

Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, John the Baptist points out Jesus to two of his own disciples. After these men meet Jesus, they tell others about him. This Gospel includes Jesus' invitation: "Come, and you will see" (1:39)—a message for his first followers and for us today.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Thank you, God, for our friends. Help us to be good friends to them and to you. Help us to follow you and share your love with others. Amen."
- Story • Rosie's Birthday Surprise.** Read this story about friends to your child:

"Good morning, Birthday Girl!" said Rosie's dad. "Time to get up." Rosie sat up. "Get dressed quickly and come to the kitchen. Your mom has a special breakfast for you." Rosie jumped out of bed, got dressed, and ran to the kitchen. She could smell the birthday breakfast before she saw it. "Waffles!" Rosie said. "With syrup and whipped cream," her mom said. Rosie ate two big waffles.

Rosie's dad came into the kitchen with his coat on. "Hurry up," he said. "The school bus is coming." When the school bus pulled up, the bus driver opened the door, stepped down on the curb, and bowed to Rosie. "We are honored to have the birthday girl on our bus today," the bus driver said. Rosie

looked at her dad. "How does he know it's my birthday?" she asked.

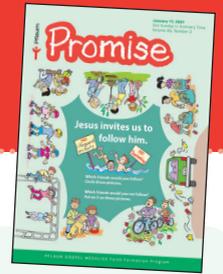
Just then, Rosie heard knocking on the bus windows. She looked up. Boys and girls were laughing and pointing to her front porch. Rosie looked. Attached to the flower pot were six red balloons and a big sign that said, "Happy Birthday, Rosie!" A card was taped to the bottom of the sign. It said, "To our favorite birthday girl. Love, Grandma and Uncle Don." Rosie hugged her dad. "I love my birthday surprise," she said. "I'm going to call Grandma and Uncle Don as soon as I get home from school." Rosie climbed on the bus. The bus driver climbed on too, and off they went to school.

Ask: How did Rosie's family make her birthday special? How can you make others feel special on their birthdays?

- Activity • Who are my friends? (page 2)** Invite your child to draw a bus driver and friends in the school bus windows. Look at the house picture and **ask:** How does our family show we are friends with each other? Invite your child to draw your family's faces in the house picture.
- Cover Activity • Which friends would you follow? (page 1)** Read the page title aloud and talk about the pictures as your child proceeds with the circling and crossing out. Optional: Play a game of Simon Says or Follow the Leader together.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Calls Followers** Explain that after Jesus was baptized, people began to follow him. Share the Sunday Gospel:



A man named John the Baptist was teaching people and baptizing them in the Jordan River. One day, John saw Jesus walking by. John said to two of his followers: "See that man? He is Jesus, God's chosen one, the Lamb of God."

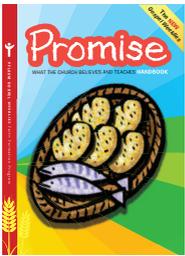
Andrew said to the other man, "Let's go meet him." So they left John behind and went to see where Jesus was going. Jesus turned around and saw them. He asked, "What do you want?"

They asked him, "Teacher, where do you live?" Jesus said, "Come and see!" They went with him and saw where he lived. They stayed there for the rest of the day.

The next day, Andrew found his brother, Simon Peter, and told him, "We have found the Messiah!" Andrew brought Simon Peter to meet Jesus. When Jesus met him, he said, "Simon, from now on, you will be called Peter."

Ask: How did Andrew and the other man learn who Jesus was? *John the Baptist told them.* **Ask:** How did Peter meet Jesus? *His brother Andrew introduced them.* Explain that Peter means "rock." Simon Peter would need to have strong faith for the job Jesus would ask him to do.

- Activity • Jesus makes friends. (page 3)** Help your child cut off the strip at the bottom of the page. Then cut apart the three figures. Read the page with your child. Then read the back of the figures to identify which belongs in each of the scenes. Show how to tape each figure at the top in its place so your child can still read the words on the back. Have your child use the pictures to retell the Gospel to you. Discuss the question left over from the paper strip to summarize.



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 32. Point to *Holy Communion*, *Lord's Day*, and *Mass*. Help your child get a basic grasp of the meaning of each. You might say, the Last Supper was a very special meal Jesus had with his friends. Jesus told them the bread was his Body and the wine was his Blood. We remember this at Mass. We share Jesus' Body and Blood in Holy Communion. Write the words: *Jesus invites me to Mass* on a white board or piece of paper. Have your child copy these words on the top of a sheet of drawing paper. Then invite your child to draw your family at Sunday Mass.

Note that Andrew invited his brother Simon to meet Jesus. **Ask:** How can you invite others to meet Jesus? *Invite them to come to Mass or a parish activity, tell them about Jesus, treat them with kindness like Jesus would.* *Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 3.*

- Word of the Week • Sunday (page 3)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 3. Share this definition: *On Sunday, we come together at Mass to remember and thank Jesus.*

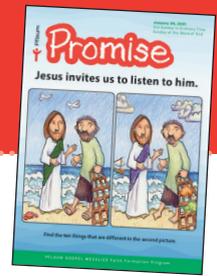
Live the Gospel

- Activity • How do friends of Jesus act? (page 4)** Turn the Gospel page over to find a *Promise* classroom. **Ask:** Can you tell me some things that are happening in this classroom? Read the title and **ask:** How are these children and adults acting like Jesus? *Sharing, helping, praising, being friendly and polite, learning about Jesus and God.*
- Closing Prayer** "Dear Jesus, thank you for being our friend and inviting us to follow you. Help us to live as your followers. Amen."



