

LIGUORI CHRISTIAN INITIATION PROGRAM

# Journey of Faith



**FOR CHILDREN**

**INQUIRY LEADER GUIDE**

***Journey of Faith for Children, Inquiry Leader Guide (826368)***

*Imprimi Potest:* Stephen T. Rehrauer, CSsR, Provincial, Denver Province, the Redemptorists

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## Welcome to *Journey of Faith*!

Liguori Publications is dedicated to providing parishes with quality resources like *Journey of Faith*. Since 1993, *Journey of Faith* has established itself as a trusted and beloved program for catechists to guide participants through the RCIA process. As the Catholic Church takes on the challenges and graces of each generation, *Journey of Faith* has been carefully developed to help you meet the changing needs of adults, teens, and children who are inquiring about and seeking initiation into the Catholic Church—ever ancient, ever new.

The *Journey of Faith* program is cohesive, comprehensive, and flexible. The forty-eight catechetical lessons and three corresponding *Leader Guides* create a practical and attractive formation process for today's team leaders, catechists, and participants. All the materials are referenced to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and have been granted an *imprimatur* from the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Unbaptized children over the age of seven are to be considered catechumens. Liguori offers *Journey of Faith for Children* to any child needing formation or sacraments. All *Journey of Faith for Children* products are available in Spanish under the title *Jornada de Fe para niños*.

We hope you enjoy using *Journey of Faith* and find it enlightening and engaging for all. To see our entire collection of sacramental preparation titles, parish subscriptions, formation and spirituality books, and more, please visit [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org) to contact us for a copy of the latest catalog.

—The editors

## An Overview of the RCIA

### The Historical Development

The decision to become a member of the early Christian community bore serious ramifications. Becoming Christian meant a break with one's background and often required fracturing relationships with the non-Christian members of one's family. In many cases, this decision meant a willingness to suffer persecution or even death, as seen in the example of the martyrs Perpetua and Felicity. Perpetua, a noblewoman of Carthage and mother of an infant son, and Felicity, a pregnant slave woman, both refused to denounce Christianity and were subsequently martyred during the public games in the amphitheater around the year 200.

Just as the decision to become a Christian was not made lightly, the formation process wasn't quick or easy. Catechumens—those in the process of preparing for baptism—were invited into a step-by-step journey of three or more years with the community before achieving full membership. During this process they were expected not only to begin to accept Christian beliefs but also to begin to live the Christian life. The community shared their faith with the catechumens and celebrated each step along with them.

One period of this preparation has remained throughout the centuries: the season of Lent. Originally this time was one of immediate preparation for baptism, which was celebrated at the Easter Vigil. During Lent, the entire Christian community, especially the catechumens, devoted themselves to prayer, fasting, and self-scrutiny. For those already baptized, it was a time to remember and renew their original commitment.

During the solemn Easter Vigil, the catechumens—now called the elect—received the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist) and were welcomed into the community. As a rule, this initiation was celebrated at the Easter Vigil only. Formation of the newly baptized did not end with the rites of Holy Saturday night, however, but continued with further instruction and the daily living out of Christian values.

This process began to change in the fourth century, when periodic persecution of Christians was replaced by tolerance. Because of the favor many emperors showed toward it, Christianity became fashionable,

and many people began entering the catechumenate for social and political reasons. As a result, the pattern and standards for formation gradually transitioned to the point where, by the fifth century, the rites of initiation were separated into the three sacraments we know and celebrate today. Infant baptism became the norm, and the catechumenate vanished.

The Church published the first *Roman Catechism* in 1566, following the Council of Trent. This book of teachings was presented in question-and-answer form and was used for instruction of the faithful. Such catechisms later became the foundation for what came to be called "convert classes." Using a teacher-student model, the priest would meet with interested parties and assist them in memorizing certain prayers and learning the material in the catechism. The duration of the process, the material to be covered, and the format were left to the priest or parish custom, with few outside directives given.

Successful completion of these classes meant either baptism or formal reception into the Catholic Church. This event was usually celebrated in a private ceremony, with only close family in attendance. Those received into the Church would be confirmed by the bishop at the cathedral or would receive the sacrament in their local parish whenever the bishop came to confirm the schoolchildren. Follow-up for the new Catholics, if any, might consist of being sent to a formal course in liturgy, Scripture, dogma, or morality.

Following World War II, a call for a change in the formation of new Catholics came from the Church in Africa. They began to use the ancient form of the catechumenate to provide stability in formation and a period of time for faith to mature. The Second Vatican Council called for a thorough revision of all the rites (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy [*Sacrosanctum Concilium*], 4), and a committee that engaged in a formal study and revision of the methods leading to baptism or reception into the Catholic Church was formed. This study resulted in the promulgation of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)* in 1972.

Thus the catechumenate was restored: a process of formation, sanctified by various liturgical rites that mark progress in the journey of faith and culminate in full membership in the Catholic Christian community. An integral part of the revision is that the whole process and its rites are to be celebrated with and in the context of the local parish community and diocese.

## Q4: Who Is Jesus Christ?

**Catechism:** 514–682

### Objectives

- Define Jesus as fully human and fully divine.
- Discover that Christ is the way to the Father and salvation.
- Develop participants' relationship with Jesus through personal sharing and reflection.

### Leader Meditation

*John 10:7–18*

Jesus likens himself to a caring shepherd who would lay down his life for his sheep. Reflect on what these words tell us about the person Jesus.

### Leader Preparation

- Read the lesson, this lesson plan, the Scripture passage, and the *Catechism* sections.
- Be familiar with the vocabulary terms for this lesson: Gospel, miracle. Definitions are given in the lesson and in this guide's glossary.
- Be prepared to model and review the steps to looking up Bible verses. There are many in this lesson. Determine ahead of time whether you can cover them all as a group, will divide them up for groups, or will leave some for participants to reflect on outside of the session.
- Ask your pastor for guidance on possible questions or concerns surrounding Jesus' life, identity, words, and dual natures. Perhaps he can help to lead the session or recommend ways to explain the material to the children.

### Welcome

As the children arrive, welcome any new inquirers and sponsors. Check for supplies and immediate needs. Ask for any questions or comments about the last lesson that may have come up since then. Begin promptly.

### Opening Scripture


*John 10:7–18*

Light the candle and read aloud. Emphasize the importance of Jesus' words, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me." Clarify for the children what it means to be Jesus' own. As Jesus' own, we belong to Jesus' "flock" or family, just like we belong to our families. That doesn't mean Jesus "owns" us, like we are his slaves. You will discuss free will and making good choices in later lessons, so now may be a good time to focus on the idea that we belong to Jesus' "flock."

As Lord, Christ is also head of the Church, which is his Body. Taken up to heaven and glorified after he had thus fully accomplished his mission, Christ dwells on earth in his Church.

