

Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus reminds us that he has come to redeem, not judge. He speaks of light and darkness, noting that those who live in the light are his followers.

Editor's Note: This Sunday is Laetare Sunday. *Laetare* refers to rejoicing. At Mass, we'll see the liturgical color rose, a sign of our joy. Christians rejoice in the salvation gained for us by Christ's suffering, Death, and Resurrection.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Dear God, thank you for forgiving us when we have done wrong. Help us forgive as you do. Amen."
- ☐ **Activity • I can say I'm sorry. (page 2)** Point out the images around the family picture. **Ask:** Who is doing things they'll be sorry for? What will the children need to do to make things right again?
- ☐ **Activity • Make-a-Sentence Maze (page 4)** Read the directions aloud. The completed activity spells: *I forgive.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • We can be children of the light. (page 1)** Together, look at the picture on the cover. Help your child identify Jesus as the man on the right. Tell this Gospel:

A man named Nicodemus came to talk to Jesus. Nicodemus was a religion teacher called a Pharisee. The Pharisees sometimes criticized Jesus, but Nicodemus believed that Jesus came from God. Nicodemus was afraid to talk to Jesus during the day. Instead, he came to visit Jesus at night. He wanted to understand why Jesus had come.

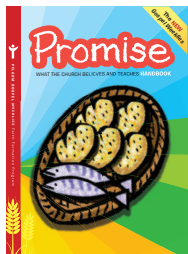
Jesus told him: "God loves the world so much that he gave his only Son to become one of us. Everyone who believes in him will live with God forever. God didn't send his Son to punish the world. God wants to save the world through his Son. People choose to believe in God's Son or not to believe in

him."

Jesus didn't tell Nicodemus that he is God's Son, but we know that he is. He talked to Nicodemus about light and darkness. Jesus said: "Some people like the darkness because they do bad things. They hate the light because the light shines on the bad things they do and everyone can see them. People who do what is good choose to live in the light. The light shows that they are obeying God."

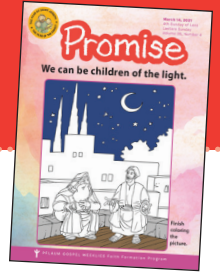
Later, after Jesus died on the Cross, Nicodemus helped bury him. This was done in the daytime when it was light. Nicodemus believed that Jesus was the Son of God.

Ask: Why did Nicodemus come to talk to Jesus when it was dark? What does Jesus want us to do—live in the dark or the light? We will live in the light by believing in Jesus and following him.



- ☐ **Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 30. Ask:** Does everyone live in the light (doing good things, saying yes to God) all the time? **No. Ask:** What do we need to do after we have done something bad? *Say we are sorry and work to make things right.*

Point out the Prayer of Sorrow near the bottom of the page. Explain that *sorrow* is a word that can mean feeling sad and being sorry. This is a prayer you can pray to Jesus when you need to tell him you're sorry.



Read the prayer aloud and have your child place a finger on the words as you say them.
Have your child color the star next to this prayer.

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

- **Word of the Week • mercy (page 4)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 4. Share this definition: *Mercy is being willing to forgive or help. It means treating others like God treats us.*

Live the Gospel

- **Activity • Who needs forgiveness? (pages 3-4)** Help your child cut out the forgiveness words and story squares on page 3. Explain that the story squares show times when children need to ask for and give forgiveness. Beginning with the square showing a girl falling on a sandcastle, tell the story of each square. (See stories below.) Invite your child to choose one blue and one green square with words the children can say to each other.

Story 1: Jade is building a sandcastle. Jade's sister Tanya and her friends are playing with a beach ball. Someone kicks the ball hard. Tanya runs to catch it. She falls on Jade's sandcastle and smashes it. **Ask:** How might Jade feel? How might Tanya feel? What can Tanya say? What can Jade say?

Story 2: Jade asks if Tanya's doll, Samantha, can come to a party on the porch. "Samantha can come if you take good care of her," Tanya tells Jade. After the tea party, Jade goes inside to watch TV. She doesn't hear it start to rain. When Tanya comes home, she finds a wet Samantha on the porch. **Ask:** How might Tanya feel? How might Jade feel? What can Jade say? What can Tanya say?

