

The Word of God

QUICK SESSION OVERVIEW

Opening Prayer	4 min
Watch and Discuss; Read and Explore	73 min
Show What You Know	5 min
Journal with Jesus	5 min
Closing Prayer	3 min

OBJECTIVES

- **TO PROCLAIM** that two of the ways God reveals his amazing plan for our lives are through the Bible and Mass on Sunday.
- **TO EXPLAIN** that Jesus is the greatest teacher who ever lived.
- **TO TEACH** that we gather at church with our family, friends, and all our parish family to worship God in the way that Jesus taught us to.

YOU CAN GROW AS A LEADER BY . . .

- **Setting aside weekly prep time.**
- **Seeking counsel.**

WELCOME

Jesus is the greatest teacher who ever walked the earth. His teaching method has inspired countless pages of analysis and thousands of hours of training. Here are two methods Jesus used to be a great leader.

JESUS PREPARED FOR THE WORK ENTRUSTED TO HIM BY GOD.

Jesus underwent an intense period of preparation before beginning his public ministry. After being baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, Jesus prayed and fasted for forty days and forty nights alone in the desert. Why? Because Jesus knew that preparation is essential.

Preparation dramatically increases the quality of the experience for both the student and the teacher. Without it, leaders struggle to engage their students, respond effectively to questions, or even enjoy themselves.

JESUS DIDN'T WORK ALONE.

Over and over again throughout the Gospels, we read about Jesus retreating to a quiet place seeking counsel from God the Father. He did it before choosing his disciples, before feeding of the 5,000, and before returning to Jerusalem to face crucifixion and death.

You don't have to lead this class by yourself. Seek wisdom from others. Most of all, pray, because no one wants you to be successful more than God.



**Prayer
Icon**



**Read and
Explore**



**Watch and
Discuss**



**Show What
You Know**



**Journal
with Jesus**



**Time
Tracker**



OPENING PRAYER

Step-by-Step

- 1 Gather students for prayer. Wait for them to be quiet. Don't rush this . . . reverence takes patience and practice.
- 2 Before reading the prayer out loud, take a deep breath to allow an additional moment of silence. You never know what God might say to your students (or you!) when given the opportunity.
- 3 Pray!

Developing a dynamic prayer life requires perseverance more than anything else.

Decision Point



3

The Word of God

God, our loving Father,
 thank you for all the ways you bless me.
 Help me to be aware that every person,
 place, and adventure I experience is an
 opportunity to love you more.
 Fill me with a desire to change and to grow,
 and give me the grace to become
 the-best-version-of-myself in
 every moment of every day.

Amen.

tip

Prayer is as easy as one-two-three!

1. Bow your head
(show respect for God.)
2. Close your eyes
(focus the mind.)
3. Fold your hands
(still body.)

If your students need help, model it for them first and then practice it. It's amazing how many kids struggle with prayer because they struggle with their posture. Finally, begin the prayer with "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."



4 minutes

My Notes:

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all of these things will be given unto you as well.

Matthew 6:33



WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Introduce Episode 1 by saying: "Ben is put to the test by his friends. Will he pass the test? Let's watch to find out!"
- 2 Watch Episode 1.

Overview of the Mass

Each time you go to Mass there are many things that happen. Behind each prayer and each action is enormous meaning; everything in the Mass happens for a reason. In our spiritual journey as Catholics we are always uncovering new layers of meaning, so we never stop learning about the Mass.

The Mass is made up of four parts:

1. The Introductory Rites
2. The Liturgy of the Word
3. The Liturgy of the Eucharist
4. The Concluding Rites

There are two words for us to pay special attention to here: rite and liturgy.

What Is a Rite?

A rite is something that is said or done the same way every time for a reason. For example, the Sign of the Cross is a rite. We do it the same way every time. We say it the same way every time: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

The order is for a reason. God the Father is the first person of the Blessed Trinity. God the Son is the second person of the Holy Trinity. And God the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity.

If you went to Mass and the priest began by making the Sign of the Cross and saying, "In the name of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and of the Father. Amen," you would know that something was wrong.

Our Catholic faith has many rites. Each rite has a reason.



My Notes:

tip
Intentionally compliment the children. Instead of a general praising of an accomplishment, encourage persistence. For example, "Toni, you paid great attention to that episode. Thank you." A simple statement like that will go a long way in replicating positive habits.

I am but an instrument, a tiny pencil in the hands of the Lord with which he writes what he likes. However imperfect we are, he writes beautifully.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

The human person cannot live without meaning and purpose.

The Rhythm of Life



READ AND EXPLORE

Step-by-Step

1 Invite the children to look at the illustration and ask: “Do you recognize anything?”

- THE CUP THE PRIEST IS HOLDING: *CHALICE*
- THE OUTER GARMENT WORN BY THE PRIEST: *CHASUBLE*
- THE NAME OF THE BROWN BOX BEHIND THE PRIEST: *THE ALTAR*
- THE NAME OF THE CLOTH ON TOP OF THE ALTAR: *THE ALTAR CLOTH*

What Is Liturgy?

Liturgy is a prayer we participate in as a community. During the Mass we experience two types of liturgy: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

During the Liturgy of the Word we listen to readings from the Bible and a homily from the priest or deacon, then we pray the Creed together and offer our petitions to God.

During the Liturgy of the Eucharist we offer our lives and our gifts to God, prepare the altar, pray the Eucharistic Prayer, and receive Holy Communion.

Liturgy is a beautiful way to spend time with God and our parish family.

Where Do We Celebrate Mass?

We celebrate Mass at church. Our parish church is a very special place because it is God’s house. We gather at church with our family, friends, and all our parish family to worship God in the way that Jesus taught us to.