CCC 669





# Journey of Faith

**Q4**

**INQUIRY**


## Who Is Jesus Christ?

Tomás was lost. He was supposed to be going to Terrence's house, but all the streets looked the same. Tomás knew he should probably turn around and go home, but he kept walking. Tomás knew he was way off track, but he didn't know how to get back on the right road.

"What are you doing way over here?" Terrence called when he saw Tomás.

Tomás felt relieved. "I'm lost. I didn't know where to go."

"That's OK. I'm walking my dog. If you walk back with us I can show you the way."



**CHILDREN**

CCC: 514–682

## Who Is Jesus Christ?

Read the lesson anecdote as a class and ask the children if they can think of a difference between the kind of lost Tomás was and the kind of lost Jesus talks about.

*Tomás was physically lost. He thought he was on the correct street, but he wasn't. Terrence had to show him the right way to go. Jesus talks about us being lost spiritually. This means we might be mixed up about what choices are right or good, how to treat people, or how to behave.*



## The Way

Ask the children how Jesus could be the way to God. Emphasize that Jesus is like our spiritual map. Through his life, he gives us directions on how to get to God.

Ask the children to think about how Jesus leads them to God. Encourage them to think of specific stories and share a story of your own as an example.

## The Truth

As a group, make a list of ways we know Jesus is the truth.

*Jesus never lies. Jesus always does the things he says he'll do. Jesus cares about us and wants the best for us. When we do what Jesus says, we grow closer to God. Jesus is really God and wants us to go to heaven and be with him.*

## The Life

Pause here to do the "Jesus Is..." activity as a group. Emphasize that we know Jesus is God through his words and his actions.

- How does light help you see?  
How is Jesus like a light  
(John 8:12)?

*Light clears away shadows and the dark so we can find our way and see the things around us. Jesus lights up our lives by helping us to tell right from wrong and to see the people around us.*

- What does a shepherd do?  
How is Jesus like a shepherd  
(John 10:14)?

*A shepherd takes care of sheep and keeps them safe and healthy. Jesus takes care of us and helps keep us safe by giving us rules to follow and showing us how to live. Jesus watches over us and listens to us when we talk to him.*

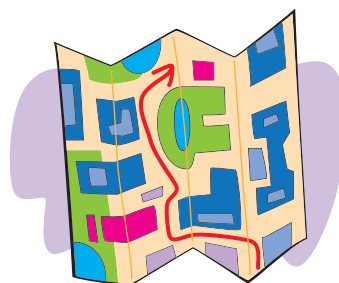
### INQUIRY

### JOURNEY OF FAITH

#### Who Is Jesus?

Jesus is the most important person in our journey toward God. Jesus Christ is the center of our faith. Without Jesus, we couldn't know God. Without Jesus, there would be no Church.

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Let's look at those words carefully.

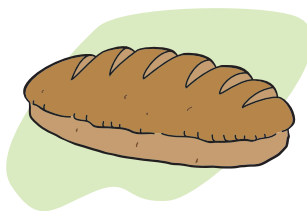


#### The Way

Jesus is the Way to God. When we know Jesus, we know God. What we learn from Jesus leads us closer to God.



*How does Jesus lead you to God?*



- How does a vine help the plant it's attached to? How is Jesus like a vine (John 15:1)?

*A vine keeps a plant rooted to the ground, where it can get nourishment and survive storms. A plant without a vine would wither up or blow away in a bad storm. Jesus keeps us "rooted" to God, where we can get spiritual nourishment and grow strong in our faith.*

#### The Truth

Jesus didn't say, "What I tell you is the truth," but "I am the truth." Jesus asks us to believe in him because he is God. When we believe in someone, we trust what they say is true, too. That's why we also believe what Jesus taught.



*Do you believe that Jesus is really God?*

#### The Life

Jesus taught us how to live by his example. Jesus would often go off alone and pray. This helped him understand and obey his Father. We also spend time in prayer and live by God's rules. Jesus brings us everlasting life. That good news fills our lives with joy and hope.



*What in your life brings you joy or hope?*

#### Jesus Is...

Jesus didn't only perform good deeds. He also said a lot of things about himself. Here are a few:

- "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). How does light help you see? How is Jesus like a light?
- "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:14). What does a shepherd do? How is Jesus like a shepherd?
- "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower" (John 15:1). How does a vine help the plant it's attached to? How is Jesus like a vine?
- "I am the bread of life" (John 6:48). How does food give you life? How is Jesus like food?

- How does food give you life? How is Jesus like food (John 6:48)?

*Food nourishes our bodies and helps us stay active and healthy. Jesus helps our souls to stay active and healthy. Jesus nourishes our bodies and souls in a special way through the Eucharist.*



## The Life of Jesus

We read about Jesus' life in the **Gospels** of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus' birth was a miracle. God sent an angel named Gabriel to ask a girl named Mary if she was willing to be Jesus' mother. She was engaged to a man named Joseph. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and Mary and Joseph helped him to grow knowing and loving God.

Jesus did many good things. He taught people about God. He forgave people when they were sorry for the wrong things they'd done. He also healed people who were sick or injured. Some of the most exciting stories about Jesus describe the miracles he performed. A **miracle** is an event that doesn't have a scientific explanation. It seems impossible, but there's proof that it happened.

Not everyone liked what Jesus was doing or saying. So the religious leaders of the time plotted to have Jesus killed on a cross. Jesus knew what they were planning, but he let them plot anyway. Jesus died on a cross, but three days later, the greatest miracle of all happened. Jesus rose from the dead! He appeared to his friends so they would know he was alive. Anyone who believes in Jesus knows that he is real and lives forever.