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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus calls four fishermen to leave their boats and follow him. By responding to this call, Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John become Jesus' first followers. Jesus tells them that he will teach them to fish for people—catching them with the bait of the message of God's love.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Jesus, we want to be your followers. Help us learn how to follow you and share your Good News about God's love. Amen."
- Activity • I Can Listen** Sit quietly with your child. **Say:** Let's close our eyes for a few moments and listen for sounds. Once you've opened your eyes, share what you both have heard. Explain that listening is a way to learn, share, enjoy, help, show respect, and know what is expected of us.
- Story • Listening to Emma** Share this story with your child:

Emma was a great student. She loved school. She loved her teacher and her friends. She loved that her classmates didn't think it was a big deal that she wore a hearing aid. Emma wore a hearing aid to help her hear better. Emma's teacher, Miss Simms, wore a special microphone so that Emma could hear what Miss Simms was saying.

One day, Miss Simms was sick. The substitute teacher couldn't find the part of the special microphone that hooks on her belt. All of the students wanted to help find the microphone for Emma. They searched all around the room. They got louder and louder.

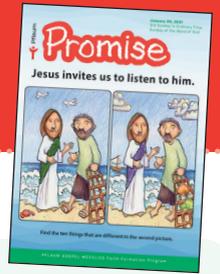
Emma looked at the teacher's desk and saw the missing equipment under some papers. "I found it!" Emma said. The students were too loud to hear her. Emma picked up the equipment and handed it to the teacher. The teacher thanked Emma and clapped her hands to get the children's attention, but they couldn't hear her. Emma went to the light switch and turned off the lights. The children were so surprised that they stopped talking. "I found it!" Emma told them. The teacher smiled and said, "Now let's see if you can work as hard at listening as you did at looking for the missing equipment."

Ask: How did Emma feel about school? What were Emma's friends like? Why couldn't Emma's friends hear her or the teacher when Emma found the missing equipment? How did Emma get her friends to listen? Why was it important to listen?

- Activity • Listening to Emma (page 2)** Discuss what is happening in the pictures on page 2 and then read the sentences together. Have your child put numbers in the circles so the pictures are numbered in the right order.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Activity • Find the Differences (page 1)** Direct your child's attention to the two drawings on page 1 of *Promise*. Invite your child to find and circle the differences between them. **Answers:** no birds, clouds, boat, color of Jesus' sash, Jesus' ear is visible, no crab, no shoes on fisherman, fish in net, longer shirt on fisherman, smaller beard on fisherman.
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Calls Fishermen to Follow Him** Invite your child to continue looking at the cover pictures while you share this Gospel:



Jesus came to Galilee to share the Good News of God's love. He said to the people: "This is the time! God's kingdom is coming. Turn back to God and believe in the Good News."

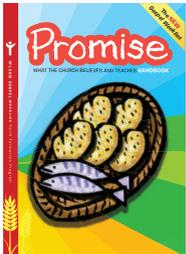
As Jesus walked near the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers who were fishermen. Their names were Simon Peter and Andrew. They were putting their fishing nets into the big lake. Jesus called to them, "Come with me! I will teach you

how to catch people instead of fish." Simon Peter and Andrew left their nets and followed Jesus.

As they walked, Jesus saw two more brothers who were fishermen. Their names were James and John. They were in a boat fixing their fishing nets. Jesus called to them "Come with me! I will teach you how to catch people instead of fish." James and John left and followed Jesus.

Ask: Why did these men leave their jobs and families to follow Jesus? *Maybe they had heard that he was the Messiah that God had promised to send.* **Ask:** What did Jesus mean when he told them he would teach them to catch people? *They would use the bait of the Good News of God's love to catch other followers for Jesus.*

- Word of the Week • mission (page 3)** Help your child find the word *mission* on page 3. Share this definition: A **mission** is being sent to love and help other people. God calls all of us to love and help other people. God calls some people to do this for people who may live far away. These people are called missionaries.



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 26. Read the story up to the point where Jesus blesses the children. **Ask:** How does this story make you feel? Have your child read the remaining two paragraphs (starting with *Jesus wants*). Then read aloud the directions in red. Give your child time to complete the drawing/writing exercise in the box.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 3.

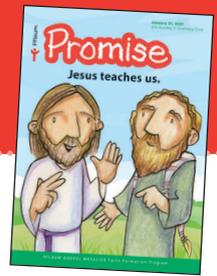
Live the Gospel

- Activity • What does a good listener need? (page 3)** Ask: What do we look like when we are being good listeners? *Eyes on speaker, mouths closed, ears uncovered.* Read the title and instructions on page 3. When your child finishes, talk about your child's drawing and affirm times when your child has been a good listener.
- Activity • Thank you, God! Megaphone (page 4)** Read the first sentence together on page 4. Have your child look at each rebus line, name each picture, and make the sounds each thing makes. Using the diagram at the bottom of page 4 as a guide, show show your child how to roll the page into a megaphone.
- Closing Prayer** Recall some of the pictures on the megaphone. After you mention each one, **say:** "Thank you, God for . . ." Then invite your child to child can make the sound through the megaphone. **Pray:** "Thank you, God for everything you have given us. Amen."