Story 3: Erin gets out her Mickey Mouse pencil. She opens her notebook with the Disney World stickers on it. She pushes up the sleeves of her Cinderella shirt. Then Erin hears a whisper behind her: "Erin is a show-off." Erin turns around. The whisperer is Jennifer. "You're always showing off about Disney World," Jennifer says. **Ask:** How might Erin feel? How might Jennifer feel? What can they say?

Story 4: Erin is one of the captains for Red Rover. When it's her turn to pick, Jennifer says, "Choose me!" Erin says, "You can't run fast enough." The other children laugh. **Ask:** How might Jennifer feel? How might Erin feel? What can Erin say? What can Jennifer say?

Story 5: Brett is drawing a dinosaur to give to his grandpa. "What are you drawing?" his brother Mikey asks. "Nothing," Brett says. "Can I see it?" asks Mikey. "Not until I am finished," Brett says. "I just want to look," Mikey says. Mikey grabs the paper and rips it. **Ask:** How might Brett feel? How might Mikey feel? What can Mikey say? What can Brett say?

Story 6: Brett's brother Mikey wants to swing. "Come and push me," Mikey asks. "I don't want to," says Brett. Mikey asks again, "Push me!" Brett gives Mikey such a hard push that Mikey falls out of the swing and starts to cry. **Ask:** How might Mikey feel? How might Brett feel? What can they say?
- **Closing Prayer** Pray: "Loving God, help us live in the light of your love, mercy, and forgiveness. Amen."



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

Sunday's Gospel opens with the religious leaders trying to find a reason to have Jesus put to death. Jesus uses the metaphor of the grain of wheat, which must be buried and crack open to grow new seeds. This is what will happen in Jesus' Death and Resurrection. As Jesus' followers, we also grow, by praying to Jesus. We also follow the example of saints. This week, be sure to offer affirmation for the many ways your child is growing as a follower of Jesus.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Dear Jesus, thank you for coming to live with us and for teaching us about God. Help us listen to your words and grow as God's children. Amen."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • How Does a Seed Grow? (page 1)** Invite your child to describe what is happening to the seed-plant in each of the pictures. **Ask:** What would the next picture look like? **Ask:** When you have planted a seed, how long did it take to grow? Stress how growth happens slowly. **Ask:** What shows that you are slowly growing every day? Point out that your child's growth, like the growth of seeds, is slow and continual.
- ☐ **Story • Hooray for Spring! (page 2)** Read the title on page 2 aloud and **ask:** How is the little girl feeling today? Point to the first picture and read the text aloud. Continue this way with the story. When you have finished, review the story by inviting your child to name the things in nature that the little girl sees and how they make her feel.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

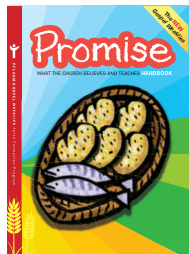
- ☐ **Gospel • Jesus Is Like a Seed** Share this Gospel:

Jesus knew that he would soon be put on a cross, die, and rise from the dead. He said to his friends: "A seed must be buried in the earth if it is going to grow. If no one plants it, the seed stays just a seed. But when someone plants a seed in the

earth, it will sprout and become a plant that grows many new seeds."

Jesus was talking about how he would have to die. Like a seed that's planted, his Death would bring new life.

Ask: How is a seed being planted in the ground like dying? *It gets buried. It stops being a seed when it breaks open and starts to grow into a plant.* This is a good time to plant some seeds with your child to illustrate how Jesus' Death brings new life.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 27. Read aloud the promise next to the first heart. **Ask:** How does praying help you grow? *Praying helps us grow closer to Jesus, grow in love for others, etc.*

Read aloud the second promise. Remind your child that Jesus always hears our prayers. Sometimes we don't get an answer right away or the answer we want, but Jesus always hears our prayers and answers with love. Give your child time to complete the prayer starters on the page.

