used for Christmas and Easter. Green is used for Ordinary Time. On special days, such as Good Friday and Pentecost, red is used.



My Favorite Gospel Stories

Complete the sentences about your favorite Gospel story. Responses will vary. Affirm appropriate responses.

One of my favorite Gospel stories is _____

It is about _____

This Gospel story teaches me _____

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Teaching Tip

Introduce Liturgical Colors. Ask the pastor or a parish staff member to borrow some of the vestments worn during the liturgical seasons and special feasts. Share with the children the significance of each of the colors. Purple is the color of penance, white and gold signify rebirth and joyful celebration, and green is the color of life and hope. Include a cover on your prayer table each week in the color of the liturgical season.

Enriching the Lesson

The "Literature Connection" activity on page 235 is related to today's content. You may wish to include it in today's lesson.

Connect

PRAY

Write this prayer on the board and have the children pray it together.

God our Father, we praise you and thank you for the gift of your Son and our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOCUS

Remind the children that we celebrate the faith of the Church in Jesus Christ throughout the liturgical year. Tell the children that page 146 will help them discover other feasts of the Church that help them grow in their faith in Jesus Christ.

DISCOVER

- Invite volunteers to read aloud "Feasts of the Lord" to discover what all these feasts have in common. They all proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

INTEGRATE

- Ask the children to share with one another how celebrating the feasts of the Lord may help them grow in faith.
- Tell the children what season the Church is now celebrating and ask them to notice what color the celebrant is wearing the next time they are at Mass.

Enriching the Lesson

The "Creating a Liturgical Dance" activity on page 235 is related to today's content. You may wish to include it in today's lesson.

Our Church Makes a Difference



Epiphany



Annunciation



Presentation of the Lord

Feasts of the Lord

All throughout the liturgical year the Church celebrates her faith in Jesus Christ. In addition to his birth and the saving events of Jesus' Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension, the Church celebrates other feasts of the Lord.

These feasts of the Lord remember and proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of the world. He is the new and everlasting Covenant of friendship that God has made with all people.



How can celebrating the six feasts named on this page help you grow in your faith in Jesus Christ?

Affirm appropriate responses.



Baptism of the Lord



Transfiguration



Christ the King



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Special Needs

Learning New Vocabulary. Play a game called Rivet to learn and reinforce the vocabulary for "Feasts of the Lord." For each word draw the appropriate number of blanks on the board for the letters in the word. Begin to write a word one letter at a time. Allow students to try to guess the word or words as more letters are revealed. As each word is guessed, talk about the feast. You will want to do this activity with student books closed so they do not have the words in front of them!

Need: Children with learning difficulties

What Difference Does Faith Make in My Life?

The Church's liturgical year helps you keep your faith alive. When you take part in the celebrations of the liturgical year, you share in God's love.

Describe how the liturgical season that the Church is now celebrating helps you live as a follower of Jesus. Affirm appropriate responses.

Living as a Follower of Jesus

The Church is now celebrating the season of _____.

During this season I will remember that Jesus _____.

I will try to follow Jesus by _____.

My Faith Choice

This week I will celebrate that I am a follower of Jesus. I will _____.

Responses will vary.

Affirm appropriate responses.

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Teaching Tip

Focusing on the Liturgical Season. Reflect for a moment on the present season of the Church year. Think about how you are living the season in your day-to-day life. Consider how you might work to incorporate the lessons of the current liturgical season into lessons for the children.

Day 4

Apply

HIGHLIGHT

Remind the children that the Church's liturgical year helps us live as followers of Jesus.

RESPOND

- Read aloud the opening paragraph and the introduction to the activity.
- Invite the children to complete the phrases that describe how this liturgical season will help them live as followers of Jesus.

CHOOSE

- Invite the children to respond to "My Faith Choice."
- After a moment of prayerful reflection have the children review their faith choice.
- Encourage the children to put their faith choice into practice this week.
- If you intend to administer the chapter test from the Assessment Tools booklet, you may wish to send the "We Remember" review on page 149 home today as an assignment to help the children prepare for the test.