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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus teaches during Sabbath synagogue worship and expels an evil spirit who interrupts him. The people who witness this are amazed at his authority. They comment that he is a far greater teacher than any of their rabbis. In Mark's Gospel, this is the first cure Jesus performs as he begins his public ministry.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be with us. Help us learn more about him today. Amen."
- Story • I can learn. (page 3)** Have your child look at the pictures on page 3 as you tell the story:

Last Tuesday, Jenna woke up and started to sing. Tuesday was music day in school. Jenna wanted to warm up. She brushed her teeth and got dressed. Jenna found her shoes under her bed and put them on. "I can't get this shoe tied," she said. Dad heard her and came to help. "Watch how I do it, Jenna," Dad said. Jenna watched and then she tried. "Thanks for teaching me how to tie my shoe, Dad," Jenna said.

After breakfast, Jenna walked to the bus corner. The crossing guard said, "Wait! It isn't safe yet." Then she blew her whistle and motioned the children to cross. When the children were seated on the bus, the bus driver said, "Don't stand while the bus is moving. Don't be loud. I want to get you to school safely and on time." At school, Jenna could hardly wait for music

class. Mr. Kramer played his guitar, and the children sang their favorite songs. When Mr. Kramer was singing "The Little Red Caboose," he forgot the words. "I know them," said Jenna. Mr. Kramer asked Jenna to teach the class the words to the song. In health class, Mrs. Mooney taught the children how to brush their teeth and gave each child a new toothbrush. After lunch, Father Mathias read them a story about Jesus.

At dinner that night, Dad asked Jenna what she had learned that day. "I learned how to tie my shoe, how to wait before crossing the street, how to behave on the bus, how to brush my teeth, and how good Jesus was to his friends," Jenna said. "Great!" said her dad. "And I was a teacher too," Jenna said. "I taught the class the words to 'The Little Red Caboose.'"

After you've read the story, have your child cut apart the pictures. Save the bottom strip for later. Have your child place the pictures side by side in order on a workspace.

- Activity • I need teachers. (page 4)** Ask your child to turn over the pictures. The blocks spell *I need teachers*. Say the words aloud together. Invite your child to give examples of people who teach. **Ask:** Do you teach anyone?

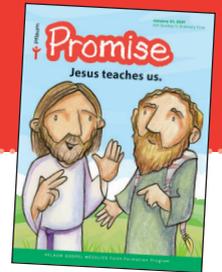
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus teaches us. (page 1)** Share the Gospel:

Jesus and his followers went to Capernaum where Jesus went to teach in the synagogue. The people were amazed at what a good teacher Jesus was. Suddenly, a man with an unclean spirit cried out. The unclean spirit said: "What are you doing here, Jesus? Leave us alone. I know you are the Holy

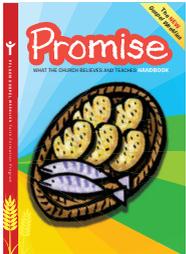
One of God."

Jesus said, "Bad spirit, get out of this man!" The bad spirit left the man. A woman who saw this said, "It is a miracle!" A man said, "See what power Jesus has!" Soon, people all over the country were talking about Jesus.



Help your child focus on *why* Jesus did this—to show us God’s love for us and God’s wish that we can all be free to love. Jesus’ healing miracles are signs of inner healing so that we can fully be God’s children and brothers and sisters of one another.

- **Word of the Week • Gospel (page 3)** Help your child find the word *Gospel*. Share this definition: *A Gospel is a book in the Bible that tells us the Good News about Jesus. We listen to a Gospel reading at every Mass.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 23. Read the story of the wedding at Cana. **Ask:** Who did what Jesus said? *Mary*. Explain that Mary loves God and Jesus very much. Mary can help us to be good followers of Jesus.

Read aloud the directions for the activity. Give your child time to draw the hearts. Then take turns telling about a time when you did what Jesus tells us to do.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 2.

Live the Gospel

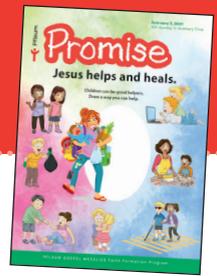
- **Story • Sister Thea teaches us to love all people. (page 2)** As you share this photo story, have your child place a finger on the picture that shows the part of the story you are telling.
 1. Bertha Bowman was born in Mississippi. Her nickname was Birdie. When she was nine years old, Birdie asked her parents if she could become a Catholic. They said yes.
 2. When Birdie was twenty years old, she joined a community of religious sisters. She was the only black sister in her community. She became known as Sister Thea.
 3. Sister Thea studied to become a teacher. She taught in elementary and high schools. She also taught at a college. She used songs and stories in her classes. One of her favorite songs was “This Little Light of Mine.”
 4. Sister Thea taught people what it is like to be a black Catholic in the United States. People learned that we might have different colored skin, but we are the same on the inside and that God loves us all. God wants all of us to let our lights shine.