The Mass is a beautiful ritual made up of prayers, liturgies, and rites. During the Mass we use many special items to help us celebrate. Do you recognize any of these items?



My Notes:

tip

If the children are having a difficult time answering a question, give assistance in the form of a cue or hint. Utilize rhyming and word association to help guide them toward the right answer.

In all our lives there is a great danger in believing that who we are, where we are, and what we have is all that there is. There is more.

The Rhythm of Life

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, that is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

1 Corinthians 11:24



WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Introduce Episode 2 by saying: "What do you think is the most amazing thing Fr. Tom has ever seen?"
- 2 Watch Episode 2.
- 3 Ask the children: "What is the most amazing thing that Fr. Tom has ever seen?"
 - DURING THE MASS, THE BREAD AND WINE TURN INTO THE BODY AND BLOOD OF JESUS!

The Introductory Rites

We come to church on Sunday to celebrate Mass. It's a great way to thank God for all the blessings he has given us.

During the Mass we remember Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection, and the most amazing thing happens, something that doesn't happen anywhere else: the priest changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

How can he do this? God gives priests special powers. At your First Reconciliation God forgave your sins through the priest. During Mass God transforms the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus through the priest.

Another amazing thing that happens at church is that we get to receive Holy Communion. We get to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. This is an amazing blessing.

When you go back to your pew after you receive Jesus in the Eucharist, kneel down, close your eyes, and pray. This is a very special moment because God is inside you.

Now let's talk about the four parts of the Mass. Do you remember what they are?

1. The Introductory Rites
2. The Liturgy of the Word
3. The Liturgy of the Eucharist
4. The Concluding Rites

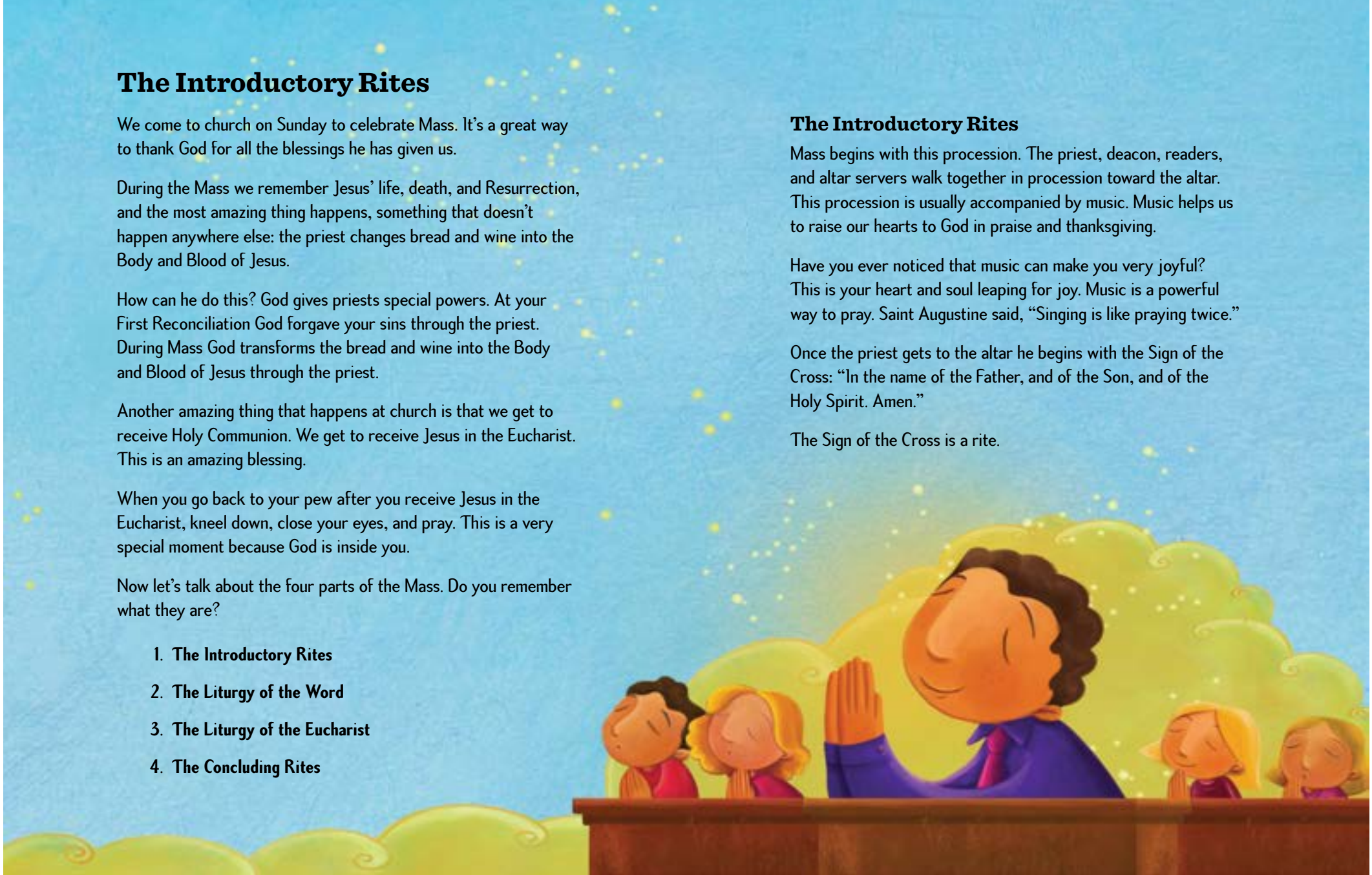
The Introductory Rites

Mass begins with this procession. The priest, deacon, readers, and altar servers walk together in procession toward the altar. This procession is usually accompanied by music. Music helps us to raise our hearts to God in praise and thanksgiving.