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



Live the Gospel

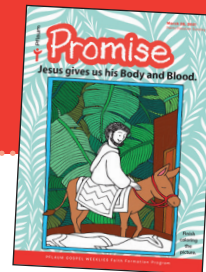
- ☐ **Word of the Week • Church (page 4)** Help your child find the Word of the Week at the bottom of page 4. Share this definition: *The **Church** is God's family, the faithful people that God has called together all around the world.* **Ask:** How does the Church help you grow to be more like Jesus? *Teaches us about Jesus, helps us pray with other people who believe in Jesus, gives us role models of Jesus' followers, etc.*
- ☐ **Activity • Saints help us to grow like Jesus. (pages 3-4)** Read aloud the names of the saints on page 3. **Ask:** What makes someone a saint? *Followed Jesus; grew closer to God by praying, loving others, being kind; died and is in Heaven with God.*

Read aloud the activity title. Explain that the four saints are members of the Church who give us good examples of how to follow Jesus. Show your child how to cut on the heavy dark lines around each saint's picture. Read the stories on the back of the cards. After reading each story, ask how each saint can help us learn how to grow closer to God. All four saints loved God, prayed, helped others, and gave their energy to telling the Good News of God's love to others.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Stand with your child in the middle of your learning space. Invite your child to plant himself or herself like a little seed, crouched to the ground. Direct your child to slowly grow into a beautiful plant as you **pray:** God, you give life to us and to seeds that get planted. The seeds slowly sprout and grow. *(Give time for your child to slowly stand and grow.)* You water them with rain. *(Pretend to water your "plant".)* You warm them with the sun. *(Lightly touch your child on the shoulder.)* Help us grow in our love for you. *(Have your child sway in the breeze.)* Help everyone in our family care for others, share our blessings, and help others grow in love for you. *(Hold arms out toward one another.)* Amen.



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

On Palm Sunday, we remember Jesus coming to Jerusalem, where crowds welcomed him. This begins our annual observance of Holy Week. This Sunday has two Gospels—Jesus' entry into Jerusalem before the procession of palms and the Passion account according to Mark. We share the first Gospel in *Promise*. During Holy Week, we follow the last days of Jesus' life on earth. Find out about Holy Week liturgies in your parish and attend as a family in whatever way you are able—online or in person.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Jesus, thank you for our family. Help us welcome others as you welcome us. Amen."
- ☐ **Story • Welcome, Maria!** A coloring page to accompany this story is available at gospelweeklies.com/lesson-updates. Tell the following story about welcoming someone special:

Dad, Mom, Brad, and Sarah are all waiting at the airport. They are waiting for a new baby. Her name is Maria. Dad holds a folder of important papers to show the people who are bringing Maria. Mom has the car seat so Maria will be safe in their car on the way home. Brad has a yellow balloon that says, "Welcome, Maria!" Dad had written the message with a big black marker. Sarah holds a teddy bear to give to Maria.

They have been waiting a long time. Finally, people start coming from the plane Maria is supposed to be on. All the people look tired. None of them is carrying a baby. Brad pulls on Dad's sleeve and asks, "Where's Maria?" Dad says, "Let's both close our eyes and say a prayer to ask God to bring Maria

soon." Brad closes his eyes and prays hard. When he opens them, he sees a baby's head above the heads of all the men and women. The baby is smiling. "There she is!" yells Brad. Dad and Mom and Brad and Sarah all yell, "Maria!" at the same time. The baby hears them and waves her little arms. The woman holding Maria smiles a big smile. "This is your little girl," she says as she hands Maria to Mom. Everyone pats Maria and gives her kisses. Then Mom straps her into the car seat. Brad ties the balloon to the seat, and Sarah tucks the teddy bear next to Maria. Brad and Sarah carry the car seat with Maria in it all the way to the parking lot. They drive home full of happiness.

Ask: How did the family get ready to welcome Maria? Why is Maria important to her new family?

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

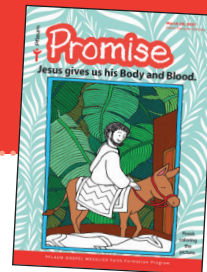
- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Welcome Jesus! (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the cover picture as you tell the Palm Sunday Gospel for the procession of palms:

The more Jesus taught, the more friends he made. Many people heard about him and wanted to listen to him. One day, Jesus decided to go to Jerusalem, the capital city of his country and the place where the Temple was. He invited his friends to come along.

When they got to the city gate, Jesus asked two of his friends to find a donkey for him to ride. This was a sign that he was a peaceful person, not a king who was used to riding around in a chariot and making wars. His friends put their

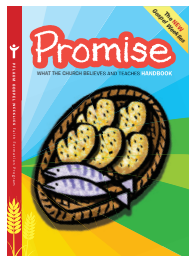
cloaks on the donkey's back for Jesus to sit on.