Ask: What was special about Sister Thea? What was one of her favorite songs? What did she teach people about the color of our skin? What did she teach people about God’s love? How can we act like Sister Thea? To learn more about Sister Thea, go to the website of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration: fspa.org.
- **Closing Prayer** Invite your child to repeat each line of the prayer after you: Jesus teaches me that God loves me. / Jesus teaches me to pray. / Jesus teaches me to forgive. / Jesus teaches me to share. / Jesus teaches me to love everyone. Amen.



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Scripture Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus brings happiness and healing to Peter's mother-in-law and to the many sick people who crowd around her door. Jesus heals many people in Capernaum and then moves on to teach and heal in other towns. *Promise* connects the Gospel reading to the sacraments this week, especially the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Jesus, thank you for our family. Thank you for neighbors and friends too. Help us learn how to be more helpful and loving to everyone. Amen."
- Cover Activity • Draw a way you can help (page 1)** Invite your child to describe the helping situations. Read the directions and have your child draw a way to help the mom in the center.
- Story • Ben and the Sad Face (page 2)** Have your child turn to page 2. Read the title aloud, and point out the sad face. **Ask:** What are some other feelings this face might be showing? Help your child fold back the page from top to bottom so only the first column shows. Read the story one column at a time, inviting your child to add the words the drawings represent. Read the question aloud. *Ben's parents showed him that they care about him. They joked with him, which helped him to smile.* **Ask:** Why did this work? **Ask:** Since Ben's parents helped him, do you think Ben will pass it on and help someone at school?

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Heals** Read aloud the Gospel to your child.

After they left the synagogue, Jesus and his friends went to the home of Simon Peter and Andrew. Simon Peter's mother-in-law was sick with a fever. Jesus went to her, took her hand, and helped her up. Her fever was gone! She got up and waited on them.

That evening, people brought all the sick and those who were bothered by bad spirits. The whole town gathered at the door. Jesus cured many of the sick people and told many bad

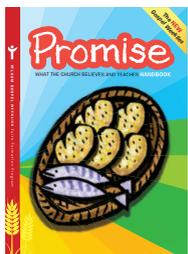
spirits to leave people.

Jesus got up very early the next morning. He went to a quiet place to pray. Simon Peter and the others went looking for Jesus. When they found him, Simon Peter said, "Everyone is looking for you." Jesus said, "Let us move on to other towns so that I may preach there also. This is why I have come."

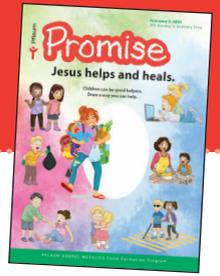
Jesus left Capernaum and went to other towns. He taught in their synagogues and healed people all over Galilee.

Ask: How did Jesus help? Why did Jesus leave to go to other towns? *Jesus wants to tell and show everyone the Good News of God's love.*

- Activity • How does Jesus help? (pages 3-4)** Help your child separate the page and make the folds. Then read the Gospel story together.



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 10. Remind your child about the story of Noah. You may wish to read the story from a children's Bible or picture book. Emphasize that God took care of Noah and his family because Noah believed and trusted God. (This might be a good time to assure your child that floods and other natural disasters aren't punishments from God. God didn't say there would never be another flood but that no flood would ever again destroy the whole world. God cares about all creatures and wants everyone to be saved. Even if people die through a natural disaster, God will bring those who are



faithful to him into forever happiness in Heaven.)

Read aloud the title on page 10. Read aloud the first three lines. Assist as needed with the activity. **Answer:** *I care.* **Ask:** *What are some examples of how God cares for people, animals, and the earth? Challenge your child to come up with one example for each band of the rainbow.*

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 2.

Live the Gospel

- ❑ **Word of the Week • anoint (page 2)** Help your child find the word *anoint* on page 2. Share this definition: *To anoint means to bless a person with oil to show that he or she is special to God.*
- ❑ **Optional Activity • Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick** Explain that a special way our Church shows God's care and our care for the sick is through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. This sacrament gives special grace to Christians who are sick. Invite your child to imagine a person who is sick in the hospital. You might role play and act this out together. One person can pretend to be the sick person who receives the blessing, another can be the **Priest**, and other family members can represent the family and friends who are present (**All**).

Priest: The peace of the Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Scripture Reading: Reread this Sunday's Gospel.

Priest: Loving God, through this holy anointing, come and comfort (*Name*) with your love and mercy.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Priest: Relieve the suffering of all who are sick. Assist all dedicated to the care of the sick. Give life and health to our (*brother/sister*).

