



Sunday Gospel Background

This Sunday's Gospel includes one of Jesus' most wonderful statements: "Come, and you will see" (1:39). We learn that each person has a calling—a vocation—from God. Whether our vocation is to marriage, priesthood, religious life or single life, we are called to follow Jesus, each in our own way. But like the Apostles, we must spend time with Jesus to learn what he wants from us. Praying to God every day and asking him what he wants of us is the most important thing we can do. Just like Andrew and his friend, we must "come and see."

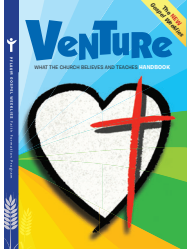
Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Loving God, bless all the people who lead the Church. Help us see the work they do and find ways we can help and be leaders ourselves. Amen.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Who Leads the Church? (page 1)** Use a copy of your parish bulletin or access the website to gather names for this bingo game.
- ☐ **Article • Good Pope John (pages 2–3)** Read the article together or have your child read it silently. (If your child needs a reminder, in Roman numerals, X= ten and I = one.)
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. He was called to be a dedicated student, called to serve the church, called to work for the Catholic Worker Movement, and called to serve the Italian Army. 2. Angelo was a leader by helping refugees and by helping people survive and escape the Nazis. He brought Orthodox and Roman Catholics together in conversation. 3. As pope, through the Second Vatican Council, he brought Catholics a more accessible form of their religion, Masses in their own language, interfaith communication, and a commitment to justice and equality.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Calls His First Followers (page 4)** Explain that this Gospel takes place at the Jordan River where John baptized Jesus. If you have access to a Bible map, show your child where the Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea. The traditional site of Jesus' baptism is just a little north of the Dead Sea. Proclaim the Gospel by sharing the parts of Narrator, John, Jesus, Andrew, and Two Disciples. Set the scene in which John the Baptist points out Jesus to Andrew and another disciple and the subsequent scene in which Andrew brings his brother Simon (Peter) to meet Jesus.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. John points out Jesus and tells the disciples that Jesus is the Lamb of God. Speculate about why else they might have been interested. 2. Simon Peter, his brother. 3. Open-ended. Talk about your child's gifts, talents and interests and how they might be vocations, even now at this age.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus Calls Us to Love (page 4)** Read this doctrine feature as a summary of the Gospel message of calling and naming. Jesus calls us by name.
- ☐ **Turn to the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Even if your child already knows the story, talk about it together. 2. Peter agrees to follow Jesus. He also answers Jesus' call to lead God's Church on earth.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 11. Take turns reading aloud the three paragraphs of section 12: What was the mission of Jesus? Remind your child that the mystery of the Incarnation is that God became one of us in Jesus so that we might become more like God. Jesus' entire life was an example of this Good News of God's love for us.

Note that the Creed we pray each Sunday skips over Jesus' ministry and goes right to his suffering, Death, and Resurrection. The Sunday Gospels are where we hear about that part of Jesus' life. The Gospels in this unit show Jesus teaching and healing and going from town to town. Jesus is a man seized by the love of God.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.

- **Catholic Faith Word • Vocation (page 5)** Read the definition aloud.
- **Our Catholic Faith • A Vocation Is Saying Yes to God (page 5)** Read aloud this feature together. Feel free to share about a priest or a religious sister or brother you know who truly lives out a vocation to serve God.

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • Who Were Jesus' First Followers? (pages 7-8)** Follow the instructions on page 8. Partner with your child and take turns reading aloud the information on the cards about each of the four fishermen Jesus called and about Mary Magdalene, whose belief in Jesus' Resurrection earned her the title of apostle to the Apostles. Have your child cut out the cards, being careful to keep the name of each follower at the top of each card. For the blank card, invite your child to include information about a patron or favorite saint, or other another role model of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.
- **Saints • Saint André of Montreal (page 6)** Read this feature aloud together or have your child read it silently. **Ask:** How did Brother André answer God's call in his life?
- **Closing Prayer** Invite your child to reflect on the holy people you've studied. Explain that some people do the important work of protecting people who are not able to protect or speak for themselves. This week, the Church prays for them as we observe the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. **Pray:** Loving God, every life is precious. We thank you for every person—young, old, and unborn. Amen.



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John were simple, ordinary fishermen. What made them extraordinary was their willingness to follow Jesus. They answered his call immediately, and they gave their whole lives to spreading the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus. The Gospel is indeed the Good News that Jesus brings. And though we may think of ourselves as rather ordinary, we can do extraordinary things when we agree to follow Jesus with the same speed and enthusiasm as the Apostles.