Have you ever noticed that music can make you very joyful? This is your heart and soul leaping for joy. Music is a powerful way to pray. Saint Augustine said, "Singing is like praying twice."

Once the priest gets to the altar he begins with the Sign of the Cross: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

The Sign of the Cross is a rite.



My Notes:

tip

One of the best ways to create a safe space for the children to openly share and participate in the class without fear of being rejected is to celebrate little successes. A leader who takes the time to celebrate the success of his or her student creates an environment of encouragement that allows children to ask questions, share ideas, and honestly participate in discussions. Celebrating little victories is a simple way to make a big impact. Here are a few examples of ways you can celebrate little victories: a high five for the right answer; saying, "Good guess, that was close!" or "You're almost there, keep guessing!"

Christ invites us to a life of discipline not for his sake, but for our sake; not to help him, but to help us; not to make him happy, but to allow us to share in his happiness.

Rediscover Catholicism

We should spend as much time in thanking God for his benefits as we do in asking him for them.

St. Vincent de Paul



READ AND EXPLORE

Step-by-Step

- 1 Invite the children to explore the illustration.
- 2 Inform the children that the image depicts the story of the woman at the well. If time allows, read the story. It can be found in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel, verses 1-42.

We Say Sorry

God loves healthy relationships, and a very important part of healthy relationships is saying sorry when we do or say something that hurts the other person. Catholics say sorry. The reason is because our friendship with God and our friendships with each other cannot thrive if we don't say sorry.

If you were playing on the playground with a friend yesterday and he pushed you over and didn't say sorry, how would you feel? You might wonder if he was really your friend. But if he came up to you and the first thing he did was say, "I'm sorry I pushed you over yesterday. I won't do it again. Please forgive me."

How would that make you feel? You would be reminded that he really does want to be your friend.

That's why, after the Sign of the Cross, the first thing we do at Mass is say sorry to God. We want him to know that we are his friends and that we want to be really good friends to him.

We say sorry to God and ask for forgiveness at the beginning of Mass with a really simple and beautiful prayer:

Priest: Lord Have Mercy
Congregation: Lord Have Mercy
Priest: Christ Have Mercy
Congregation: Christ Have Mercy
Priest: Lord Have Mercy
Congregation: Lord Have Mercy



My Notes:

tip
 Children this age show emotions. If they don't like something or if they are confused, it's likely that you will be able to read it on their faces. If there are a bunch of confused faces staring back at you, don't panic. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the minds of the children. Say: "I'm seeing a lot of confused faces—what is confusing?" If that doesn't work, don't give up. Use different adjectives until you are able to identify precisely how they feel and why they are feeling that way. This insight will allow you to better anticipate potential roadblocks in future sessions.

Our peace is founded not on our perfection but on God's mercy. Call on his mercy.

Mustard Seeds

If you do not believe Christ's mercy is enough to forgive the worst sins, then you commit an unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit.

Venerable Fulton Sheen



READ AND EXPLORE

Step-by-Step

- 1 Ask the children: “Do you know where the first line of the Gloria comes from?”
- 2 If they don’t know, give them a hint: “The answer can be found by looking at the illustration!”
- 3 If they still don’t know, share with them the answer.
 - THE ANGEL WHO ANNOUNCED TO THE SHEPHERDS THAT JESUS WAS BORN GREETED THE SHEPHERDS BY SAYING, “GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH PEACE TO PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL.” LUKE 2:14

Glory to God

Next we say or sing The Gloria.

At different times in life we pray for different reasons. And at different times in the Mass we pray for different reasons.

Sometimes we pray to ask God to help us. This is called a prayer of petition. Sometimes we pray to ask God to help other people. This is called a prayer of intercession. Sometimes we pray to thank God for all the ways he has blessed us. This is called a prayer of thanksgiving. And sometimes we pray to praise God for his goodness. This is called a prayer of praise.

The Gloria is a prayer of praise. Sometimes we sing it and sometimes we say it, but always for the same reason —to praise God!



Glory to God in the highest,
 and on earth peace to people of good will.
 We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you.
 We give you thanks for your great glory,
 Lord God, heavenly King,
 O God, almighty Father,
 Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God,
 Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
 You take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
 You take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
 You are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.
 For you alone are the Holy One,
 You alone are the Lord,
 You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
 With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

After the Gloria, the priest reads the opening prayer from the Roman Missal. Then the whole congregation responds with “Amen,” and we sit down to listen to the Word of God.

tip

Use your voice to catch their attention. Change it up and begin with a whisper instead of a louder voice. You can even play a game to catch their attention with a whisper. Begin softly and slowly with, “If you can hear me, touch your nose. If you can hear me, pat your head.” The movement and whisper will soon catch everyone’s attention.



My Notes:

Our best days are those when we stay connected with God throughout the day.

Rediscover Jesus

I am not capable of doing big things, but I want to do everything, even the smallest things, for the greater glory of God.

St. Dominic Savio



WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

1 Introduce Episode 3 by saying: “Fr. Tom asked Ben to help him with a very special task. Let’s find out what it is!”

2 Watch Episode 3.

The Liturgy of the Word

During the part of the Mass we call the Liturgy of the Word, we listen to the Word of God and reflect on how we can live our lives as God invites us to.

The Liturgy of the Word includes readings from the Bible, the homily, the Creed, and the intercessory prayers.

At Mass on Sunday we listen to four readings from the Bible:

1. The First Reading, from the Old Testament
2. The Responsorial Psalm
3. The Second Reading, from the New Testament
4. The Gospel Reading, from one of the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

Each reading is specifically selected to connect with a theme that the Church wants us to reflect on that week. And guess what: Every Catholic parish reads the same readings each Sunday.