Priest: (*pretends to anoint the sick person on the forehead and hands with blessed oil*) Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen. *Everyone says the Lord's Prayer together.*

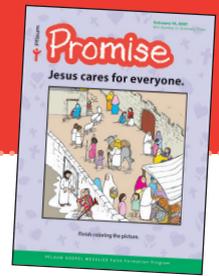
(*Note that in the Anointing of the Sick, the sick person often receives Holy Communion.*)

- ❑ **Activity • Making Care Cards** Collect some drawing paper or card stock and crayons. **Ask:** Who do we know who is sick or very old? Make some cards together for them. You might print *Thinking of You* and *Praying for You* on a sheet of paper for your child to copy. Mail or deliver the cards this week.
- ❑ **Closing Prayer** "Thank you, Jesus, for loving us and taking care of us. Please bring comfort and healing to those who are sick, especially (*have your child name someone you know*). Help us to trust in your care for us. Amen."



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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is moved with compassion for a leper; an outcast of society. The leper, whose faith in Jesus brings him to ask for healing, is so moved by this sign of God's love that he tells the Good News everywhere he goes. Jesus shows that God's love is for all people. We are called to do the same. During Lent, the Church asks us to pray, sacrifice, and care for others. Affirm the ways your child cares for others and for God's Creation. Look for opportunities to discuss situations when it's difficult to care for, respect, or include someone.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "God, you give us people to love and who love and care for us. Thank you for sending Jesus who shows us how much you love us. Amen."
- Story • I can show I care. (page 2)** Invite your child to look at the pictures on page 2 as you share this story poem about a brother and sister.

Mom said, "Ted, help me clean up this mess."

Ted nodded and answered yes.

Mom said, "Beth, will you please go and help your brother?" Beth said no.

Ted started to clean and sweep;
he got very tired and fell asleep.

Beth decided to pick up the broom.

She cleaned and straightened the whole room.

Which child said yes? Which child said no?

Which was the one to change and grow?

"Beth," said her mom, "can your sister Tess use your new crayons?" Beth said yes.

"Ted, please help Tess color so I can go and make our lunch." Ted said no.

Tess broke the red crayon and broke the black.

Beth took all of her crayons back.

Tess cried. Ted felt sad.

Ted played with Tess until Tess was glad.

Who is a caring child? Can you guess?

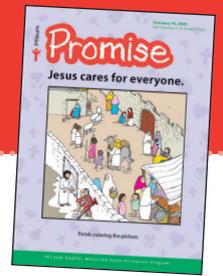
Do both children care? Yes! Yes! Yes!

Look at the pictures at the bottom of page 2. Help your child cut on the heavy horizontal line and the heavy vertical line. Your child will have a yes and no version of Beth and Ted. Have your child fold on the dotted lines. Tape the figures on the sides to make two finger puppets. Read the story poem again, inviting your child to use the puppets to show which child is saying yes and which is saying no. Conclude by saying that we can always change and grow.

- Word of the Week • respect (page 3)** Help your child find the word *respect* on page 3. Share this definition: *Respect means showing that a person or thing has been created by God. It means caring for it and treating it well.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

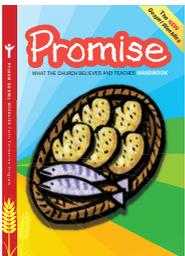
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus cares for everyone. (page 1)** Look at the cover together. Read aloud the background and then proclaim the Gospel story:



Background: In Jesus' time, some people had leprosy, which was a bad skin disease. They were left out of everything. They had to stay away from all other people so no one else would catch their sickness. (Invite your child to find the leper in the illustration—lower left.) In the market, women were buying oranges and children were playing with other children. (Have your child find the market.) But the leper had to stay away from the market. Near the door to the synagogue courtyard, children were playing games and grown-ups were going inside to pray. (Find the door at upper right.) But the leper had to stay away from them. The leper couldn't even go home. The leper was left out of the market, the synagogue, and even his family.

Gospel: One day, a man who was sick with leprosy called out to Jesus. The man said, "Jesus, if you want to, you can make me better." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. Jesus said: "I do want you to be better. Be well!" The man's sores went away. He told everyone he met that Jesus had healed him.

Ask: How do you think the leper felt before Jesus healed him? How do you think the leper felt after Jesus healed him? What can you do to make sure no one feels left out? Invite your child to add color to the page.



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 22. Read aloud the words next to the second heart (at the bottom). Then read the activity directions. Encourage your child to draw things your child really does, not things your child may do some day.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, pages 3–4.

Live the Gospel

- Activity • Jesus Cares Valentine (pages 3–4)** Read the title and the top red heart on page 4. Remind your child about Peter's mother-in-law and all the people Jesus healed. Read the next red heart. Recall the leper. Then read the bottom red heart.

Ask: Who does Jesus want us to care for? *The sick, those who are left out, everybody.* We are followers of Jesus, so we need to do what Jesus does. Point out that Valentine's Day is a good time to celebrate how much God loves us and how we love one another.

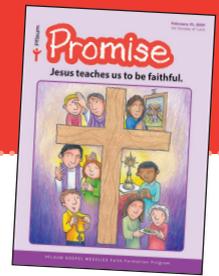
Have your child cut the green stem along the left edge of the page first. Next, cut apart all the hearts; then cut carefully around the individual hearts. Direct your child to glue the stem in the middle of a sheet of construction paper, then arrange the three big red hearts on the paper and glue them down. Then add the three small hearts. Point out the small sample on page 4 for placement.