Share Experiences

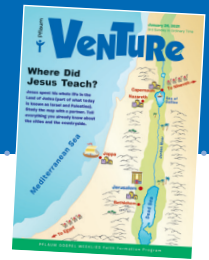
Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- ☐ **Pray together** Share names of people you and your child wish to pray for. After each petition, respond together, "Loving God, hear our prayer."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Where Did Jesus Teach? (page 1)** Look at the map together. Explain that your child already knows several things about Jesus' home country. *Possibilities: Jesus was born in Bethlehem, grew up in Nazareth, escaped to Egypt when Herod wanted to kill him, was baptized in the Jordan River, went sailing on the Sea of Galilee.* Conclude that today we are going to meet one of the people who wrote down a Gospel account of Jesus.
- ☐ **Story • The Gospel According to Mark (pages 2-3)** Have your child read the title and examine the illustration on page 2. Mark's symbol is the lion because his Gospel begins in the desert or wilderness where John the Baptist was preaching.

Read the interview aloud together. Your child might take the interviewer's questions and you might read Mark's responses. When you are finished, turn to the timeline at the bottom and begin with Jesus' birth. This is labeled with a zero because our way of marking time begins with Jesus' birth.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Have fun with this question and listen to your child's perceptions of what life was like when you or your parents were children. 2. Open-ended. 3. People who knew Jesus when he was alive were getting old and dying. Mark wanted to get their stories written down so others could learn about Jesus. 4. Open-ended.*
- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Sacred Tradition (page 5)** Read aloud this definition to wrap up the article on Mark's Gospel. Help child understand that the Word of God is meant as much for us today as it was for earlier generations.

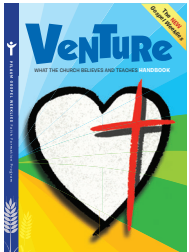
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Calls Four Fishermen (page 4)** Tell your child that this Sunday's Gospel is similar to last week's story by the Gospel writer John, but is told this Sunday according to Mark. Proclaim the Gospel by sharing the reading parts.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. God's kingdom is coming! 2. Jesus wants these four to follow him and to "catch," or gather, other people together. 3. Open-ended. Possible responses: let our Christianity show, love and include others as Jesus did, support missionaries, consider a vocation to priesthood or religious life.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus Calls Us to Community (page 4)** Read aloud the doctrine together. Your child might view the Gospel readings as ancient history. This doctrine reminds us that the work



that Jesus and his disciples did long ago continues today through the selfless, merciful acts of Christian believers.

- Discuss the *Think* questions on page 4. *Answers: 1–2. Open-ended.*



- Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 7. This can be a difficult concept for children to grasp, but one that is fundamental to the Catholic Church. We believe that we hear God's plan for us in Scripture, particularly in the Gospels. We also believe that we learn God's plan and will for us from the teaching of the Church, which we call Tradition.

Read aloud the paragraphs one at a time. Simply hearing these concepts is enough at this level of learning. Ask your child the prompt in the lesson (page 4, bottom right): How does Jesus' message to his disciples more than two thousand years ago still apply to us today in 2021? *Possible responses: It shows us how we should treat one another, how to remain close to God, how we should help the least among us (e.g., the Works of Mercy), and how to respond to God's call in our lives.*

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.

- **Our Catholic Faith • The Village of Capernaum (page 5)** Capernaum was near a busy Roman road that went north to Syria and east to what are now Iraq and Iran. More people lived in Capernaum than in Nazareth. This fishing village is where Jesus called his first followers and where he worked his first healing miracles. Have your child find Capernaum on the cover map. Read the article aloud together, and discuss the two questions. *Answers: The location of Capernaum makes it a crossroads for business and for spreading the Word of God. It's an ideal spot for Jesus to begin his ministry. Jesus' message may not have been as well-received in his own hometown.*

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • God Calls a Reluctant Prophet (pages 6–7)** This excerpt from the story of Jonah is the First Reading for this Sunday. Read aloud the prologue together and then the setting for Scene 1. Read the play together, speaking the various parts. Pause just before the Epilogue to answer the Narrator's question. *Open-ended; God, of course, is very happy that the Ninevites have repented.* Divide the reading of the Epilogue between you and your child. **Ask:** Why do we read this story? What does it have to do with today's Gospel? With our Christian lives?
- **Saints • Saint Monica and Saint Augustine (page 8)** Have your child read this comic feature about two of the Church's best-known saints.
- **Closing Prayer** Say the **Pray Think Act** prayer on page 8 to finish the lesson.