So if you have a friend on the other side of the country, you can talk about the readings because they heard the same ones you heard at Mass.

Different people read different readings. Perhaps one day you will become a reader at Mass. There are so many ways to be involved in the life of the parish—reading at Mass is just one of them.

You are a layperson. A layperson is an unordained member of the Church, and he or she usually reads the First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Second Reading. The priest or the deacon reads the Gospel. Both the priest and deacon are ordained members of the Church.



My Notes:

tip

If time allows, take a moment to share about the importance of being involved in the parish. Perhaps highlight how special it is to be a reader at Mass. The children are likely too young to be a reader now, but by building up a level of excitement around the idea you will plant an important seed in the hearts of the children.

Courageously follow the path of personal holiness and diligently nourish yourselves with the Word of God and the Eucharist. The holier you are, the more you can contribute to building up the Church and society.

St. John Paul II

Your happiness in this life and the next depends in large part on how seriously you take the Word of God.

Decision Point



READ AND EXPLORE

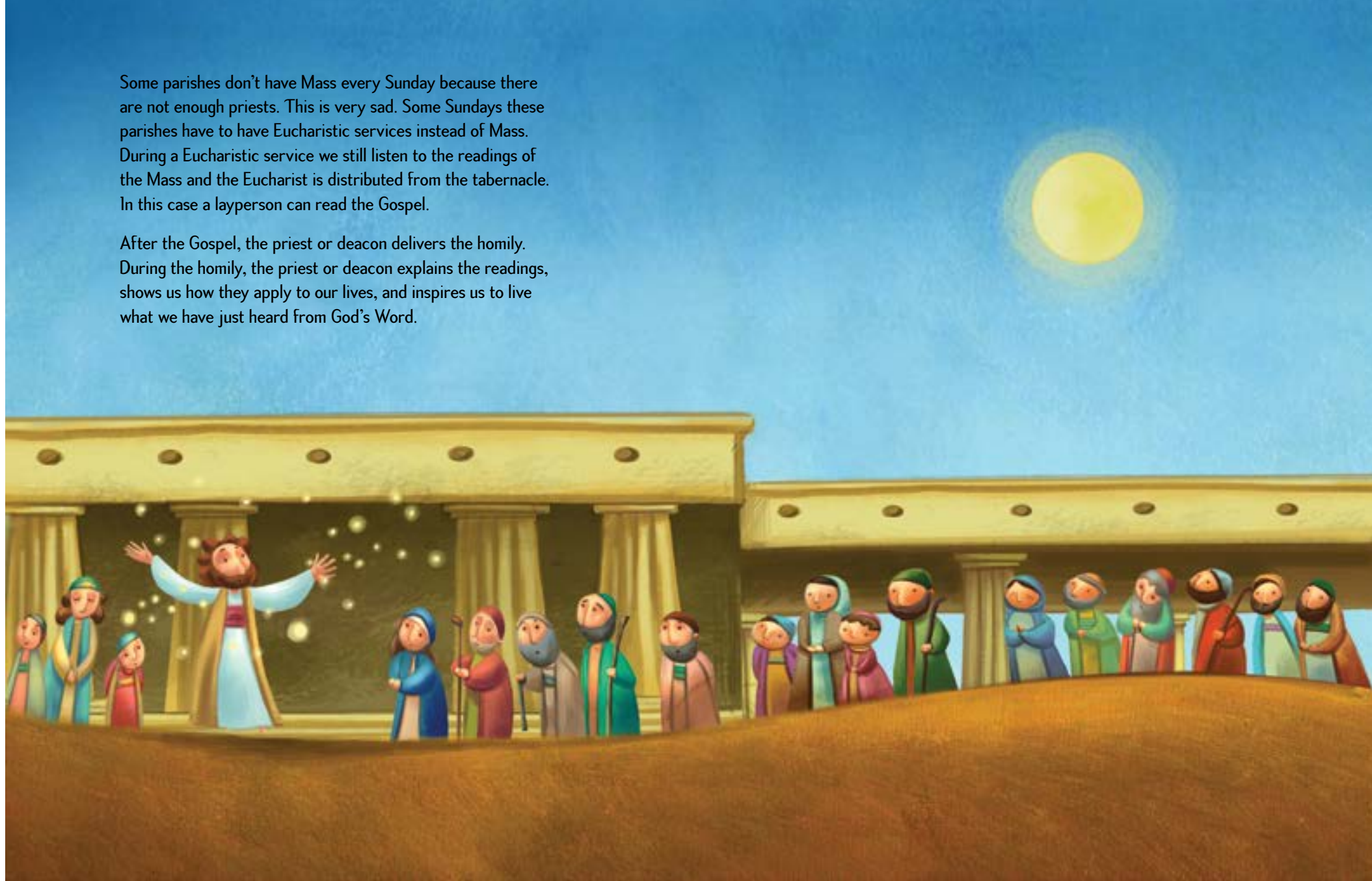
Step-by-Step

1 Activity: FOLLOW THE LEADER!

Invite all of the children to stand up and face you. Request that the children “follow the leader” and do everything you do. Then run in place, do jumping jacks and arm circles, stretch by touching your toes and then reaching as high as the sky, and make up your own unique moves for the children to follow. Have fun with this!

Some parishes don't have Mass every Sunday because there are not enough priests. This is very sad. Some Sundays these parishes have to have Eucharistic services instead of Mass. During a Eucharistic service we still listen to the readings of the Mass and the Eucharist is distributed from the tabernacle. In this case a layperson can read the Gospel.

After the Gospel, the priest or deacon delivers the homily. During the homily, the priest or deacon explains the readings, shows us how they apply to our lives, and inspires us to live what we have just heard from God's Word.



My Notes:

Horizontal lines for writing notes on page 92.