INQUIRY

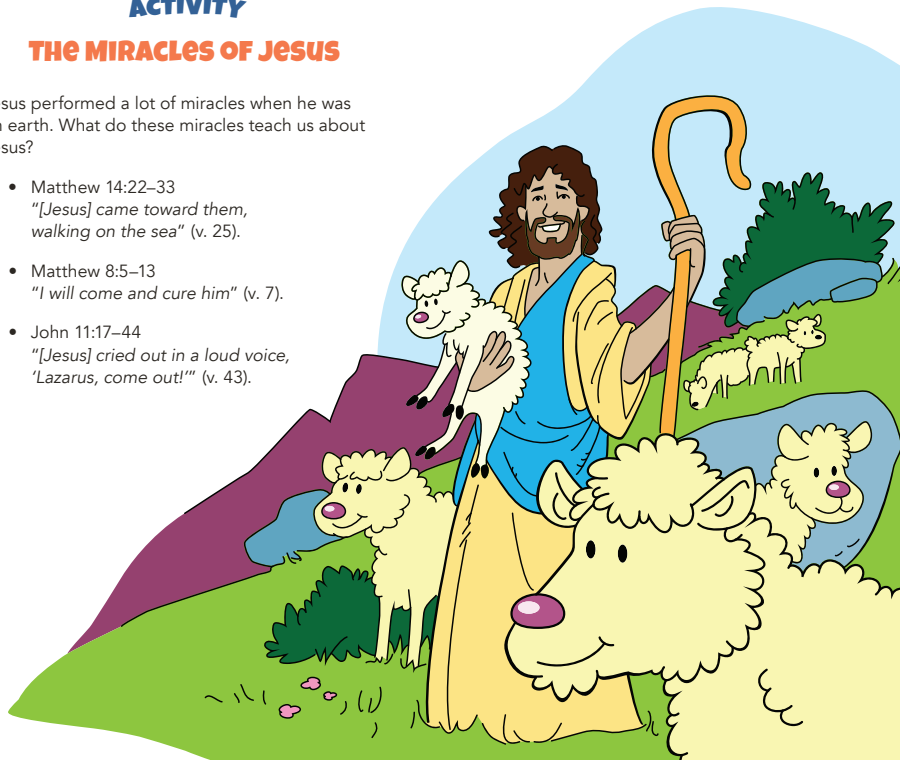
JOURNEY OF FAITH

## ACTIVITY

### THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

Jesus performed a lot of miracles when he was on earth. What do these miracles teach us about Jesus?

- Matthew 14:22–33  
"[Jesus] came toward them, walking on the sea" (v. 25).
- Matthew 8:5–13  
"I will come and cure him" (v. 7).
- John 11:17–44  
"[Jesus] cried out in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!'" (v. 43).



## The Life of Jesus

Remind the children that the four Gospels appear in the New Testament and that the Gospels were written to teach us about Jesus.

Ask the whole group if they have heard any stories about miracles. While their examples don't need to be Church-approved miracles, be sure they see the difference between a miracle that's really attributed to God and something

people say is a "miracle" because it's just unexpected (like, "it's a miracle you cleaned your room without being asked").

Complete "The Miracles of Jesus" activity as a group; answers appear to the right. Because this activity comes before the children have learned how to navigate the Bible, help them locate the passages and read them aloud. Reading from a children's Bible storybook may be preferable with younger children.

- Matthew 14:22–33

*This miracle reveals Jesus' divine nature (that Jesus is God) and that because Jesus is God he can command nature.*

- Matthew 8:5–13

*This miracle reveals that Jesus would accept Gentiles (people who weren't Jewish) as his followers, too. It also reveals Jesus' ability to heal us.*

- John 11:17–44

*This miracle reveals that Jesus, as God, had authority over death, and could bring people back to life.*

## Final Activity

As you wrap up the lesson, give the children time to complete the final activity of the lesson, "You Know Me." Ask the children to share one fact they learned about Jesus with the rest of the group. Walk around and see what the children are writing. Affirm good answers and help clarify any confusion.



### "You Know Me"

List five things you learned about Jesus today.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### In Short

- Jesus is fully human and fully divine.
- Christ is the way to the Father and salvation.
- Your friendship with Jesus grows through sharing and reflection.



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## Closing Prayer

Teach the children to pray the memorial acclamation below by asking them to repeat each line after you. Explain that these statements summarize our faith and declare who Jesus is. These lines are so important, we say them together at every Mass.

*When we eat this Bread  
and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.*

## Take-Home

Ask the children and their parents or guardians to read John 1:1–18 together. Suggest splitting up the reading into one or two verses every night, depending on when your next session will be, so families have an opportunity to reflect together. Ask the children to please focus on how the passages talk about Jesus.

LIGUORI CHRISTIAN INITIATION PROGRAM

# Journey of Faith



**FOR CHILDREN**

**CATECHUMENATE LEADER GUIDE**



***Journey of Faith for Children, Catechumenate Leader Guide (827181)***

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C7. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick
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## The Catechumenate: A Period and a Process

Since the time of the early Church, generally “the catechumenate” referred to the entire process of Christian conversion and initiation. It spanned multiple years and involved formal instruction, acts of penitence, and public rites that confirmed the community’s approval as well as the catechumen’s changed status.

Today, *catechumenate*, and *catechumen* in some respects, refers to a specific stage within the typical RCIA process. The rite of acceptance has been called a “first step,” even though most participants take part in a period of inquiry as well as unknown years of personal discernment before contacting a Catholic parish (RCIA 42). While the rite of election technically “closes the period of the catechumenate proper,” catechumens (then the *elect*) and candidates continue to meet for months and have not yet been fully initiated (RCIA 118; see also *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 6).

The period of the catechumenate remains at the heart of the RCIA process. Team members, catechists, and participants should take advantage of all its benefits and allow it to progress naturally. Especially when an inquirer enters the process later than others, Lent arrives early, or there are exceptional circumstances, it may be best to extend the length of this period rather than rushing through or shortchanging the participant’s needs and experiences.

While the catechumenate is distinctly reserved for more formal instruction and presentation of essential doctrine, it is also a time for participants to practice and apply their faith. The Church identifies four goals for the catechumenate (RCIA 75). During this period, participants will:

1. receive a “suitable catechesis...planned to be gradual and complete in its coverage....This catechesis leads the catechumens not only to an appropriate acquaintance with dogmas and precepts but also to a profound sense of the mystery of salvation...” (see also the Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity [*Ad Gentes*], 14, from the Second Vatican Council documents).
2. “become familiar with the Christian way of life..., learn to turn more readily to God in prayer, ...and to practice love of neighbor, even at the cost of self-renunciation.”
3. participate in “suitable liturgical rites, which purify the catechumens little by little and strengthen them with God’s blessing.... At Mass they may also take part with the faithful in the Liturgy of the Word, thus better preparing themselves for their eventual participation in the liturgy of the Eucharist.”
4. “learn how to work actively with others to spread the Gospel and build up the Church....”

Throughout the catechumenate, catechumens and candidates will undergo “a progressive change of outlook and morals” (AG 13). RCIA leaders and sponsors can be catalysts for this spiritual transformation by providing opportunities for reflection, interaction with the community, and by supporting their study with clear and accurate information. Many features of the *Journey of Faith* program and materials assist you in achieving those goals.

Prior to the rite of election, leaders, sponsors, and participants themselves should observe an increase in the participant’s understanding and ownership of his or her Catholic Christian faith. The signing of names into the *Book of the Elect* signifies the fuller “yes” to Christ and Church that began in his or her heart at the rite of acceptance.