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus shows that he has authority over evil. He heals the man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue at Capernaum through his own power. Jesus brings a new teaching of love and does it with authority. He is a teacher with power, but he uses it to help others and to show God's love. Jesus makes the man whole and calms him, showing him that God loves him.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Read aloud the paragraph at top left of the *Venture* cover, substituting "family" for "class." Pause and give your child time to think of people whose work heals others. Read aloud the prayer petition, and invite your child to share the name of someone who works for healing.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • How Can We Help Others? (page 1)** This Sunday's Gospel is about one of Jesus' healing miracles; it also reveals Jesus' teaching authority. This week, we concentrate on the ways we can share Jesus' healing ways. Share with your child that Black History Month begins this week. After your child reads the timeline, ask if any of the facts were surprising. Read aloud the brief biography of Father Augustus Tolton and watch the ten-minute video together.
- ☐ **Article • Doing Good (pages 2–3)** Explain that the experiences we have when we're young can influence who we become as adults. This was the case for Sebastián Seromik, who was influenced by the poverty he saw when he was about the same age as your child. Read aloud the article together, switching readers at each paragraph.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. It is real life for many people; it might motivate us to take action to help. 2. Open-ended. Remind your child that this is not pocket money; it's the only money these people have to meet their basic needs, including food. 3. Their families could not be found; they had no place to stay. 4. Education can open doors to jobs, resources, and skills to help people earn a living.*
- ☐ **Activity • You can do good, too! (sidebar, page 3)** If you would like to create postcards or write notes to the kids at the Children's Center in Benin, remind your child that this is not a pen pal program and the children cannot write notes in return. Notes do not have to be addressed to specific children and should be simple, as children in Benin do not begin learning English until middle school. Notes can be sent to: Dagbé, P.O. Box 1734, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

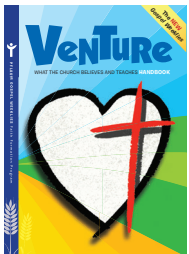
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches and Heals (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by reading the various parts.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus commands the unclean spirit to come out of the man. 2. They question what is happening and the kind of teaching Jesus does; they are amazed that the spirits obey Jesus' powerful commands. 3. We know that he has the power to do healing miracles; we also witness his compassion for a man who is unclean, or outside of the community. 4. Father Tolton preached and cared for his community, despite the prejudice he would have faced as a Black priest in the late nineteenth century. The Dagbé organization that Sebastián founded offers safe housing and education to children.*
- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Synagogue (page 4)** Read aloud the definition when you encounter it in the Sunday Gospel. Explain to your child that it is significant that Jesus teaches and heals inside the synagogue; this is a sign to the



religious leaders of the time that Jesus has the authority to preach and heal in God's name.

- ❑ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • No One Is Outside of God's Love (page 4)** This topic will likely generate some discussion. Children at this age like to follow rules and do not wish to be embarrassed or called out. God cares about people whether or not they act appropriately or "cool." No one is excluded by God.
- ❑ **Discuss the *Think* questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus' public healing of the man reveals his own healing power; it also reveals the nature of God's inclusive love—no one is left outside. Likewise, the Church is home to everyone. We are called to welcome the least among us. Every person is a member of the Body of Christ. 2. Open-ended; encourage everyone to participate.*



- ❑ **Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 51.** Read each section and together identify which Themes of Catholic Social Teaching apply to this Sunday's Gospel Reading. **Responses:** *Life and Dignity of the Human Person; Call to Family, Community, and Participation; Option for the Poor and Needy.* Turn to page 32, and read aloud Section 5. Then **ask:** What is the common good? *Everyone thrives; no one is left out.* **Ask:** Why should Catholics work for the common good? *We are all created by God with equal dignity.* Read Section 6 and ask similar questions. *Conclude that as Catholics we must work to help people be all they can be. We praise God when we do this.*

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.

- ❑ **Our Catholic Faith • People from Africa in the Bible (page 5)** Do the exercise with your child, helping to look up the Bible passages. Record your findings together. **Answers:** *Zipporah; the Queen of Sheba; the queen of the south; Simon of Cyrene; the Ethiopian eunuch, a court official.*

Live the Gospel

- ❑ **Activity • How Do I Live Jesus' Values? (pages 6-7)** Read aloud the instructions at the top of page 6. Then go through the five teachings of Jesus on page 6, lower left. Read aloud each scenario, and ask your child to select which of the five teachings best apply. Decide together on the best way to deal with each situation.
- ❑ **Saints • Saint Brigid of Kildare (page 8)** Give your child time to read this feature.
- ❑ **Closing Prayer** In honor of the Presentation of the Lord, which the Church celebrates on Tuesday, February 2, pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary (see page 54 in *What the Church Believes and Teaches*).