Horizontal lines for writing notes on page 93.

tip

During the activity play music to accompany the moment. Select something that is upbeat and fun. If you have *Blessed: A Collection of Songs for the Young at Heart*, it's recommended to play "It's a Beautiful Day." Movement helps students to focus and it's fun!

God's plea to humanity has always been a call to go within and discover the truth about ourselves, which is that we have been created in the image and likeness of God.

Mustard Seeds

Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 136:26



WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Introduce Episode 4 with some excitement by saying: "I am so excited to share this episode with you! Sarah is going to take us on a journey through the Creed and it's awesome. Let's watch together."
- 2 Watch Episode 4.
- 3 Have the children share with someone next to them the one thing that stuck out during the episode. When they are done, share the one thing that stuck out to you. Be excited when you do. This is cool stuff! And your voice should reflect that.

We Believe

After the homily, we stand and proclaim the Creed together, and then we have the prayers of the faithful.

Everyone believes something. There are many things we believe as Catholics. We believe in God, we believe God loves us, we believe God has blessed us, and we believe in the power of prayer. But there are many other things we believe.

At Mass each Sunday we proclaim the Creed. The Creed is a summary of the core beliefs that make up our Catholic faith.



3 minutes

My Notes:

tip

Make it ok to be wrong. When a participant gets an answer wrong, your next words matter. Say something like: "Nice try" or "Thanks for your answer" or "Not quite." They will create a safe environment for answering questions.

I know this now. Every man gives his life for what he believes. Every woman gives her life for what she believes. Sometimes people believe in little or nothing, and yet they give their lives to that little or nothing. One life is all we have and we live it as we believe in living it and then it's gone. But to surrender what you are and to live without belief is more terrible than dying—even more terrible than dying young.

St. Joan of Arc

Only one thing is necessary for Catholicism to flourish: authentic lives.

Rediscover Catholicism



READ AND EXPLORE

Step-by-Step

- 1 Invite a different student to read each line of the Creed out loud. If you don't have thirty students in the class, keep cycling through the group until you finish.
- 2 The children may have difficulty reading the different style fonts or pronouncing some of the bigger words. Be ready to help them sound out any particularly difficult words or supply the word.

The Creed

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, **THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,**
maker of heaven and earth
OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST,
 THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES.

GOD FROM GOD, *Light from Light,*
TRUE GOD FROM TRUE GOD,
 BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE, CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH THE FATHER;
THROUGH HIM ALL THINGS WERE MADE.
 FOR US MEN AND FOR OUR SALVATION *he came down from heaven,*

AND BY THE HOLY SPIRIT
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary

AND BECAME MAN.
FOR OUR SAKE HE WAS CRUCIFIED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE,
 HE SUFFERED DEATH AND WAS BURIED,

and rose again on the third day
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN
 AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER.

HE WILL COME AGAIN IN GLORY

to judge the living and the dead

AND HIS KINGDOM WILL HAVE NO END.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
WHO PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON,
WHO WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON IS ADORED AND GLORIFIED,

who has spoken through the prophets.

I BELIEVE IN ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

I CONFESS ONE BAPTISM FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
AND THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME.

Amen.



My Notes:

tip

Stay positive. God has allowed you to teach the faith to his children. Be careful not to discourage questions or punish doubt; instead, see these as invitations of the Holy Spirit to explore and study the faith more. If time allows, ask the children if they have any questions about the Creed. Don't worry about not having all the answers. You can always write the question down, look up the answer, and then provide the answer next class. The important thing is to let them know that questions are a good thing and, even more importantly, that the Church has deeply personal answers to their deeply personal questions.

When you come to recognize and believe that you are a son or daughter of God you will also become aware that you lack absolutely nothing.

Mustard Seeds

Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

1 John 5:5



WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Introduce Episode 5 by saying: "I hope you are as excited as I am for the parable of the sower to come to life. *Hint:* Watch closely what happens to the seeds."
- 2 Watch Episode 5.

From the Bible: The Sower of Seeds

As Jesus made his way from village to village, word about his great deeds spread very quickly. He became very famous as a great teacher and healer, and so everywhere he went huge crowds of people would gather around him.

One day Jesus was sitting by the lake, and a large crowd gathered around him. They wanted him to teach them and heal them. So Jesus sat in a boat at the water's edge, the people stood around, and he told them parables. One of those parables was about a farmer sowing seeds.

A farmer went out to sow seeds in his field. As he sowed the seeds, some fell on the path beside the field, and birds came down and ate them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where there was not sufficient soil. These seeds sprang up quickly, but because of the shallow soil, when the sun rose it scorched them and they died. Still other seeds fell among thorns, and as they grew they were choked by the thorns. But some seeds fell on the rich, good soil, and these grew strong and healthy, and brought forth an abundant harvest.

God is the farmer. Our hearts and souls are the soil. The world, selfishness, and evil are the birds, the thorns, and the scorching hot sun. Daily prayer, learning about our faith, going to Mass on Sunday, being generous to all who cross our path, and sharing God's message with others all help to make your heart and soul like the rich soil that receives the seed and produces an abundant harvest.

Adapted from Matthew 13:1-9



tip

Perspective is powerful. There are going to be moments when you want to express your impatience with the children. It will probably come after having to tell them to quiet down for the 5000th time before watching an episode of the animation. You'll want to reprimand them and that's natural. But when you feel that way, consider your own relationship with God. How many times has God had to remind you of something? How many times has he showed you loving kindness only for you to turn around repeat the same careless mistakes over and over again, sometimes even on purpose? God's mercy and his patience are thankfully endless, and he invites you to care for your students in the same way.



5 minutes

My Notes:

Catholicism is a dynamic way of life designed by God to help you explore your incredible potential.