## Rites Belonging to the Catechumenate

### Celebrations of the Word of God

The catechumenate, indeed the entire RCIA process, is connected intrinsically to the liturgical year. The Church recommends that it last at least one year to ensure that catechumens experience the fullness of the paschal mystery as reflected in the liturgy.

Many RCIA groups attend the Sunday Liturgy of the Word together. Others meet during the week to proclaim and reflect on the upcoming readings. You may combine these celebrations with the catechetical sessions or keep them separate. However you structure your RCIA process, maintaining a connection to the seasons of the Church year and regularly, prayerfully breaking open the Scriptures is vitally important.

#### Model for a Celebration of the Word of God

1. *Song.* The celebration opens with an appropriate hymn or chant.
2. *Readings and Responsorial Psalm.* A baptized member, ideally a trained lector, proclaims a reading or two from Scripture. As in Mass, the first or Old Testament readings are followed by a psalm, either sung or in a call-and-response format.
3. *Lesson.* The RCIA director, pastor, or another trained catechist briefly explains and applies the readings.
4. *Concluding Rites.* The celebration closes with a prayer or one or more of the optional rites below (RCIA 85–89).

### Optional Rites

Catechumens and candidates can be nourished by other liturgical rites during this period. The Church offers texts and guidelines for minor exorcisms (petitions for strength in the challenges of faith and struggle against temptation), blessings, and anointings, which may occur on their own or conclude a celebration of the word (RCIA 90–103). Speak to your priest or deacon about when and how these might benefit your group.

Also, you will need to determine what rites are appropriate for the period of enlightenment and how they will fit into the weeks leading up to the Easter Vigil. The Presentations of the Creed and Lord's Prayer can be moved to late in the catechumenate if necessary, but the priest, deacon, or director of religious education (DRE) should ensure that the catechumens are ready beforehand.

If the rites of election and/or calling are celebrated by the bishop elsewhere in the diocese, both the parish and participants will benefit from the rite of sending. In this rite, the local pastor and community preliminarily approve and celebrate the participants' readiness (see RCIA 106–17, 434–45, 530–46). It demonstrates their present, though distant, love and support and strengthens the catechumens and candidates for their return and entrance into the Lenten season.

## C5: The Sacrament of the Eucharist

**Catechism:** 1322–1419

### Objectives

- Recognize the scriptural context for Catholic teaching on the Eucharist.
- Relate and reflect on the Real Presence in the Eucharist.
- Identify the call to imitate Christ, especially through sacrifice.

### Leader Meditation

*John 6:25–51*

As Catholics, our faith in the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist sets us apart from many other Christian churches. Meditate on this passage from St. John's Gospel, which proclaims the central truth upon which all Catholic truths are based. Our faith must be like that of the apostles, who answered Jesus, saying, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

### Leader Preparation

- Read the lesson, this lesson plan, the Scripture passage, and the *Catechism* sections. This may help you answer questions from children coming from faith traditions that view holy Communion as only symbolic.
- If possible, try to schedule a time of eucharistic adoration for your RCIA group.
- If you can, show the children unconsecrated bread and wine, plus a Communion chalice and a paten.
- Be familiar with the following vocabulary terms: Eucharist, substance. The definitions are in this guide's glossary.

### Welcome

Greet participants as they arrive. Check for supplies and immediate needs. Solicit questions or comments about the previous session and/or share new information and findings. Begin promptly.

### Opening Scripture

*John 6:25–51*

Light the candle and read aloud. Before you begin the lesson, ask the children what they think it means when Jesus says he is the "bread of life" or "bread come down from heaven."

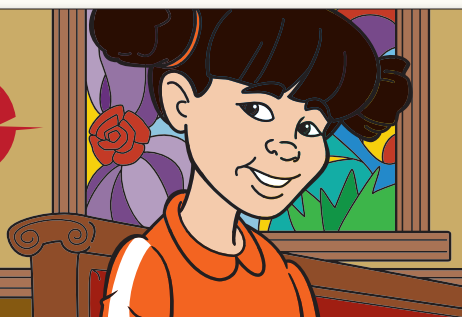
The holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist.

CCC 1322

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# Journey of Faith



C5  
CATECHUMENATE

## The Sacrament of the Eucharist

"The Eucharist can be a complicated mystery to understand," Mrs. Evans said. "Some people believe that the bread and wine are just symbols. Or that the bread and wine don't remain the Body and Blood after Communion. As Catholics, we believe the bread and wine really become the Body and Blood of Jesus."

"But what does it taste like?" asked Tanya.

"Why didn't Jesus just make a different way of sharing himself?" wondered Terrence.

Mrs. Evans said, "Communion still tastes like bread and wine even though it's been transformed. Jesus had a reason for sharing himself in this way. We're going to read about it in Scripture."



CHILDREN

CCC 1322-1419

## The Sacrament of the Eucharist

Answer the reflection question at the top of the next page as a group by writing down questions on the board or in another place where you can keep track of them. You'll come back to these questions at the end of the lesson to see which ones you've answered and which ones you may need to check on and then answer at the next lesson.

## The Last Supper of Jesus

Depending on the average age of the children in your group, you may want to read the actual Scripture passages cited in the lesson.

After you've read through the story of the Last Supper, ask the children what actions Jesus did or what symbols and words he used during the meal.

*He preached to his apostles before the meal, he used bread and wine, he lifted the bread up and broke it, he called the bread his Body, he lifted up the cup (chalice), he said the wine was his Blood, he shared the meal with his friends, and so on.*

Once you've gone through the story, ask children if these actions, words, or symbols remind them of anything. *(They should think of the Mass.)*

Then ask the children what happened after the Last Supper. *(Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross for our sins.)* Emphasize to the children the importance of Jesus really and truly offering himself up on the cross for our sins. Not only did Jesus give us his Body and Blood at the Last Supper, he also gave up his body and shed his blood for us on the cross.

Ask the children to think about ways they can live like Jesus by sacrificing for others. Then ask each child to share a way, compiling all replies into a list. *(Responses will vary, but some may include sacrificing time to do extra chores at home, giving up part of an allowance to donate to the collection at Mass on Sunday, and sacrificing play time to help a younger sibling or classmate with schoolwork.)*



What questions do you have about the Eucharist?

### The Last Supper of Jesus (adapted from Matthew 26:26–29)

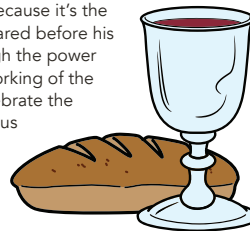
Jesus was at supper with his closest friends. He was sitting near Peter, James, and John. As everyone gathered at the table, Jesus talked about many things. Jesus told his friends about a love that never ends. "You are all my friends," he said.

Then he broke and shared the bread. "This is my body," Jesus said. "It will be given up so all of you may live." Then he filled a cup and said, "This is the blood I shed. My own life will be the best gift I can give."