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

This Sunday's Gospel shows Jesus healing people throughout Galilee, starting with Simon Peter's mother-in-law. Mark's Gospel shows us a Jesus who is dynamic. He is on the move, going from place to place in order to preach the Gospel message and heal those in need. But Jesus is also centered in prayer. We cannot do the work of God without prayer. Our Father in Heaven and Jesus, our brother, give us the strength, through prayer, to bring healing and peace to others.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Share names of people you and your child would like to pray for. Respond to each name: "Loving God, bring him (or her) healing." Finish by thanking God for his love and for the gift of compassion he has given your child.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • You Can Make a Difference (page 1)** After your child completes the activity, explain that by choosing to make a difference, your child is showing compassion; the ability to feel what another person is feeling and to respond with help and kindness.
- ☐ **Story • Who Gets to Play? (pages 2-3)** This is a good story to read aloud. Ask questions as necessary while you're reading to keep your child engaged.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** Most of the responses are open-ended, but try to conclude that Gary seems stuck in his meanness. Perhaps the whole group standing up to him will help him reconsider who he wants to be. *Answers: 1-2. Open-ended. Most children who hurt others have been hurt themselves in some way. Ask: Why does being treated poorly compel some kids to become mean and hardened toward others, while children take a similar experience and instead choose to show compassion to those who may be hurt? 3. Tim invites Kai to play broomball. He knows what it's like to be new in town. 4. When one person stands up to a bully, it's easier for others to follow suit. Open-ended. 5. Open-ended; suggest that Rick could have taken Gary aside and told him to knock it off. Humiliating Gary is no better than what he did to Kai.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Heals Many People (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by reading the various parts. **Note:** A detail that goes easily unnoticed in this Gospel is that Simon Peter's mother-in-law becomes one of Jesus' disciples. She responds to Jesus' act of raising her up from a fever by serving him. The Greek word for *serve* is *diakonei*. It is the word Jesus uses of himself when he says he comes to serve, not to be served. Point out that Jesus goes off to pray. We will hear several instances of Jesus going off to pray after he heals or preaches. Ask your child why it's noted so often and why it's important that Jesus goes off to pray.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** Use these questions to help your child realize how much compassion Jesus had for the poor and suffering. *Answers: 1. He wants everyone to be healed. We cannot live our best lives if we are broken (physically, mentally, or spiritually). 2. They all come seeking Jesus' healing or counsel. 3. To heal, love, and make people whole; open-ended.*
- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Disciple (page 5)** Draw attention to this definition, and invite your child to name other people who are Jesus' disciples, both in the Bible and those who witness his message today through their actions.
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus Acts with Compassion (page 4)** Compassion is not passive; it calls each of us to feel with another person. Read the doctrine that relates to this Sunday's Gospel.



- ☐ **Discuss the *Think* questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. The sacraments provide healing from sin and relief from worry or anxiety, as well as concern for physical health. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, for example, brings strength, peace and courage to those who are suffering from illness or disease. 2. Open- ended.*
- ☐ **Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 24, and read aloud Section 9 together.** Share any experiences you might have had with the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Remind your child that each sacrament helps us remember the loving and healing actions of Jesus and makes his power present to us now.
Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.
- ☐ **Our Catholic Faith • The Church Continues Jesus' Healing Work (page 5)** Have your child read this feature about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and write answers to the three questions. Sit face to face as you celebrate the Healing Prayer Service together.

Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • Gospel Booklet, Part 1: Jesus Begins His Ministry (pages 7-8)** This Gospel booklet activity provides a look at the first week of Jesus' ministry in the Gospel of Mark. The first few days of Jesus' ministry illuminate what his entire ministry is about, and they function as a microcosm of Mark's entire Gospel.
Have your child cut out the booklet on page 7. Following the diagram on page 8, show your child how to fold the first part of the booklet. Explain that you will complete the booklet in next week's lesson.
For now, open the booklet to Day 1 and help your child use a Bible to fill in the blanks (*Simon, Andrew, James, and John*). Point out how Jesus initiates (calls followers), and hearers respond (*the fishermen follow*). Ask your child to open the booklet to Day 2, Sabbath Morning, and read aloud the text bubble. Again, you can use a Bible to answer the question (*the holy One of God*). Once again, Jesus initiates (*teaching with authority*) and others respond (*the unclean spirit departs*). Emphasize that your child will see this pattern repeat during the first days of Jesus' ministry.
Save the booklet for use again at the next session.
- ☐ **Saints • Saint Josephine Bakhita (page 6)** Give your child time to read about the patron of Sudan.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Think of the people you prayed for in your opening prayer. **Pray:** Loving God, be close to _____ in their time of need. We ask that you extend your healing love to them and give them your peace. Amen.



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

In Jesus' time, lepers had to live away from the rest of the community. According to the law given by Moses, they had to cover their faces and shout "unclean" to warn people who came near. Jesus violates every social norm by touching a leper. Jesus shows, by this action, that no one is outside the love of God. This is the lesson of this Sunday's Gospel. All people are loved by God and deserve our love and respect, even when we don't like them or agree with them.