Rediscover Catholicism

Who except God can give you peace? Has the world ever been able to satisfy the heart?

St. Gerard Majella



WATCH AND DISCUSS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Introduce Episode 6 by saying: "In this episode, Hemingway finds a secret passage way in the clubhouse. Let's see where it leads!"
- 2 Watch Episodes 6.

Wear It Out

All of the readings at Mass come from the most famous book in the world: the Bible. It is the best-selling book of all time. When you pick up the Bible it may seem like you are holding one big book, but in fact, it is a collection of 73 books.

The Bible is made up of two main sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. There are 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

One of the many ways God speaks to us is through the Bible. God has an amazing plan for your life, and one of the ways he reveals that amazing plan is through the readings we hear at Mass every Sunday.

If you were going on a long journey it would be a good idea to take a map with you. It would be even better to take a guide with you who has made the journey before. The Bible is like that map and

the Church is like that guide to help you make your journey through this life into the next so that you can live with God in heaven forever.

Over and over throughout the Bible God speaks to people, guiding them, encouraging them, and warning them. He spoke to Adam and Eve, Moses and Abraham, Noah and Jacob, Rebecca and Ruth, Mary and Paul. God spoke to each of them in different ways, but he spoke to them all. And now, God wants to speak to you.

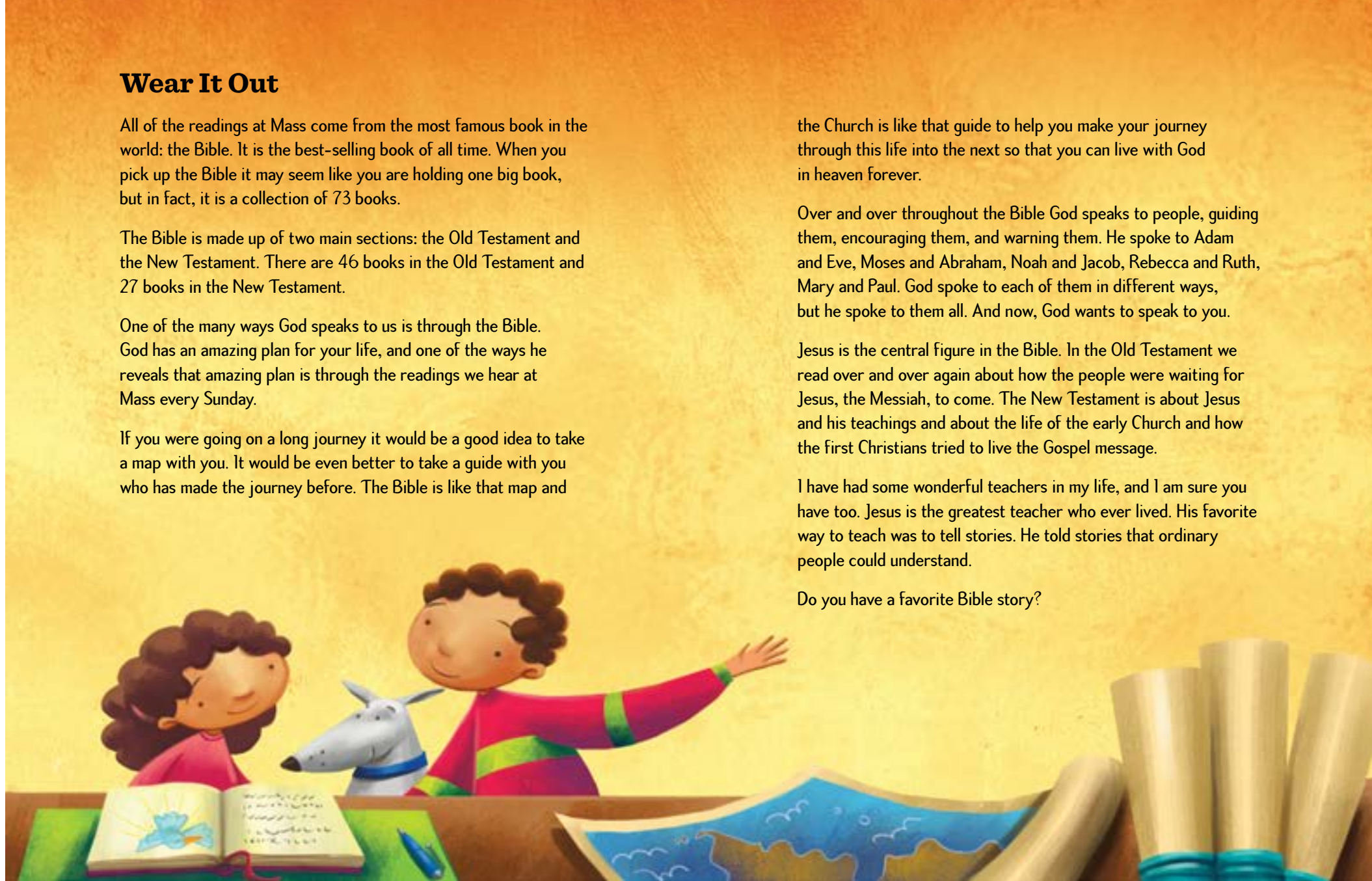
Jesus is the central figure in the Bible. In the Old Testament we read over and over again about how the people were waiting for Jesus, the Messiah, to come. The New Testament is about Jesus and his teachings and about the life of the early Church and how the first Christians tried to live the Gospel message.

I have had some wonderful teachers in my life, and I am sure you have too. Jesus is the greatest teacher who ever lived. His favorite way to teach was to tell stories. He told stories that ordinary people could understand.

Do you have a favorite Bible story?

tip

Take a moment and share with the children your favorite Bible story.