- Closing Prayer** Invite your child to repeat this prayer after you: "Jesus, you care for the sick. / You care for those who are left out. / You care for us. / Thank you, Jesus. / Amen."



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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is driven into the desert by the Holy Spirit. Jesus encounters the Devil's temptations as well as the comfort of his Father's angels. From this desert experience, Jesus goes out to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of God. The forty days of Lent invite us to grow as Christians and show our belief in God's promises. Talk with your child this week about how your family will observe Lent. The prayer box in this issue can help.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** Pray the Sign of the Cross together. Then say the Lord's Prayer, inviting your child to repeat each line after you. Pray the Sign of the Cross again.
- Cover Activity • Jesus teaches us to be faithful. (page 1)** Talk about what is happening in the pictures on the cover. *Clockwise from top left: receiving ashes on Ash Wednesday; praying the Stations of the Cross; attending Eucharistic Exposition and Adoration; doing Works of Mercy (like feeding the hungry); praying the Rosary; and celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.* **Ask:** What is in the middle of the page? *A cross.* **Ask:** Why is a cross important to us? *We pray the Sign of the Cross, Jesus died on a Cross, it reminds us of Jesus and his love and sacrifice for us.* Lent is special time when we do loving actions and pray more than usual. It's a time of getting closer to God and one another as we get ready for Easter.
- Story • The Kissing Hand** Borrow a print copy of *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn from your public or school library. You may also share a video telling of this story. Find it at <https://www.storylineonline.net/books/kissing-hand>.

Before sharing the story, invite your child to think back to the first day of school. Talk about what your child was excited, nervous, or scared about. Emphasize that it's normal to feel any or all of those things when we start something new. In *The Kissing Hand*, Chester doesn't want to go to school. Mrs. Raccoon shares a family secret with him. Have your child listen closely to find out what the family secret is.

After sharing the story of *The Kissing Hand*, **ask:** What is the family secret? What does Chester take with him to school? How does it help him? What does Chester give his mother?

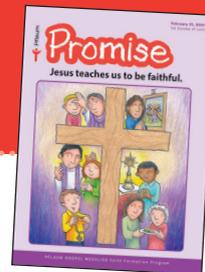
Introduce the word *faithful* to your child. Explain that someone who is faithful will always be there for you. A faithful person is someone you can count on, who believes in you, and who wants good things for you. The kissing hand reminds Chester that his mother always loves him—even when they are apart. Chester kisses his mother's hand too. Chester and his mother are faithful to each other. **Ask:** Who is a faithful friend (or family member) to you? To whom are you faithful?

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches Us to Be Faithful** **Ask:** Do you know what it means to be tempted? *To have a strong urge to do something we know is wrong.* Explain that even Jesus was tempted sometimes. Invite your child to listen to the Gospel to hear what Jesus did when he was tempted.

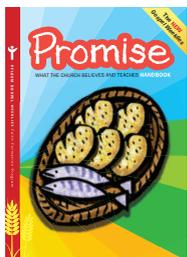
The Holy Spirit sent Jesus out into the desert. Jesus stayed there for forty days. While Jesus was in the desert, the Devil tempted him, but Jesus trusted God and not the Devil. Wild

animals kept Jesus company. After his time in the desert, Jesus went to Galilee. "God is near," he said to the people. "Turn away from sin and believe that God loves you."



Ask: When the Devil tempted Jesus, what did Jesus do? *He trusted God and not the Devil. Jesus believed that even if some things are hard, God our Father wants only good things for his children. Jesus knew that God was faithful to him. Jesus was faithful to God too.* **Ask:** What do you believe about God? *God made us and all of Creation. God loves us. We can trust God. God is faithful. God will take care of us.*

- Word of the Week • creed (page 2)** Help your child find the word *creed*. Share this definition: *A creed is a prayer that tells what members of the Church believe.* At Sunday Mass, we stand with everyone in the church and say together what we believe about God. This is our creed.



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 18. Read about holy seasons. Then take some time to talk about the pictures for the matching activity. Have your child use a pencil or crayon to match the words *Lent* and *Easter* to the pictures.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 2.

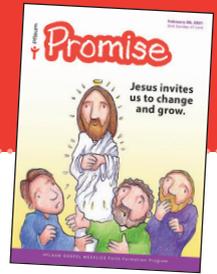
Live the Gospel

- Activity • Lent is a time to . . . (page 2)** Invite your child to use a secret code to find a hidden message. Read the first part of the sentence: "Lent is a time to..." Explain how to match the symbols to the letters. Get your child started by finding the first letter together. When your child has finished the activity, read the message together: *Lent is a time to pray, help, share, and forgive.*
- Activity • Make a Prayer Box (pages 3-4)** Talk together about the pictures on pages 3-4. Have your child color in the word *Lent*. Show your child how to cut on the heavy solid lines on page 3 that have scissors icons. Set aside the prayer strip for the time being. Show your child how to fold on all the dotted lines. You will need to fold twice, backward and forward, so the sides of the box will be easy for your child to manipulate. Use a glue stick or tape to attach the sides. Look at the prayer strip and talk about people or concerns for which your child wants to pray. Write or have your child write a prayer on the strip. Keep the prayer box and prayer strip at your family table or in another prominent place in your home during Lent.
- Closing Prayer** Together, look at the picture of Jesus on the bottom of the prayer box. Read the words and have your child repeat them. Have your child read the prayer strip and respond, "We pray in Jesus' name." Conclude by **praying:** "God, bless our family as we pray and do loving actions during Lent. Amen."