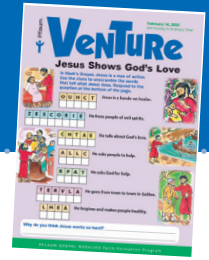
Share Experiences

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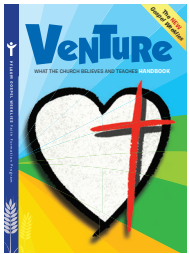
- ☐ **Pray together** Invite your child to think of someone who needs to be cared for and included. *Possibilities: new immigrants, people with mental illness, homeless people, children with behavior problems, new kids in school, new players on sports teams.* **Pray** this prayer: Loving God, help us to notice the people on the outside of things, the people who most need our compassion and care. Send your Holy Spirit to fill us with your love. Amen.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Jesus Shows God's Love (page 1)** Give your child a few moments to work out the puzzle. **Answers:** touch, exorcize, teach, call, pray, travel, heal. Invite your child to respond to the question at the bottom of the page. Then ask your child to describe what is happening in each of the illustrations. *Clockwise from upper left: raising up Peter's mother-in-law; calming a child; calling followers; healing a sick man; teaching in the synagogue.* The sick man is the leper in this Sunday's Gospel. All the illustrations are part of the second half of the Gospel booklet your child began last week. Conclude that Jesus was both fully human and fully divine. Jesus used all his human energy and compassion to show people of his time how much God loved them.
- ☐ **Story • The Visitors (pages 2-3)** Ask your child to speculate from the title and illustration what this story might be about. Read the story together, switching at each paragraph. Read aloud the "Why Does a Family Become Homeless?" sidebar on page 3. Give your child time to respond to the question.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** **Answers:** 1. Her cousins are in her personal space and using her special things. Colleen feels as though she has to do extra work, too. 2. Perhaps she is respecting her sister's privacy, or sparing Colleen the worry of knowing about her aunt's situation. Colleen immediately has empathy for her cousins and wants to share her things with them. Colleen shows compassion. Tell your child that you will hear another example of compassion in this Sunday's Gospel. 3. Open-ended; perhaps you have welcomed a family who needed help due to job loss or illness.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Heals a Man with Leprosy (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by sharing the parts of Narrator 1 and 2, Man, and Jesus.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** **Answers:** 1. His compassion and concern for wholeness and community. 2. He was overjoyed to be healed, and he wanted everyone to feel included as he did; the Good News of Jesus was news he just had to share. 3. People who are homeless, poor, refugees; open-ended. 4. Colleen's family shares their home and their compassion and support with Aunt Grace and her family.



- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus' Actions Teach Love and Compassion (page 4)** After you read the doctrine section aloud, ask: Who are the "lepers" in our community, those people who are rejected or excluded?
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Through prayer, we can be given the Holy Spirit's gifts of understanding and wisdom; we receive God's grace and a greater capacity for love and compassion. 2. Open-ended.*



- ☐ **Open the What the Church Believes and Teaches handbook to page 40.** Share about times you like to pray and what types of prayers you pray. Throughout the season of Lent, read about the kinds of prayer on pages 40–42. There are six weeks in Lent and six kinds of prayer: blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, praise, and contrition. Each week during Lent, allow your child to select one form of prayer to read about and pray together as a family.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.

- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Homily (page 5)** Read aloud the definition. Invite your child to share any examples or stories your parish priest shared in his last homily.
- ☐ **Our Catholic Faith • Holy Communion Makes Us a Holy Community (page 5)** The Sacrament of the Eucharist is referred to as the "source and summit" of our lives as Catholics. Holy Communion nourishes us spiritually; it is a sign that we are part of the community of Jesus' followers. Read aloud this feature together, and allow plenty of time for your child to respond to the questions.

Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • Gospel Booklet, Part 2 (pages 7–8)** This Gospel activity completes the booklet that your child began in the previous lesson. Read aloud the text on page 7. Have your child cut out the booklet on page 7, make the three accordion folds, and tape it to the section from last week's lesson.

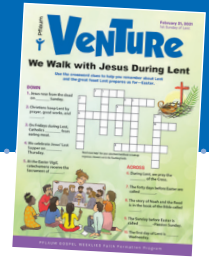
Ask your child to open to Day 2, Noon, and describe what is happening to you. Read the text aloud and help your child use a Bible to look up and fill in the missing word (*serve*). Continue in the same manner through each day.

- ☐ **Closing Prayer • We Celebrate Ash Wednesday (page 6)** Celebrate the prayer service together as a family. There are many spoken parts, so adjust for the number of family members who participate.



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Sunday Gospel Background

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus undergoes temptation. He is driven—not led, but driven—into the desert by the Spirit he just received at his baptism. Jesus encounters the devil's temptations, but also the comfort of his Father's angels. To follow Jesus, we must make Lent a time of growth, a time when we overcome temptation and develop loving habits toward God and one another.