10 minutes

My Notes:

True fulfillment can only be found in and through Jesus Christ. You cannot become the-best-version-of-yourself except in and through Jesus.

Decision Point

The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.

Deuteronomy 31:8



READ AND EXPLORE

Step-by-Step

- 1 Beginning from the last paragraph on page 102 read the text out loud to the children.
- 2 Ask the children, "Do you want Jesus to be one of your best friends? How about the saints?"

Life is wonderful but brief. Each day is filled with unimaginable potential. The life God invites us to allows us to live each moment consciously and with vibrant enthusiasm.

Rediscover Catholicism.



Do you have a favorite shirt or sweater? Do you have a favorite pair of shoes? I have an old sweatshirt that I just love. It is all worn out. The color is fading and there are a couple of holes in it, but it is so comfortable. It has been with me in good times and in bad times, and it comforts me in ways that a new sweatshirt cannot.

Many years ago a good friend inspired and challenged me. He said, "One of my goals in life is to wear out a Bible." I thought to myself, "What a fabulous goal."

Now I want to challenge you. Get yourself a Bible to carry with you throughout your life. Ask your parents or grandparents to

read a little to you each day. As you get older, read a little yourself each day. Wear that Bible out by reading it, reflecting on what you learn, and praying for the grace to live what you learn.

Over a lifetime Jesus and the other great people in the Bible will become great friends of yours. They will teach you how to grow in virtue, become the-best-version-of-yourself, and live a holy life.

Somewhere down the road, I hope we meet, and when we do, I hope you will show me your worn-out Bible.

God wants you to have many companions on your journey to heaven. He wants you to have friends who help you become the-best-version-of-yourself. But he also wants you to be friends with the saints because they have already made this journey and can teach you so much about which path to take and the paths to avoid. God also gives us our guardian angels to accompany us on the journey. And God gives us the Bible and the Church as great companions along the way too.

tip

What is your relationship with the Bible? For many, the Bible is just a collection of stories they have heard many times before. After all, it is so easy to think that we know a certain story, and to tune out as a result. But to do so would be a mistake. The Word of God is constantly new and fresh, even for those who have spent a lifetime exploring it. The reason is because our lives are constantly changing, we are constantly changing, and our relationship with God and others is constantly changing. If you have not yet had a life-changing experience with the Bible, I am excited for the opportunity you have before you.

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12



My Notes:



SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

Step-by-Step

- 1 Have your children complete the activity page by themselves, with a partner, or as a group.
- 2 After three minutes ask the class: "Are there any questions you are struggling with?"
- 3 Briefly explain the answer to any questions they might have, referring back to the specific page in the workbook.

Show What You Know

True or False

1. **T** The Bible is a great companion for your journey to heaven. (p 101)
2. **F** We should never say sorry even when we've done something wrong. (p 86)
3. **F** There is no purpose or meaning behind each prayer and each action at Mass. (p 80)
4. **T** God speaks to you through the Bible. (p 100)
5. **T** Jesus is the greatest teacher who ever lived. (p 101)

Fill in the blank

1. God has an amazing **plan** for your life. (p 100)
2. Our parish church is a very special place because it is God's **house**. (p 83)
3. God reveals his amazing plan for your life through the **readings** you hear at Mass every Sunday. (p 100)
4. Going to Mass on Sunday is a great way to thank God for all the **blessings** he has given you. (p 84)
5. At Mass we get to receive **Jesus** in the Eucharist. (p 84)

6. Music helps us to raise our hearts to God in **praise** and **thanksgiving**. (p 85)
7. God loves **healthy** relationships. (p 86)
8. The **Bible** is the most famous book in the world. (p 100)
9. One of the many ways God **speaks** to you is through the Bible. (p 100)
10. The Bible is your **map** and the Church is your **guide** on your journey to live with God in heaven forever. (p 100-101)

Word Bank

THANKSGIVING HOUSE GUIDE HEALTHY SPEAKS PRAISE PLAN
READINGS MAP BIBLE JESUS BLESSINGS



tip

If you are running short on time, you may choose to complete this section together as a class. Simply read each fill-in-the-blank and true-and-false statement and invite your students to call out the answer. Once someone calls out the right answer, ask everyone to write it down in their workbook. If you are completely out of time, ask the children to complete the exercise for homework.

My Notes:



Follow your conscience and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and you will notice that you are less anxious and more joyful.

Decision Point

The goal of our life is to live with God forever. God, who loves us, gave us life. Our own response of love allows God's life to flow into us without limit.