People were glad to see Jesus. They crowded around to welcome him like a king. Many people spread their cloaks on the road. Some others cut leafy branches to spread on the road. They did this to make a special path for the donkey to travel on. People ahead of Jesus shouted, "Hosanna!" This is like shouting, "Hooray!" They shouted, "Hosanna! God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna for God in Heaven above!"



Ask: How did people show their love for Jesus? If you had been there, what would you have shouted to welcome Jesus? Invite your child to finish coloring the picture.

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Holy Week (page 2)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition: *Holy Week is the week before Easter.* Explain that the Gospel about welcoming Jesus to Jerusalem happens on Palm Sunday—the first day of Holy Week.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 30. Explain that the special meal Jesus shared with his friends is known as the Last Supper, which happened on Thursday of Holy Week. We remember Jesus' Last Supper every Sunday at Mass, in the Eucharist. **Ask:** What do we do before a meal? *Say a prayer to thank God for it.* Find the Blessing Before Meals on page 30. Your child may already know this prayer. If not, help your child learn it by repeating each line after you. Then have your child color the star next to the prayer.

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

Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • My Holy Week Booklet (pages 3-4)** Invite your child to finish coloring the four pictures. Then help your child fold the page in half to make a booklet. Go through it together as you tell what happens:

Palm Sunday The people of Jerusalem welcome Jesus.

Holy Thursday Jesus and his friends are at their Last Supper together. Jesus tells them that the bread and wine they share are his Body and Blood. We remember this meal at every Mass (Eucharist, Holy Communion).

Good Friday The leaders think Jesus is making himself too much like God and decide he must be killed. Jesus carries his Cross. Jesus dies on the Cross. Jesus asks his Father to forgive these people. His mother Mary and friend John stay by his Cross.

Easter Sunday Jesus is risen! He visits his mother and his friends. They are amazed and overjoyed. They share the Good News: Alleluia! Jesus is risen from the dead!

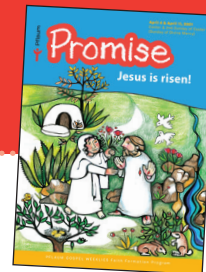
- ☐ **Activity • Holy Week (page 2)** Read aloud the title on page 2, and the names of these days. **Ask:** Which day comes first? *Palm Sunday.* Direct your child to write a number one in the box above that day's name. Then have your child look at the pictures and draw a line from the day's name to the picture for that day. Continue with the remaining days.

- ☐ **Closing Prayer** "Dear Jesus, thank you for your love and sacrifice for us. Amen."



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

Alleluia! He is risen! Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried. But on the third day, he was raised again. He appears to his disciples. Thomas doubts Jesus' Resurrection until he sees and touches Jesus' wounds. The Resurrection of Jesus is the most important truth of the Catholic faith. Jesus' Death and Resurrection opened the gates of Heaven for us. He promises his followers the joy of Heaven. For this great gift, we say, "Alleluia!" Teach the Easter word *Alleluia* to your child—it means "Praise God" in Hebrew.

Editor's Note: This week's *Promise* is for two Sundays. You can do both lessons at once, or spread them out over two weeks.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Dear God, thank you for raising Jesus up and for filling us with new life too. Amen. Alleluia."
- ☐ **Story • An Easter Surprise** *A coloring page to accompany this story is available at gospelweeklies.com/lesson-updates. Tell this story:*

Mason was sitting on the porch swing at Grandma's house when a big black car pulled up. His mom and sisters were in the kitchen with Grandma making Easter dinner. They were taking the big ham out of the oven, mashing the potatoes, and whipping cream to put on the red Jell-O® salad. No one else is coming to Grandma's house today, Mason thought. I wonder who is in the car.

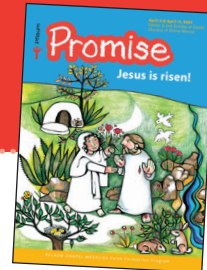
The passenger door opened and a soldier got out. He opened the back door of the car and pulled out a big duffel bag. The soldier leaned back into the car to talk to the driver, then stepped back, closed the car door, and waved as the car drove down the street. The soldier stood on the sidewalk and grinned at Mason. "Aren't you going to say hello?" he asked. Mason couldn't believe his eyes. "Uncle Davey!" Mason cried. "How come you're here? Grandma said you were still in Afghanistan." Uncle Davey's smile got even bigger. "Why don't you go tell Grandma that I'm here? OK?"