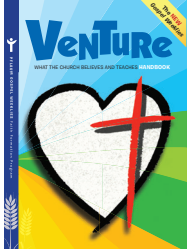
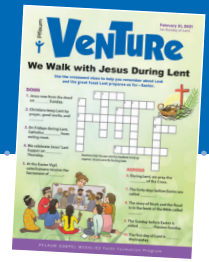
Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Loving God, every year, you bring the world back to life in the springtime. Lent is springtime in our hearts. Help us grow in love for you, for all Creation, and for one another. Amen.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • We Walk with Jesus During Lent (page 1)** Give your child time to complete the crossword. *Answers: Down: 1. Easter, 2. fasting, 3. abstain, 4. Holy, 5. Baptism. Across: 6. Stations, 7. Lent, 8. Genesis, 9. palm, 10. ash.*
- ☐ **Story • What If I Did? (pages 2-3)** Read the voice balloon conversation on page 2 with your child. **Ask:** What might happen in the story? Give your child a moment to speculate; then read aloud the story, alternating at each paragraph. When you get to the three possible endings on page 3, read them aloud and ask which one your child thinks Colin will choose. Discuss the reasons for your child's choice. Your child can imagine another possible ending if none of the three seems realistic.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Colin wants to buy the new game. The cash is there and no one will see him. 2. He justifies his actions, deciding that it's fair for him to have the money. 3. Open-ended; 4. Share about a time when you experienced temptation, and what you did about it. If your child is uncomfortable talking about this, invite your child to write about it in a journal. Conclude your discussion by asking what might help Colin be more honest in his choices.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Faces a Test (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by sharing the parts of the two Narrators and Jesus.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus probably faced tests about how he would use his power and about what God wanted of him. Open-ended. 2. Jesus announces that God's kingdom is here. He continues to ask people to believe his message and to live like members of God's family. 3. Open-ended.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Lent Gives Us Time to Grow (page 4)** Read aloud the doctrine feature, and brainstorm habits your child might like to change during Lent. Emphasize that Lent is not simply a time of deprivation but a positive time in which we can become closer to God. Give your child the time to discern some Lenten commitments. You will create a reminder of those commitments later in this *VenTure* lesson.
- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Covenant (page 4)** Introduce your discussion of covenants by reading the definition aloud. **Ask:** What's another word for covenant? *A promise or commitment.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 6. **Ask** your child: What important covenant have you already made with God? *Most children won't remember this special promise, but your child became part of the new and everlasting covenant with God at baptism. You and your child's sponsors promised, on your child's behalf, that your child would be raised to live as a child of God.*

Read aloud a paragraph at a time. Stop and ask for questions after each. **Note:** *Venture* children are just beginning to ponder big thoughts. Don't worry if your child doesn't respond with great enthusiasm to these paragraphs. You are planting seeds. Some of the words will stick. **Continue** the activity on the forms of prayer you began last week.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.

- **Our Catholic Faith • God Makes a Covenant With Noah (page 5)** Briefly recall the story of Noah and the flood from Genesis 7–8. Have your child read the page silently. Discuss the four questions (bottom right). *Answers: The flood waters wash away everything except Noah and others in the ark. The rainbow promises that God will never destroy the earth again. The waters of Baptism wash away sin; they promise a new life of membership in God's family.*

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • A Covenant Makes a New Relationship (pages 6–7)** Read aloud page 6, which describes the purpose and parts of a covenant. Emphasize the story of Noah and the covenant God made with him. Read aloud the introduction to the Class Covenant on page 7 together. Consider your family as a “class” and brainstorm ideas for practical ways your “class” might improve. Jot the ideas down and decide together which covenant terms you will commit yourselves to. Then choose a sign of that covenant. Give your child time to make a personal, private covenant for Lent. Do the same for yourself on a separate sheet of paper. Encourage your child to review this commitment every week during Lent. Give your child time to write the commitment on the My Covenant for Lent strip at the bottom of page 7, and then cut off the strip. (You will use this strip during the Closing Prayer.) Keep the covenant page in your family classroom space during Lent as a reminder of your commitments.
- **Quiz • Review and Reveal (page 8)** Give your child time to answer the quiz questions. The letters from the correct responses will reveal an important message: *G-O-S-P- E-L means G-O-O-D N-E-W-S.*
- **Closing Prayer** Ask your child to hold up the My Covenant for Lent strip. Pray silently for God's help in making these important changes. Then pray aloud: God, we know you are with us when things are easy and when times are hard. Be with us as we work to grow and change during Lent. Amen.