This made his friends sad, but he told them to be happy. God had planned it this way. "I will come again, and then you all will know that the Son of God is in the world to stay."

We call this biblical event in history the Last Supper because it's the last meal Jesus shared before his crucifixion. Through the power of God and the working of the Holy Spirit we celebrate the Last Supper of Jesus at every Mass.

We call it the **Eucharist**, and it's a holy meal you get to share with Jesus and the whole Church.



### Sharing a Special Meal

Sharing a meal together is a way to get to know people better and show we care. Families talk about their days over dinner. When we have friends come in from out of town we invite them over to share a meal. We celebrate holidays by getting together with relatives for a special meal.

**List three times you and your family or friends share a meal. Then in one or two sentences explain why that meal is special.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### The Real Presence of Jesus

In the sacrament of the Eucharist, you will receive the Body and Blood of Jesus—just like his disciples at the Last Supper. We know Jesus is really present in the form of bread and wine because Jesus told his disciples, "This is my body." He didn't say, "This is a symbol of my body" or, "This is both my body and blood and bread and wine." The bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

## Sharing a Special Meal

Give the children time to respond to the reflection question. They may need to continue their answers on a separate sheet of paper. Then ask them to find a partner and share one of their responses.

## The Real Presence of Jesus

Emphasize that the Eucharist really does become the Body and Blood of Jesus even though its appearance remains the same. Remind the children that the sacraments are physical signs of invisible realities, just like the appearance of bread and wine is a physical sign of God's invisible presence.

When the priest calls on the Holy Spirit at Mass, God makes Jesus as present as the person sitting next to us in the pew. What we see and touch points us to a reality that remains invisible. When we eat his Body and drink his Blood, Jesus enters our hearts to help us live in his love.

The Eucharist still looks and tastes like bread and wine even though it's been transformed. That's because it's **substance**, what something really is, changes even though its appearance doesn't. We can't explain how this happens, but we believe because Jesus told us it's true. It's a mystery of faith. Only God holds the answer.

### The Unbelievable Promise

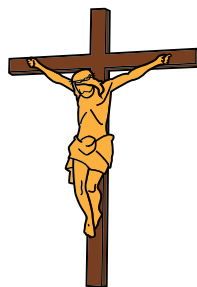
Jesus made a special promise about the Eucharist. One day, when he was teaching a large crowd, he said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever... and I will raise him on the last day" (John 6:51, 54).

Many people didn't understand what Jesus was saying. "This is too hard to believe," they said, and walked away. But the disciples stayed because they believed the promise Jesus made about eternal life. They wanted to be with him forever.

Jesus makes this promise to you, too. If you eat this bread, Jesus' Body, you will live forever with God in heaven.

### A Super Kind of Love

After the Last Supper, Jesus did exactly what he promised—he suffered and died on the cross for us. It must have been hard for his Mother and friends to watch his suffering. But imagine their joy when Jesus came back from the dead on Easter! That day they knew the power of Jesus' love. They knew his promise of eternal life would come true.



When we receive the Eucharist at Mass, we remember that Jesus gave his life for us. We remember that his sacrifice gives us eternal life and saves us from death. We remember and thank God for Jesus. Eucharist even means thanksgiving!

*Thank you, Jesus!*



### A Super Kind of Love

As you discuss the Eucharist as Thanksgiving, go around the room and ask each child to share one thing she or he wants to thank Jesus for today. After each statement, the rest of the group responds, "Thank you, Jesus."

## Final Activity

Give the children time at the end of the session to complete the final activity. Walk around as the children work and affirm correct answers and offer clarity on any points of confusion. The children's answers may vary. Sample responses follow for your reference.

### List three things you learned about the Eucharist today.

1. It's really Jesus' Body and Blood.
2. It still tastes like bread and wine.
3. It's a meal we share with the Church.

### List three promises Jesus made about the Eucharist.

1. The Eucharist is really Jesus' Body and Blood.
2. If we eat Jesus' Body and drink his Blood, we will have eternal life.
3. Jesus died for us, and he will come again.



## WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

List three things you learned about the Eucharist today.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

List three promises Jesus made about the Eucharist.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## In Short



- The Bible describes the first Eucharist in the Last Supper.
- The Real Presence of Jesus is in the Eucharist.
- We listen for the call to imitate Christ.

*Journey of Faith for Children, Catechumenate, C5 (826344)*

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## Closing Prayer

Close this lesson with the prayer below. Ask the children to repeat each line after you.

*Lord, help us  
to take you at your word,  
to trust when we feel confused  
and to accept in the faith  
that we, too, may come to know  
the treasure you have given us  
in your own Body and Blood,  
broken and poured out for our sins.  
You have become for us the food  
of everlasting life.  
Amen.*

## Take-Home

Encourage the children and their parents (or godparents or sponsors) to attend eucharistic adoration together the next time your parish offers it.



LIGUORI CHRISTIAN INITIATION PROGRAM

# Journey of Faith



**FOR CHILDREN**

**ENLIGHTENMENT AND MYSTAGOGY LEADER GUIDE**



***Journey of Faith for Children, Enlightenment and Mystagogy Leader Guide (827198)***

*Imprimi Potest:* Stephen T. Rehrauer, CSsR, Provincial, Denver Province, the Redemptorists

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Second Edition

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## Enlightenment and Mystagogy: A Review

### The Period of Purification and Enlightenment

Since the earliest centuries, the Church has set aside the season of Lent as a particular time for repentance, conversion, and preparation for the sacraments. The RCIA process and the celebration of baptism is centered on the Easter Vigil, with the rites of election and calling, scrutinies, and the entire catechumenate scheduled in relation to that feast (RCIA 17, 20–26; CCC 1168; CIC 856).

Because repentance and conversion require personal and internal preparation, the *Journey of Faith for Children, Enlightenment* lessons focus on guided, prayerful reflection. The lessons will assist the children in their internal preparation for the sacraments by guiding them through reflections on their actions and the effects of those actions, and will encourage the children to live out their faith in hands-on ways.

“[Enlightenment] is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction, and is intended to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their own consciences and do penance” (RCIA 139).

While the elect do not fully possess the graces and gifts of discipleship during the period of purification and enlightenment, they should begin to feel ownership of their Christian faith. Baptized candidates, as members of the Christian Church, should begin to identify themselves as Catholic and express their faith in keeping with sacred tradition.

The sessions and events during the enlightenment period should allow participants to experience Lent along with members of the parish community, who are also undergoing spiritual renewal and preparing to celebrate the paschal mystery more deeply (RCIA 138). At the Easter Vigil, the faithful will renew their baptismal vows as the participants profess their faith in Christ and the Catholic Church. This unity and integration will grow throughout the period of mystagogy, which usually corresponds to the Easter season.