Mason ran into the house, banging the door behind him. "Grandma!" he yelled. "Uncle Davey is here. He came in a big black car. He's really here." Mason grabbed Grandma's arm to pull her toward the door. "Mason, you will make me drop this pan," Grandma said. "But Uncle Davey is here," Mason insisted. Grandma set the pan on the stove. "Mason, Uncle Davey is in Afghanistan. You know that." "No, Grandma," Mason said. "He's outside. Come and see."

Grandma looked at Mason's mom, a kind of scared look. She went to the sink and washed her hands. Mason's mom stood by her. Then Grandma said to Mason, "You'll just have to show me where Uncle Davey is." Mason ran to the door and looked out. The soldier was still there, still smiling. When Grandma saw Uncle Davey, she had to hang on to Mason for just a minute. Then Uncle Davey ran up the steps and gave his mother a big hug. "I'm home," he said. "Just in time for Easter dinner." It was their happiest Easter dinner ever!

Ask: What was the Easter surprise? Why didn't Grandma believe Mason at first? Why was this Easter dinner the happiest one ever? Why did Uncle Davey's surprise visit mean so much?

- ☐ **Activity • Signs of Easter, Signs of Life** Talk about signs of Easter in your home: *Easter cards, baskets and eggs; stuffed toys, especially rabbits, lambs, and chicks; special flag to hang outside; flowers; new clothes, a special meal, etc.* **Ask:** What do these things tell us about Easter? *Cards and church items remind us that Easter is about Jesus rising to new life. Eggs, butterflies, and flowers are signs of life too. A clean house, special foods, and new clothes show that Easter is an important celebration.*

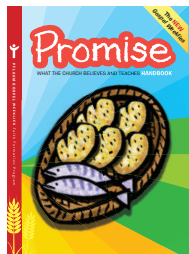


- ☐ **Cover Activity • Jesus is risen! (page 1)** Invite your child to study the cover picture.

Ask: Who is the man? Why does he have sores on his hands, feet, and side? Who is the woman? *Mary Magdalene*. **Ask:** What is the cave for? *Jesus' empty tomb*. Have your child circle all the signs of life on the page. *Rabbits, birds, bird nest, flowers, plants, water, butterfly, Jesus, and Mary Magdalene*.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • The First Easter (page 2)** Read through the Gospel together, pausing at each picture to make sure your child associates the picture with the name.
- ☐ **Word of the Week • Mass (page 2)** Help your child find **Mass** on page 2. Share this definition: *We gather at Mass to remember and thank Jesus.*



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 9. Read the title aloud. Remind your child about who Adam and Eve are. Then read the text aloud. Explain that God wanted Adam and Eve—and all people—to be happy in Heaven with him forever. Read aloud the directions for the activity. Your child likely already knows the answer: *Jesus*. Explain that God sent his Son, Jesus, to save us and open the gates of Heaven for us.

Turn to page 12. Read aloud the title and the third promise. Emphasize that God's promise wasn't only for Adam and Eve. Jesus came to save us too! He did this by dying on the Cross and rising from the dead. We remember and thank Jesus at every Mass.

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

Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • Alleluia Butterflies (pages 3-4)** Explain that butterflies are symbols of Easter. The butterfly's life cycle symbolizes the life of Jesus. The caterpillar represents Jesus' life on earth. When the caterpillar enters its chrysalis, this represents Jesus' Death and time in the tomb. The butterfly that emerges from the chrysalis represents Jesus rising from the dead. Help your child cut out the two butterflies. The pictures show how to fold each butterfly so it has wings. You may hang them from a coat hanger, dowel rod, ruler, or paint stirrer with fishing line or thread. Hang the Alleluia butterflies in your home and keep them up until Pentecost.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Invite your child to repeat each line after you: Thank you, God, for signs of spring. Thank you, God, for butterflies. Thank you, God, for raising Jesus to new life. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, the Risen Jesus appears to his friends on Easter evening with a message of peace and forgiveness. They have spent the day in fear and confusion and at first they think he is a ghost. It's a sign of Jesus' great tenderness for his friends that he wishes them peace. Jesus eats food and lets them touch him, which helps them believe he is really there. We, too, believe in Jesus' Real Presence; that he is really with us in Holy Communion. Talk with your child about the Sign of Peace we share at Mass. Help your child understand that we are wishing our neighbors friendship and Christ's peace.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Jesus, help us to be loving and kind to one another. Help us to be peacemakers. We love you. Thank you for loving us. Amen. Alleluia."
- ☐ **Story • Grandpa Snowbird** *A coloring page to accompany this story is available at gospelweeklies.com/lesson-updates. Give your child a sheet of drawing paper and crayons. As you tell the following story, read the instructions for your child to illustrate it.*