Parent Resources

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Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, the three Apostles are overjoyed but also confused by Jesus' Transfiguration. They do not yet understand that this experience is a precursor to what Heaven will be like. Jesus shows us that after his suffering and Death on the Cross, there will be a Resurrection. The Transfiguration is a model for Christian living. Jesus shows us that we grow through the sufferings we encounter in this life and we are transformed by them. After this life, there is an infinitely better life awaiting us if we are faithful. Each Lent gives us the opportunity to grow ever closer to the person Jesus wants us to be.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Loving God, you call us to work together as a community of Jesus' followers. Help us continue in our Lenten commitments. Amen.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • If I could make myself into someone brand new, I would have... (page 1)**
Before you share this issue of *VenTure* with your child, recall the story of Pope John XXIII and what new thing he did that changed the Church. *He called the Second Vatican Council.* Then ask what new action the African American people of Montgomery, Alabama, did that changed the course of civil rights in the United States. *They refused to ride city buses until the buses were integrated.*
Share this issue. After your child has a moment to look over the illustrations and text on the cover, give your child some time to fill in the blanks. Talk about your child's responses and listen to the reasons for choosing them.
- ☐ **Article • Miranda's Peaceful Sport (pages 2-3)** Have your child speculate from the photos and the title what the story is about. Aikido is a form of self-defense that does not seek to injure the attacker. It requires self-knowledge and a peaceful heart. Have your child read the story quietly. You might want to take turns reading aloud Miranda's essay about making mistakes on page 3.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3. Answers:** 1. Miranda likes that Aikido helps her feel calm; she also does not worry about making mistakes. She has friends at Aikido, and this helped her when her mom died. 2. Children who practice Aikido "leave their ego at the door." Aikido emphasizes calm meditation and peacefulness instead of competition. 3. Open-ended; Miranda knows that practice helps prevent mistakes. She calls mistakes opportunities to go back and fix things. 4. Aikido isn't just a physical sport; it's a contemplative one. The act of writing combines with mastering new techniques.

Finish your discussion of the story by talking about any sports or activities your child participates in. **Ask:** When are times that it feels peaceful for you? When does it bring out your desire to win? Understanding our inner selves is a lifelong task. Participating in different kinds of activities helps us develop different parts of our personality. Miranda remembers her mother as very competitive, but she desired a more balanced approach to life for her daughter.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus' Friends See Him Transfigured (page 4)** Read the parts of Narrator 1 and 2, Peter, Voice, and Jesus to proclaim the Gospel.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4. Answers:** 1. Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and gave them the commandments. Elijah was one of the greatest prophets. 2. God. Jesus is God's Son. 3. Peter envisions Jesus as a mighty Messiah. 4. Jesus sees he must suffer, die, and rise so his friends can have new life.



□ Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus Calls Us to Glory (page 4)

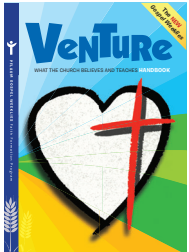
In this vision of a Risen Jesus, we get a glimpse of what will happen at the Resurrection.

- Discuss the *Think questions* on page 4. **Answers:** 1. The Incarnation reveals Jesus' humanity. The Transfiguration reveals his divinity. 2. The goal with all Lenten commitments is to grow closer to Jesus; we can make more time for prayer by giving up things that distract us (for example, curbing the time we spend on social media).

- **Our Catholic Faith • Abraham and Sarah Learn About Faith (page 5)** Have your child read this feature silently. Then ask your child to use the three illustrations to retell the story to you. Discuss the two questions. **Possible answers:** God will always be with us; God will raise us to new life after we die; peace to our world; give us everlasting life; open-ended.

Live the Gospel

- **Catholic Faith Word • Ten Commandments (page 6)** Read aloud the definition to introduce the *Living the Gospel* activity.



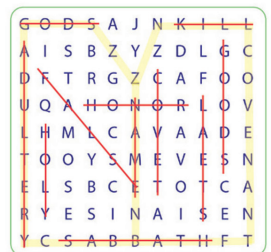
- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 32. This lesson continues *VenTure's* focus on the Ten Commandments. Begin by reading Section 7 together. Then turn the page and skip to the Fourth Commandment. Read about these commandments together with your child. Even the Ninth and Tenth commandments about coveting can speak to children who find themselves in turmoil about friends who choose other friends and leave them behind, or about friends who have many more or better possessions. Use these paragraphs as springboards for family discussions throughout Lent.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to VenTure pages 6-7.

- **Living the Gospel • Honor Your Father and Your Mother (pages 6-7)** Read aloud the introduction on page 6, which explores the meaning of the Fourth Commandment and what it asks of us. Read and discuss one family dilemma at a time. Generate alternative courses of action for both the parents and the children in the stories. Discuss the consequences of the various alternatives. Once you have arrived at solutions together, fill in the "I could" sections for each parent and child.

- **Puzzle • Ten Commandments (page 8)** The word search puzzle is an opportunity for your child to review the Ten Commandments. See solution at right.