## Rites and Sacraments During the Period of Enlightenment

The enlightenment and purification period begins with the rite of election. Please refer to the *Catechumenate Leader Guide* and other *Journey of Faith for Children* materials for details.

### The Scrutinies

Rather than examination, interrogation, or harsh judgment, “the scrutinies...are rites for self-searching and repentance,” designed “to inspire in the elect a desire for purification and redemption” (RCIA 141, 143). The prayers and intercessions encourage the elect to strive for the narrow gate (Matthew 7:13–14, Luke 13:24–28). Through the exorcisms, they “are freed from the effects of sin and from the influence of the devil” (RCIA 144). Having previously been instructed in the nature of sin and expressed their desire and commitment to receive the sacraments of initiation, participants are strengthened and sent forth to make their discipleship a reality.

The questions, activities, and other material in these guides help to prepare each child for this stage in their faith journey. The bishop or priest will “question the candidates individually” in the formula for the profession of faith at the Easter Vigil (RCIA 224–25). Should a participant express doubts or concerns about their conversion, meet with him or her privately to determine what additional support can be provided.

## The Presentations

The *Presentation of the Creed* should be celebrated during the week following the first scrutiny and, whenever possible, within a Mass so that the faith community may be present (RCIA 157, Canon 837). It prepares the elect to memorize the Creed, for the *Recitation of the Creed* (see Preparation Rites), and to profess their faith on the day of their baptism (RCIA 148).

During the *Presentation of the Creed*:

- The prescribed readings, which replace the regular weekday readings, are proclaimed during the Liturgy of the Word (RCIA 158).
- After the homily, the priest calls the elect forward to receive the words and mysteries of the Creed. The Nicene or Apostles’ Creed may be used, depending on the parish’s tradition (RCIA 160).
- The priest begins to recite the Creed, and the assembly joins in.
- The priest prays over the elect and dismisses them prior to the Liturgy of the Eucharist. If they are to stay, he reminds them that they cannot participate fully but that they remain “as a sign of our hope that all God’s children will eat and drink with the Lord...” (RCIA 163).

The *Presentation of the Lord’s Prayer* should be celebrated during the week following the third scrutiny or in the preparation rites. It prepares the elect to make the prayer their own as they join the congregation in praying it prior to their first Eucharist (RCIA 149).

During the *Presentation of the Lord’s Prayer*:

- The prescribed readings, which replace the regular weekday readings, are proclaimed during the Liturgy of the Word (RCIA 179).
- Just prior to the Gospel reading, the deacon or assisting minister calls the elect forward. Matthew’s Gospel account of the Lord’s Prayer is proclaimed.
- After the homily, the priest prays over the elect: “Deepen the faith and understanding of these elect, chosen for baptism. Give them new birth...so that they may be numbered among your adopted children” (RCIA 182).
- The priest dismisses the elect prior to the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

## Preparation Rites on Holy Saturday

The number and arrangement of these rites will depend on the needs of your elect, timing and ability, and other factors (RCIA 185–86). The Church offers the following model for your benefit (RCIA 187–92):

1. Begin with an appropriate gathering song.
2. The celebrant greets everyone with a suitable formula or words.
3. Scripture readings are chosen from the rites and proclaimed, with psalms or hymns in between if needed.
4. The celebrant gives a brief homily or explanation of the texts.
5. The various rites are celebrated. These may include the *Presentation of the Lord's Prayer*, the *Recitation of the Creed*, the *Ephphetha Rite*, and/or the rite of *Choosing a Baptismal Name*.
6. The celebrant concludes with the prayer of blessing and dismissal.

## The Easter Vigil

The feast of Easter, in particular the Easter Vigil liturgy, is the highlight of the Church year. Given its prominence and his prerogative to initiate (baptize) those fourteen years old or older, the bishop is the preferred celebrant (RCIA 207, Canon 863). "Adult candidates, including children of catechetical age, are to receive baptism, confirmation, and eucharist in a single eucharistic celebration" (*National Statutes for the Catechumenate* 14). This trifacta of sacraments is a distinct feature of the RCIA process and reflects the unified nature of Christian initiation (Canon 842).

If a mixed group of the elect and baptized candidates are to celebrate the sacraments together, "the condition and status of those already baptized should be carefully respected and distinguished" (*National Statutes* 26, 33–34). Whenever this is the case, your RCIA process should reflect the difference between these two groups from the beginning. Continuing it through the Easter Vigil should not be hard. The bishop or priest may already have solutions.

The Vigil Mass and sacraments of initiation are discussed in the *Journey of Faith, Inquiry Leader Guide*, lesson C1: *The RCIA Process and Rites*, and lesson E7: *The Meaning of Holy Week*. You may also refer to RCIA 206–43 and *Lectionary* no. 41.

Additional steps and points are detailed here:

- The celebration of baptism begins with a presentation of the elect with their godparents, and a litany of the saints.
- The celebrant blesses and prays over the baptismal waters.
- The elect renounce sin and make a profession of faith. "Adults are not saved unless they come forward of their own accord and with the will to accept God's gift through their own belief. The faith of those to be baptized is not simply the faith of the Church, but the personal faith of each one of them..." (RCIA 211).
- The elect are baptized, preferably by immersion (*National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 17). Whether baptism is by full or partial immersion or simply by pouring, it should "take on its full importance as the sign of that mystical sharing in Christ's death and resurrection through which those who believe in his name die to sin and rise to eternal life .... [T]his washing is not a mere purification rite but the sacrament of being joined to Christ" (RCIA 213).
- The newly baptized are anointed with oil and clothed in a white garment. Godparents are presented with a candle lit from the Easter candle.
- The celebrant invites the newly baptized to receive confirmation. Afterward, the assembled faithful renew their baptismal promises. If the combined rite is used, the renewal will come first, followed by confirmation.
- Now previously baptized candidates come forward and profess their faith. The sacrament of confirmation is conferred with the laying on of hands and anointing with chrism.
- As the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins, neophytes should take part in the procession of the gifts to the altar (RCIA 241). The entire RCIA group and its supporters—neophytes, leaders, catechists, sponsors, godparents, and family members—should receive the Eucharist under both forms (RCIA 243, 594).

## E2: Living Lent

**Catechism:** 571–605, 1434–39

### Objectives

- List the major themes of Lent (repentance, sacrifice, growth, and overcoming temptation).
- Begin to practice fasting, prayer, and almsgiving in an age-appropriate way and with understanding of their significance to the Lenten season.
- Begin to list some of the major symbols of Lent, including ashes, the color purple, palm leaves, and the crucifix.