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Scripture Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Peter, James, and John witness Jesus' Transfiguration. Jesus shows us that after his suffering and Death on the Cross, he will be resurrected. The Gospel of the Transfiguration gives us an idea of what Jesus will look like in Heaven. This helps these Apostles believe that Jesus is God's Son. Their faith in Jesus grows stronger. The Transfiguration gives us a peek at our future too. If we do God's will and follow Jesus, God promises that we will go to Heaven. When Jesus comes again, our bodies will shine with God's glory in Heaven.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Dear God, everything you make grows and changes. Everything you make praises you. Amen."
- Activity • We can change and grow. (page 2)** Give your child time to study the children on page 2. Read aloud the title. **Ask:** When can a happy feeling change to a sad or mad feeling? When can a surprised feeling change to a happy feeling? **Ask:** Do you remember when you were younger—did you cry if you didn't get your way? How do you handle that feeling now? Explain that as we grow up, we can choose better ways to show that feeling.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

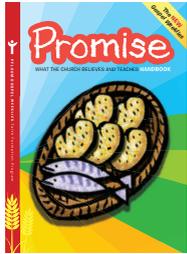
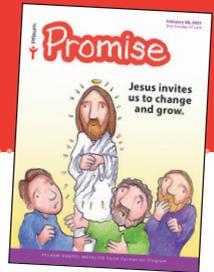
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is God's Son (page 1)** Share the Gospel story:

One day, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up a mountain. Jesus changed before their eyes. His clothes became dazzling white. Jesus' friends were amazed and afraid. A cloud came and made a shadow over them. A voice spoke from the cloud, saying "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." When Jesus'

friends looked up again, they saw only Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Tell no one about this until I have risen from the dead." Peter, James, and John kept this a secret. They weren't sure what Jesus meant about rising from the dead.

The *Promise* version of this Gospel doesn't include the appearance of Moses and Elijah. Young children don't have enough sense of biblical history to understand what the presence of these ancestors of Jesus means. Invite your child to retell the story. **Ask:** How did Jesus' friends feel when he changed? When the voice came from the cloud? *Amazed and afraid.* **Ask:** How did they feel when Jesus said he would rise from the dead? *Confused.* **Ask:** Whose voice came from the cloud? *God the Father's.* **Ask:** What other time did God the Father speak from the sky? *At Jesus' baptism.* Point out that at both of these events, God said that Jesus is his beloved Son.

Ask: Have you ever felt very special because of someone's love? This is how Jesus feels about his Father and how his Father feels about Jesus. **Ask:** What does God the Father tell us to do? *Listen to Jesus.* **Ask:** How do we show in our actions that we are listening to Jesus? Help your child connect this to the Lenten practices of prayer, helping, sharing, and forgiving. Relate back to the feelings activity on page 2. We can show in our behavior that we are changing and growing (e.g., handling our feelings in better ways than we did when we were younger).



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 28. Direct your child to find the heart near the bottom of the page. Read aloud the first line below the heart. **Ask:** What place is Jesus getting ready for us? *Heaven*. **Ask:** What do we need to do if we want to go to Heaven? *Follow Jesus, listen to Jesus, make loving choices*. **Read** aloud the rest of the lines. Invite your child to imagine and draw a picture of Heaven.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 2.

- **Word of the Week • Heaven (page 2)** Help your child find the word *Heaven*. Share this definition: *Heaven is living in happiness with God forever.*

Live the Gospel

- **Activity • What makes change happen? (pages 3-4)** Refer back to the Gospel. Jesus changed because of God's love. He became bright and shining because God was with him. Direct your child's attention to the pictures on page 3. **Ask:** What is happening in these pictures? Invite your child to think of ways that a good change could happen in each picture. Next, have your child place the page on a desk or workspace and fold the page up one time as shown in the small pictures at the bottom of the page. **Ask:** What change happened? Discuss how these were positive changes. Have your child fold the page up a second time. Discuss the changes in the top two pictures. Conclude by reminding your child that we can all choose to make positive changes in our lives.
- **Activity • You can make a difference. (page 4)** Discuss the three stories on page 4 in terms of feelings. **Ask:** How did the teacher feel when the children did not quiet down? How did the child feel who asked a neighbor to be quiet and hold up his hand? Do the same with the other two stories. Feel free to role play these scenarios if you want.
- **Prayer Activity • Praying for Others** Remind your child about the prayer box. **Ask:** What people or worries would you like our family to pray for today?
- **Closing Prayer** "Jesus, thank you for loving and caring for us. Help us to change our unloving actions into loving ones so that we will be more like you. Amen."