- **Closing Prayer** Begin a prayer by mentioning a special teacher, coach, or other leader who has inspired you. For example, "Thank you, God, for Sister Marion, who taught me science in fifth grade." Give your child an opportunity to mention a person and tell briefly about him or her. Say a prayer of thanks for these special people.



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Sunday Gospel Background

Jesus does not expel the merchants because they are selling things. There was need to buy the animals to sacrifice. Jesus expelled the merchants because they had forgotten the purpose of the Temple—that is, to worship God. Jesus reminds us that, as important as our churches are as places of prayer, we ourselves are the real temple. We must always use our bodies, minds, and souls to give praise to God. The forty days of Lent are an excellent opportunity to cleanse our temples—ourselves—of anything that does not come from God.

Share Experiences

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

☐ **Pray together** Loving God, you give us so many good people who help us learn about you. Thank you for all of them. Thank you for giving our family this time together to learn about you. Amen.

☐ **Play • God and the Hebrews Make a Covenant (pages 1-3)** Divide up the parts of this play between you and your child. This is Sunday's First Reading. Feel free to act out the italicized stage directions. They make this play fun to perform as a family.

You can even create props. Make an ark of the covenant out of an empty box and broom handles, the tablets out of a manila folder with rounded cuts at the top, and the signs for the Stagehand.

☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. God asks Moses to tell the Hebrews to keep the covenant God makes with them and to deliver the Ten Commandments to the people. The Israelites agree to the covenant. 2. To show respect for the covenant and to allow them to carry it with them wherever they go. 3. Open-ended.*

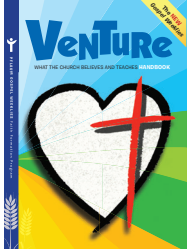
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Cleanses the Temple (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by reading the various parts. If your child enjoyed the Old Testament play, consider dramatizing the buying and selling that is going on when the Gospel begins.

☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. The buying and selling of lambs and doves for sacrifice claimed too much attention in the Temple area; the purpose of the Temple seemed to be more of a circus than a place of prayer. 2. Jesus chases the merchants out of the Temple. 3. Wherever we meet God, there is the Temple. Jesus is truly God and truly human in one Person; in him, the human and divine meet. Jesus, therefore, is the Temple.*

☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • We Live Close to God (page 4)** Have your child read this summary of Sunday's Gospel concept. This is a good check-in point to see how everyone in your family is doing with their Lenten commitments. Remind everyone that the goal of all of our promises is to grow closer to God.

☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. If your child is having trouble thinking of a person, ask: Who do you know who prays and attends Mass regularly? Who volunteers at church or at school? 2. Open-ended.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 57. **Explain** that praying the Stations of the Cross is a regular part of Lent in the Church, especially during Holy week. Following Jesus' journey from Pontius Pilate's headquarters to the Cross originally took place only in Jerusalem. Later, people would travel to the Holy Land to walk this journey. Now, most churches show this journey with statues or pictures. **Read** the descriptions of each station. You may choose to have your child make a response, such as "Jesus, we follow you on your way of the Cross."

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 5.

- **Our Catholic Faith • We Follow the Ten Commandments (page 5)** Remind your child about the work you did together on the Ten Commandments last week. **Ask:** Why do we study the commandments during Lent? *When we follow the commandments, we choose to turn from sin and grow closer to God.* Take turns reading aloud the text, and give your child time to complete the activity with the photo and respond to the two questions.

Live the Gospel

- **Catholic Faith Word • Mortal Sin (page 6)** Though still serious and important, most sins are venial, which means they are a failure to love. They do not permanently damage one's relationship with God. Conversely, mortal sin is extremely serious and deliberate. Help your child understand the difference before you begin the Living the Gospel feature about the Fifth Commandment. Breaking this commitment—"You shall not kill"—is a mortal sin.
- **Living the Gospel • You Shall Not Kill (pages 6-7)** Read aloud the introduction to the activity on page 6. Have your child think of common situations in which each of the three expressions in the balloons are said. Provide time for drawing or writing. Read through the opening text on page 7 and the four steps to making anger helpful, not hurtful. Read the directions for the choosing activity. Give your child time to make these choices. Partner with your child to apply the four steps to these choices. If you want, you can have recent newspapers and magazines available for your child to find headlines and list them on page 7.
- **Saints • Saints Perpetua and Felicity (page 8)** Give your child time to read this feature. Discuss the things you choose to stand up for as a family.
- **With My Family and Friends (page 8)** Say the Holy Spirit prayer and then make a plan to clean out a closet or cabinet this week. If possible, donate or share items with those who need them.
- **Closing Prayer** Return to page 57 in the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook. Remind your child that the suffering Jesus endured was necessary for our salvation. Invite your child to share a prayer of thanksgiving to God.



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