### Leader Meditation

*Matthew 4:1–11*

Recall times when you have felt you were in a desert—times that were difficult and seemingly lifeless. Why are these the times we are most tempted to turn away from Christ and look for comfort elsewhere? In what places or in what things have you been tempted to find comfort? What brought you back to Christ?

### Leader Preparation

- Read the lesson, this lesson plan, the Scripture passage, and the *Catechism* sections.
- Show participants any physical symbols of Lent (ashes, palm leaves, images of the stations of the cross, and so on) and a liturgical calendar.
- Bring sticky notes or index cards, one for each child.
- Be familiar with the following vocabulary terms: fasting, almsgiving, ashes, purple, rose, Palm Sunday. The definitions are in this guide's glossary.

### Welcome

Greet the children as they arrive. Check for supplies and immediate needs. Solicit questions or comments about the previous session and/or share new information and findings. Begin promptly.

### Opening Scripture

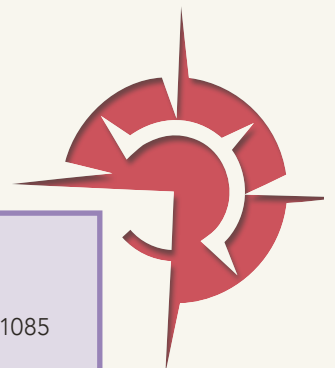
*Matthew 4:1–11*

Light the candle and read aloud. Ask the children what they think it means to have a “desert experience” without actually being in a desert.

*It could mean feeling very alone or isolated, like Jesus was all alone in the desert. It could mean not having access to things you need, both physical things like food or shelter or spiritual things like God's presence during your prayers. A desert experience could also be positive, like spending time alone with God or choosing to give up physical things (like a special food treat or screen time) to have more time for spiritual things like going to Mass or reading a book about the life of a saint.*

The event of the Cross and Resurrection abides and draws everything toward life.

CCC 1085



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Journey of Faith for Children, Enlightenment and Mystagogy Leader Guide



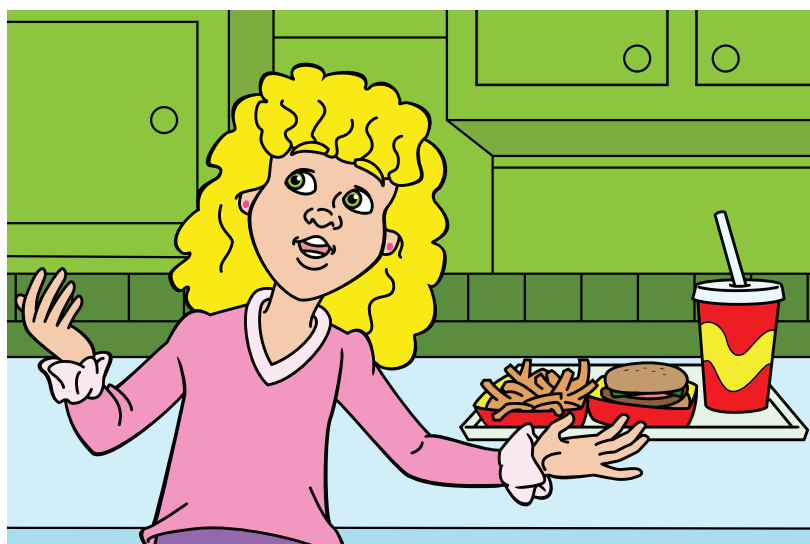


## Living Lent

"Oh, no!" Tanya gasped. "I forgot it's a Friday during Lent and I got a hamburger for lunch. What should I do?" she asked Tomás.

"Um," Tomás thought. "Mrs. Evans said Lent is about giving things up and doing good deeds to be more like Jesus. Maybe you could give the hamburger to someone who can eat meat today and doesn't have lunch yet?"

"Good idea!" Tanya said with a smile.



CCC 571-605, 1434-99

ENLIGHTENMENT E2

CHILDREN

## We Journey With Jesus

As you discuss the events of Lent, ask the children what they remember about Lent from the lesson on the Church year. If you have a liturgical calendar in your room, show the children what days each of these events falls on. Encourage the children to add special Church holy days into their planners (if they have one from school) or onto their family calendar. If you have a class calendar, highlight the holy days there, too.

## Jesus in the Wilderness

Depending on the average age of the children in your class, you may want to read these Bible accounts directly from Scripture (Luke 3:21–22, 4:1–15). If you'd prefer a more active variation on this lesson, you can split students up into small groups and ask them to prepare a skit. Depending on how many children are in your class, you can ask them to prepare one skit, different variations on the story (like a Bible-times version and a modern variation), or assign different parts of the story.

If you read the Bible account as a group, you can encourage the children to interact by asking them to repeat Jesus' words in response to Satan's temptations. These words are quoted from Scripture in the lesson handout adaptation of the Bible account, so you can ask the children to highlight or underline Jesus' responses in their own text.

Give the children time to answer the first reflection questions about temptation on their own. Instead of having volunteers share their response, lead a miniprayer of reflection after the children have had time to write something down. You can pray simply, "Jesus, thank you for helping us avoid temptation," or, "Jesus, I'm sorry for the times I give in to temptation." Or choose a prayer on your own.

### We Journey With Jesus

During Lent, the Church follows the path of Jesus. We think about his death on the cross. We remember his suffering and death. We reflect on his death as a great act of love and forgiveness. Our Lenten journey ends with a celebration of Jesus' glorious resurrection on Easter.

This Lent, you will become closer than ever to Jesus. On this special Easter Vigil, you will respond to God's love with your own special "yes."

### Jesus in the Wilderness

#### LUKE 3:21–22; 4:1–15

When Jesus was beginning his ministry, he went to John the Baptist and was baptized in the Jordan River. A voice from heaven said, "You are my beloved Son" (3:22). When the people heard, some of them wondered if Jesus was the Savior. After his baptism, Jesus went into the wilderness to prepare. Instead of eating, he prayed, and the devil tempted him, saying, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread" (4:3). Although Jesus was hungry, he wasn't fooled. He answered, "One does not live by bread alone" (4:4, see also Deuteronomy 8:2–4).



The devil then took him up a mountain, where he could look down on kingdoms of the world. The devil said, "All this will be yours, if you worship me" (4:7). Jesus replied, "Worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve" (4:8). Finally the devil placed Jesus on top of the Temple and said, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for...[God] will command his angels...to guard you" (4:9–10). But Jesus said, "[The Bible] also says, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test'" (4:12).

Then the devil left, and angels came to care for Jesus. When he left the wilderness, he was strong and ready to do God's will.