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Sunday Gospel Background

When Jesus finds people buying and selling in the courtyards of the Temple, he chases them out, saying that the Temple is the house of God, not a marketplace. Jesus is showing us here that God calls us to live holy lives. We can hear God's call when we pray. We answer God's call by making loving choices, asking for forgiveness when we make unloving choices, and forgiving others.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Thank you, God, for hearts to love you (*point to heart*) / for hands to fold in prayer (*fold hands*) / for bodies that move (*jump up and down*) / and for family to love (*point to one another*). / Amen."
- Cover Activity • What is wrong? (page 1)** Invite your child to examine the cover of *Promise* and find what's wrong in this store. There about thirty things that are wrong. Some things are silly. Other things are unloving actions. Explain that when we have done something wrong, we need to say we're sorry. **Ask:** For which things should someone say, "I'm sorry"?
- Story • Owen Gets Mad.** Share this story with your child:

When Owen woke up, he could smell the rain. "Oh, boy!" Owen thought, "If it's rained just enough, the sand will be perfect." Owen jumped out of bed and got dressed. He ran out the back door and to the sandbox. The sand was perfect. Just right for making houses. Owen created streets and houses and tall buildings. He put little pieces of evergreen on the street corners to make trees. He was so busy making his town that he didn't notice his brother and sister, Alex and Clare. Clare was pitching a softball to Alex, and he was hitting it back to her.

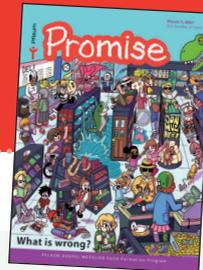
Then something awful happened! Clare pitched the ball to Alex, and he hit it hard! The ball went high over Clare's head. She backed up to catch the ball. CRASH! She fell into Owen's sandbox and smashed his whole town!

"Momm!" Owen yelled. The door flew open. "What's wrong? Are you hurt?" asked Mom. "Clare smashed my town," Owen yelled. "I hate her!" Clare stood up and stepped out of the sandbox. "I'm sorry, Owen," she said. "I didn't mean to hurt your town." "I hate you," Owen said again. "Owen," Mom said, "it's OK to be angry, but it's not OK to tell Clare you hate her." Mom gave Owen a hug. "What did Clare say to you?" Mom asked Owen. "She said she was sorry," Owen said. "And I'll help you build the town again," said Clare. "What do you say?" Mom asked Owen. "I forgive you. And I'm sorry for saying I hate you, Clare," Owen said. "Let's all have breakfast," said Mom. "I'll make pancakes." "Yeah!" said Alex. "Yeah!" said Clare. "OK!" said Owen.

Ask: How did Owen feel when he was making his town? When Clare fell on it? When Mom gave him a hug? When he accepted Clare's apology and offer to help him rebuild his town? Talk about times you've felt angry and what you did to make things better. Invite your child to do the same. Summarize: Anger is a feeling God gave us. It's OK to feel angry, but it isn't OK to hurt others or ourselves when we're angry.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches About Prayer** Invite your child to listen as you tell about a time when Jesus got angry.



One day, Jesus comes to the Temple in Jerusalem. For Jewish people, the Temple is the house of God. Jesus sees people selling oxen, sheep, and doves. It is noisy. It is more like a market than a place to pray. Jesus shouts: "Stop this! Get out of here! This is God's house, not a market."

A man selling doves asks, "What miracle will show that you can chase us away?" Jesus says, "If you destroy this Temple, I

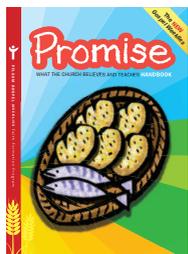
will build it again in three days."

The man selling sheep says: "It took forty-six years to build this Temple. How can you build it again in three days?"

Jesus is talking about his body as God's temple. His followers do not understand what he means until he has been raised from the dead.

Ask: Why did Jesus get angry? *The Temple was a place where people prayed and praised God. The people selling things made the Temple too much like a store.*

- Word of the Week • prayer (page 3)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 3. Share this definition: *Prayer is a heart-to-heart talk with God.*
- Activity • Jesus Invites Me to Pray Booklet (pages 3-4)** Have your child cut across the heavy black cutting line on page 3. Help to nest the booklet pages together, using the page numbers as guides. Read through the booklet together, doing the activities and reading the Gospel. The Prayer Path (page 6) answer is *This is how you are to pray.*



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 28. Read Jesus' promise at the top of the page. Give your child time to draw a place to pray. Remind your child that it's important to pray every day. Prayer helps us grow closer to God. It helps us become holy, more like God.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 2.

Live the Gospel

- Activity • A Bad Start for Owen (page 2)** Read the title and invite your child to fill in the missing words: 1-sand, 2-town, 3-hard, 4-sorry, 5-angry. **Ask:** What word do the letters in the boxes spell? *Sorry.* **Ask:** Who said, "I'm sorry"? *Clare and Owen.* Point out that what was a bad start for Owen got better when Claire said she was sorry and offered to help him rebuild his town. **Ask:** How can we say we're sorry to God? *Pray to God to say we're sorry.* *Show we are sorry by changing our bad behavior and trying to make right what we have done wrong.*
- Closing Prayer** Say together, "I am sorry, Jesus," after each of the following: For the times we have been selfish... For the times we were mean... For the times we forgot to say prayers... Jesus, help us during these days of Lent to remember your love for us and to be loving to one another. Amen.



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