PRAY

- Gather the children for prayer and pray the Sign of the Cross.
- Have a volunteer read the Psalm verse and then pray the opening prayer together from page 139 in their text.
- Conclude by praying the Sign of the Cross together.

Day 5

We Pray

PREPARE

- Share with the children that they are going to learn to sign a prayer of thanksgiving and pray it together.
- Have the children work with partners and practice the signs one word at a time.

GATHER

- When the students are ready, gather the children in the prayer area.
- Call the children to prayer with a moment of silence. Ask the children to take a few deep cleansing breaths before beginning.

PRAY

Lead the children in prayer. Gesture to the students when it is time for them to respond.

We Pray

Thank You, God

Learn to sign this prayer of thanksgiving.
Pray it alone and with other people.



Thank you, God, for everything.

All: Sign "Thank you, God, for everything."

Leader: A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Leader: Jesus told his friend Nicodemus: "God loves the world very much. That's why God sent me into the world. If you believe in me, you will never die. You will live forever with God! God did not send me to tell people that they were bad. God sent me to help people be good. Believe in me and you will be good and happy. You will live forever with God."

Based on John 3:16-18

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sign "Thank you, God, for everything."

All:

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Liturgy Tip

Signs of the Liturgical Year. Teaching children the American Sign Language signs for simple prayers serves several purposes. First, from a liturgical standpoint, it stimulates participation by allowing the children to use their bodies in prayer. This especially appeals to kinesthetic learners. Second, it shows respect for an important segment of the faith community. If some Masses are signed in your parish, ask the children to watch for signed prayers they have learned.

Need: Children with learning difficulties

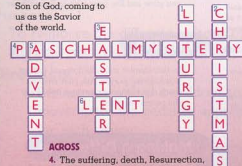
We Remember

What I Have Learned

Use the clues to complete the puzzle.

DOWN

- The Church's work of worshipping God.
- We celebrate Jesus, the Son of God, coming to us as the Savior of the world.
- We celebrate Jesus' being raised from the dead.
- We prepare for Christmas.



ACROSS

- The suffering, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus.
- We get ready for Easter.

Answer the following.

- Use the correct liturgical color and color the crosses next to the seasons of the liturgical year.



Advent



Christmas



Christmas



Ordinary Time



Lent

- Describe your favorite liturgical season.

Responses will vary.

To Help You Remember

- The Church's year of worship is called the liturgical year. The seasons of the liturgical year are Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time.
- The Easter Triduum is the center of the liturgical year.
- Ordinary Time is the longest part of the liturgical year.

Growing in Faith

One important thing I learned this week is

Responses will vary.

This is important because

Affirm appropriate

responses.

What will people see me doing as I live my faith choice this week?

Affirm appropriate

responses.

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Day 5

We Remember

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

- Introduce the crossword puzzle activity and invite the children to complete it on their own. Go over each answer with the children.
- Have the students color the crosses next to each liturgical season and then describe to a partner their favorite liturgical season. Be sure that they tell their partner why it is their favorite.
- Write the words *Advent*, *Triduum*, and *Easter* on the board with the letters scrambled.
- Ask the children to unscramble the letters to name different parts of the Church year.
- Challenge the children to create a definition for each word. They may check their answer with the "To Help You Remember" statements.

GROWING IN FAITH

- Give the children a few moments to silently read and think about how they might complete the first two statements in "Growing in Faith." Have them write their answers.
- Canvass the room for responses to the first two statements.
- Have the children turn to page 147 and reread their faith choice. Ask them to think about how they will put that choice into action. Then have them write one way people will see them putting their faith choice into action this week.

Teaching Tip

Celebrating Liturgy. Ask the children to share with a partner some ways they take part in the work of the Church. Have them name some of the ways they can take part in the liturgical season their Church is now celebrating. Brainstorm with the children how they might put together a children's liturgy that reflects the current liturgical season.

At Home

ENCOURAGE

Have the children carefully tear out pages 149 and 150 along the perforation. Encourage the children to share the pages with their family and to do the activities together. If they did not complete the review activities on page 149 by the end of the session, emphasize that they can complete them with their family.

VISIT FAITHFIRST.COM

- Share with the children the many activities on the Faith First Web site.
- Encourage them to visit www.FaithFirst.com.