**When have you been tempted to do something bad?**

**How did you say "no" to temptation and "yes" to doing good?**

### Four Ways to Resist Temptation

#### READ GOD'S WORD

When Jesus was tempted, he quoted God's word. The Bible offers many passages that help us do good and know what God's will is, including rules, comfort, and strength to resist temptation. During Lent, spend some extra time reading the Bible.



**What kind of help do you need from the Bible?**

Remind the children that Lent is a time of forgiveness, and those children who are able to go to reconciliation will have that opportunity to tell Jesus they're sorry and receive forgiveness in a special way. Children who cannot yet receive reconciliation can still pray to Jesus on their own.

Next, ask the children to complete the second reflection question with a partner or in a small group. Ask each pair or group to share one way they can say "no" to temptation and "yes" to living like Jesus.

## Read God's Word

As a group, answer the reflection question. If the children need help, ask them to think about what the Bible teaches us (God's laws and how to live like Jesus) and how those things can help us say "no" to the devil.

*We can be reminded what God's rules for us are and why God wants us to follow his rules. We can see what life looks like when we live like Jesus and why it's important to treat ourselves and others the way Jesus taught us. We can see how Jesus and his followers said "no" to the devil, and we can use them as inspiration to say "no" on our own.*

**PRAY**

Jesus often prayed alone. He knew his strength came from heaven. Prayer is a great source of strength for us, too. This Lent, remember to pray every day.

**ALMSGIVING**

**Almsgiving** means giving money or things like food and clothing to the poor. Lent is a good time to help the needy in your area. By donating your time, money, or things to others, you are caring for your neighbor like Jesus asks.



*What can you give to others this Lent?*

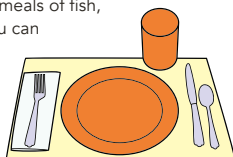


*How do you like to pray?*

*What do you want to pray for this Lent?*

**FAST**

Jesus fasted in the wilderness as a way to grow closer to God. **Fasting** means to eat smaller meals or only one meal during the day as a way of growing closer to God. Adults fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday during Lent. We also abstain from meat during Fridays in Lent and eat simpler meals of fish, pasta, or veggies. You can fast during Lent by giving up a special treat or dessert, or passing up second helpings.



*What could you give up this Lent to grow closer to God?*

**Lenten Symbols****ASHES**

On Ash Wednesday, we go to a special Mass where the priest blesses **ashes** and then makes the Sign of the Cross on our foreheads with them. The ashes are made from blessed burned palms from last year's Palm Sunday. They remind us to turn away from sin and that without God, we are like dust or ashes—lifeless.

**COLORS**

For most of Lent, the priest wears purple when he is saying Mass. **Purple** is the color of repentance, being sorry. On the fourth Sunday of Lent, the priest wears rose, which signals to us that the joy of Easter is almost here.

**PALMS**

On **Palm Sunday**, a week before Easter, the Church begins Holy Week. We wave palm branches in remembrance of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–40; John 12:12–19). The palms remind us to honor Jesus as our king.



ENLIGHTENMENT

JOURNEY OF FAITH

**Pray**

Give the children time to respond to the first reflection question on their own. If they aren't sure how to respond, encourage them to think of all the ways you've prayed as a group during these sessions.

Then ask the children to respond to the second reflection question by writing one special intention on a sticky note or index card. Tell them not to write their name on it and then collect the children's intentions. Use this for your closing prayer today.

**Fast**

Clarify that fasting means making healthy food choices and giving up extra portions or special treats. Emphasize that the children should always let their parents know if they want to fast, or better yet, fast as a family. If for some reason the children can't fast (such as a medical condition), it's OK to not fast. Jesus doesn't want us to hurt our bodies, and there are other things we can fast from besides food (like screen time and gossip).

Answer the reflection question as a group by listing all the things the children can fast from this Lent. Include food, but don't limit your discussion to food.

**Almsgiving**

Answer the reflection question as a group by listing all the things (including but not limited to money) the children can give to others this Lent.

**Lenten Symbols**

If you were able to bring in some common symbols of Lent, pass those around now or ask the children to walk up to a common area (like a desk or table in the front of the room) to look at them up close. You can also take a short trip into your parish church if it's empty at this time and there are symbols of Lent to observe.

## Final Activity

As you wrap up your lesson, save time for the children to complete the final activity or encourage them to complete the activity at home. Walk around as the children work, encouraging correct answers and clarifying any confusion.

The correct answers appear below.



### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Draw a line to connect each word on the left with its meaning on the right.

Palms	Desire or attraction to sin
Almsgiving	Going without food
Ashes	Speaking and listening to God
Fasting	The written word of God and stories of God's people
Prayer	What the crowd waved at Jesus
The Bible	Giving money or food to the poor
Temptation	Burned palms

### In Short

- The major themes of Lent include: repentance, sacrifice, growth, and overcoming temptation.
- The practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are central to Lent.
- Many symbols are associated with Lent.



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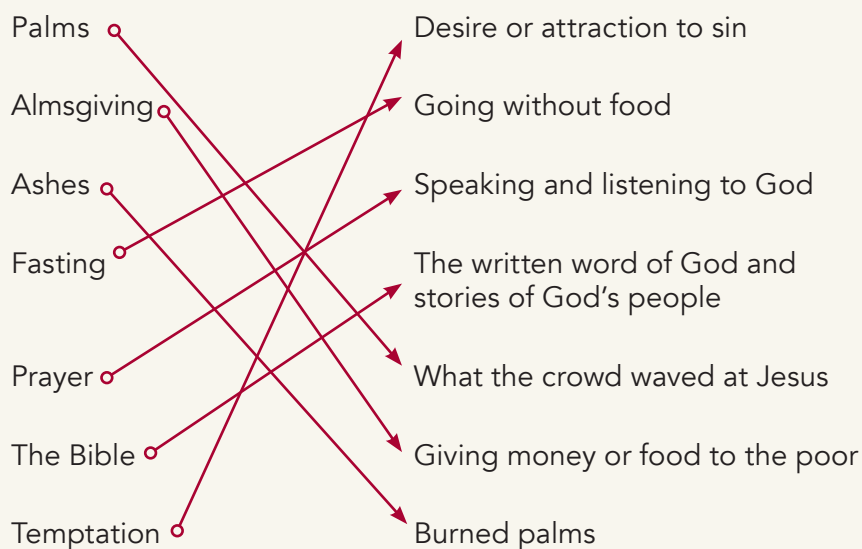
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## Closing Prayer

Ask the children to fold their hands and bow their heads. Then read each of the petitions you collected earlier in this session. Pray one decade of the Sorrowful Mysteries for these intentions.

## Take-Home

Ask the children to go home and create a “Lent action plan” with their families. Their action plan should include at least one thing they can pray for as a family, one thing they can fast from as a family, and one thing they can sacrifice for others as a family, such as a physical thing or time spent doing service work.