St. Ignatius of Loyola



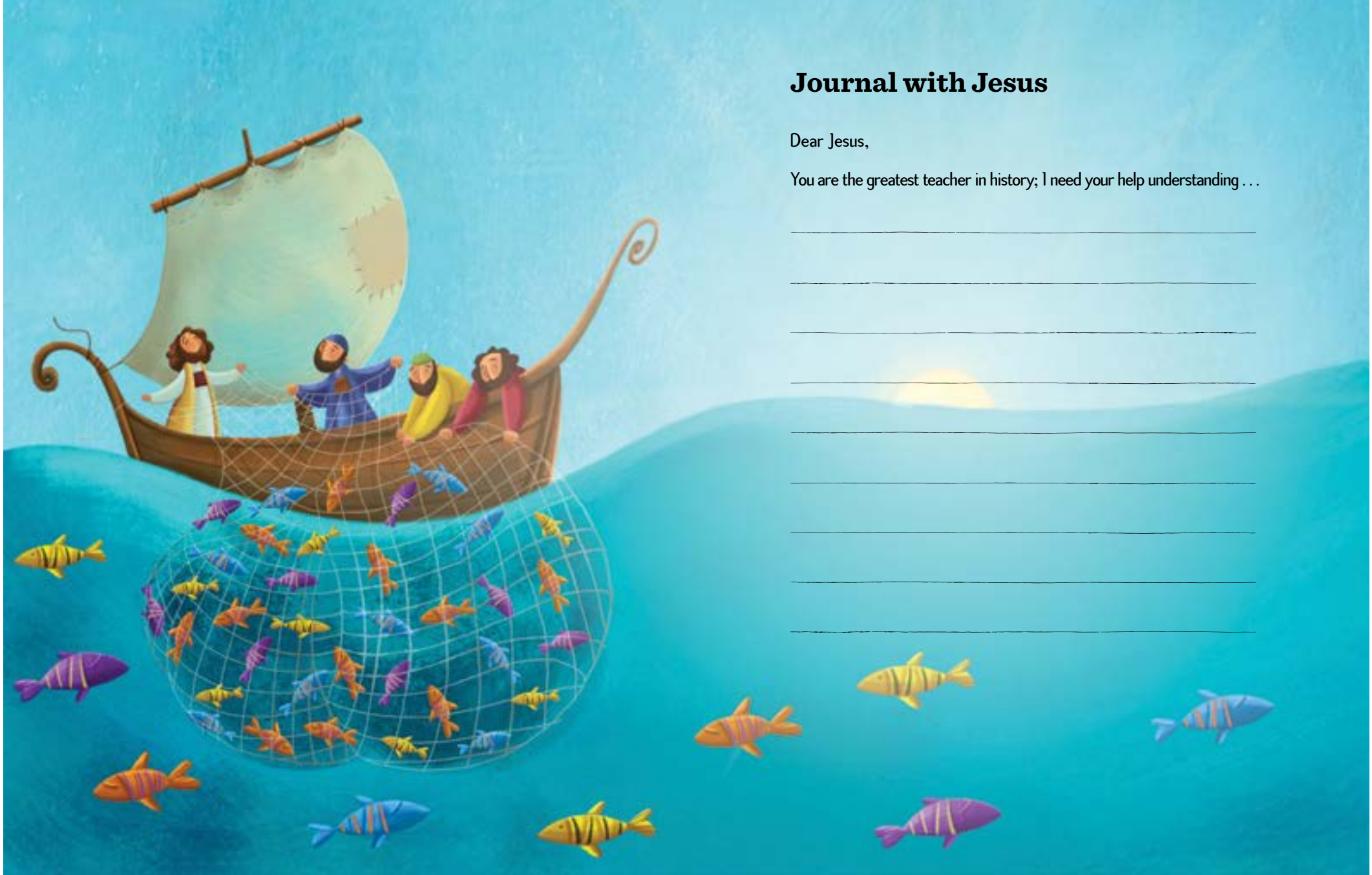
JOURNAL WITH JESUS

Step-by-Step

- 1 Invite your children to write a letter to Jesus.
- 2 Ask the children to remain silent during their journaling time.
- 3 You may wish to play some quiet, reflective music to help create the right mood in the classroom and to encourage the students to remain quiet and focused on journaling with Jesus.

The way we respond to everything that happens in our lives causes us to either love more or less.

Rediscover Jesus



Journal with Jesus

Dear Jesus,

You are the greatest teacher in history; I need your help understanding . . .

tip

The children in front of you can grasp a lot more than you think. They might complain saying, "I don't know what to say!" Treat this as an opportunity to brainstorm as a group. Here are three prompts to help spark the brainstorm:

- MAKE A LIST OF THINGS YOU WANT TO SAY THANK YOU FOR.
- TELL JESUS WHEN YOU ARE AFRAID AND ASK HIM TO BE NEAR YOU.
- WRITE TO JESUS ABOUT SOMEONE WHO IS SICK AND IN NEED OF PRAYERS.



My Notes:

The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Zephaniah 3:17



CLOSING PRAYER

Step-by-Step

- 1 Prepare the children to pray with Ben. Get them settled and quiet.
- 2 Watch Episode 7.
- 3 Ask the children: "What are some of the most important things you learned in this session?"
 - GOD REVEALS HIS AMAZING PLAN FOR OUR LIVES THROUGH THE BIBLE AND MASS ON SUNDAY.
 - JESUS IS THE GREATEST TEACHER WHO EVER LIVED.
 - ON SUNDAY WE WORSHIP GOD AS JESUS TAUGHT US.
 - MASS IS A GREAT WAY TO THANK GOD FOR ALL THE BLESSINGS HE GIVES US.
 - GOD LOVES HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.

Closing Prayer

Throughout your life, you will come across many teachers. But none of them will ever love you more or possess greater wisdom than Jesus.

From time to time you will really want to become the-best-version-of-yourself, grow in virtue, and live a holy life but you won't know how to do it. Those are the moments when you go to Jesus, the greatest teacher who ever lived, and ask him for help.

St. Ignatius of Loyola was a great priest and teacher. He founded one of the largest and most influential religious orders in history, the Society of Jesus (better known as the Jesuits). He was a spiritual master because he knew how to ask Jesus for help.

Together let's use the words of St. Ignatius and ask God to teach us to become all he created us to be:

Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will.

Amen.



My Notes:

tip

Are you praying for your students? And are you praying for the wisdom to lead this class effectively? Your potential influence on the children cannot be overstated. If you take a moment to think about it, in all likelihood, you can remember a teacher who had a really negative influence on you. He or she embarrassed you or made you feel like you were worth less than you are. At the same time, I am sure you can remember a teacher who inspired and encouraged you. In both cases, the teacher left a powerful impression on your life. This is an awesome responsibility that I am sure is not lost on you. The grace of God is your most powerful weapon in your efforts to positively influence the lives of these children. And the best way to call upon his grace is through prayer.

Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!

1 Chronicles 16:11