Challenge the children to write a letter to their family members. Encourage them to share the letter with their family members.

Encourage the children to write a letter to their family members. Encourage them to share the letter with their family members.

Before Moving On . . .

As you finish today's lesson, reflect on the following question before moving on to the next chapter.

What do I do to encourage and affirm the sense of humor I see in some of the children?



With My Family

This Week . . .

In chapter 11, "The Church's Year," your child learned about the Church's year of worship, or the liturgical year. Like the calendar year, the liturgical year is made up of a cycle of seasons and important days. The Easter Triduum, or the three days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday, is the heart of the liturgical year. The seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter revolve around this solemn three-day celebration of Christ's Passion, death, and Resurrection. The remaining weeks of the liturgical year are called Ordinary Time.

For more on the teachings of the Catholic Church on the liturgy and the liturgical year, see Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraph numbers 1135-1186.



Sharing God's Word

Reread the Gospel passage that you heard proclaimed at Mass this weekend. You can find the reading by clicking on "Gospel Reflections" at www.FaithFirst.com. Emphasize how the Gospel reading helps you grow and live your faith in Jesus Christ.

Praying

In this chapter your child signed a short thanksgiving prayer. Ask your child to teach you the prayer on page 148. Pray the prayer together.

Making a Difference

Choose one of the following activities to do as a family or design a similar activity of your own.

- When you take part in Mass this weekend, look at the color of the vestments and identify what liturgical season the Church is celebrating. Look around the church for other clues that tell you about the liturgical season.
- At dinnertime ask about how celebrating the liturgical year helps your family grow in and live your faith in Jesus Christ.
- Create place mats for the current season of the liturgical year. Use the place mats at family meals.

For more ideas on ways your family can live your faith, visit the "Faith First for Families" page at www.FaithFirst.com. This week take time to read an article from "Just for Parents."



Evaluate

Take a few moments to evaluate this week's lesson. I feel (circle one) about this week's lesson.

- very pleased
- OK
- disappointed

The activity the children enjoyed most was . . .

The concept that was most difficult to teach was . . . because . . .

Something I would like to do differently is . . .

ENRICHING THE LESSON

Creating a Liturgical Dance

Purpose

To reinforce the different seasons of the liturgical year (taught on pages 140–147)

Directions

- Brainstorm with the children some movements and gestures appropriate for each season.
- In small groups have the children create a dance for one of the seasons.
- Invite them to choose streamers appropriate for their season to use in their dance.
- Have the different groups present their dance and ask the other children to name the season.

Materials

crepe paper streamers

Celebrating the Triduum

Purpose

To reinforce that the Easter Triduum is the center of the liturgical year (taught on page 142)

Directions

- Help the children recall the events of each day of the Triduum.
- Have the children work with partners to create a diorama for one of the days of the Triduum.
- Using shoe boxes and colored paper, have the children create the background for one of these days.
- Then, using pipe cleaners and other art supplies, have the children create and place the people in the scene.
- Ask the children to display and describe their scenes.

Materials

colored paper and other art supplies
shoe boxes
pipe cleaners
scissors and markers

Literature Connection

Purpose

To reinforce that during Ordinary Time we listen to stories from the Gospels that tell us about Jesus' life and his saving work on earth (taught on pages 144 and 145)

Directions

- The Gospels tell the story of Jesus Christ. Choose the Gospel that is being read during Ordinary Time of the current liturgical cycle to draw the children into the stories that the Church is reflecting on this year.
- List several of the Gospel stories for the current year on the board.
- Pass out Bibles to the children and point out to them how to find the passages listed by using the guide words and numbers at the top of the pages.
- Have the children work in groups of three or four. Assign a Gospel story to each group.
- After each group has read its passage, have the children prepare and perform a role-play of it for the class.
- Discuss the message of each story.

Materials

Bibles



Music Connection

- "I Come with Joy," A. Buchanan. *Singing Our Faith (SOF)* #184.
- "Pues Si Vivimos/If We Are Living" (Spanish traditional), arr. D. Kodner. *SOF* #180.
- "Walking By Faith," D. Haas. *SOF* #179.
- "We Are Many Parts," M. Haugen. *SOF* #182.