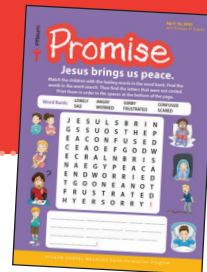
Grandpa was Cooper's best friend. Grandpa lived down the block, so Cooper saw him every day. Grandpa didn't like cold and snow, so he went to Arizona every winter. Grandpa's Arizona friends called him a snowbird because he only visited them in the winter. One day, Grandpa called Cooper's house. "Grandpa, I miss you. When are you coming home?" Cooper asked. Grandpa answered, "Look for me when the tulips bloom." When Cooper hung up the phone, he asked his mom, "When will the tulips bloom?"

"First, the birds have to come back to their house outside the window," Mom answered. Every day, Cooper looked out the window. He watched the snowdrift get smaller, and brown earth begin to show. (Draw some brown dirt at the bottom of the page.) A few days later when Cooper looked out the window at the brown dirt, he saw three little green stems pushing up through the dirt. (Draw three small green stems coming out of the dirt.)

Cooper kept looking out the window. He noticed buds getting fat on the trees and two birds building a nest in the birdhouse. He went outside to look at the green stems. They were very tall now. (Make the little stems taller.) The weather got warmer. Cooper began wearing his spring jacket. One day, he noticed the tall green stems had leaves on them, one on each side. (Draw two leaves on each stem.) Two nights later, Mom's phone rang just as Cooper was going to bed. Cooper fell asleep before he could ask who it was. The next day, Cooper got up and looked out the window. There were beautiful red and yellow tulips on the green stems! (Draw the three tulips in whatever color you choose.) Cooper ran to tell his mom. He heard a big laugh coming from the kitchen. There was Grandpa, standing by the stove. Grandpa lifted Cooper up in his arms. "I said I would come back when the tulips bloomed, and I did."

Ask: Can you remember a time you waited for someone? What feelings did you have? What helped make the waiting go faster?

- ☐ **Feelings Word Search (page 1)** Have your child find the hidden words in the words search. Save the second part of the activity for later.



Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Brings Us Peace** Ask: How did Cooper feel when Grandpa was away? How did he feel when Grandpa came home? Invite your child to think about how Jesus' friends feel in the Gospel:

After Jesus had died, his friends were afraid they might be killed like Jesus. They locked themselves in a room and closed the shutters on the windows. Then two of Jesus' friends came and told how they had met Jesus on the road. They didn't know the man they met was Jesus until he broke the bread like he did at the Last Supper.

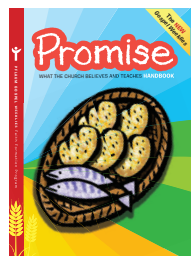
Jesus' friends were talking about this when, suddenly, Jesus was there with them. He said: "Peace be with you. Why

are you so frightened? Why do you doubt? Look at my hands and my feet and see who I am! Touch me and find out for yourselves that it is I." Jesus asked for something to eat. They gave him a piece of baked fish, and he ate it.

Then Jesus told them: "All the people in the world must be told to turn to God to be forgiven. So beginning in Jerusalem, you must tell everything that has happened."

Ask: How did Jesus' friends feel at the beginning of the Gospel? How did they feel when Jesus arrived? How were Jesus' friends like Cooper?

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Holy Communion (page 4)** Find the term *Holy Communion*. Share this definition: *Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.*



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 12. Read the page title aloud, then ask: Who are God's people? Jump down to the final sentence under "God made another promise." Read the sentence aloud, then continue with "The People of God Today." Help your child connect the terms *Church* and *God's family* to the People of God. Explain that God works through the Church to help us learn to follow Jesus. *Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, page 3.*

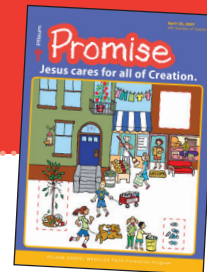
Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • Who can bring peace? (page 3)** If needed, help your child cut the strip with people (priest, woman, girl, man, and Jesus) on page 3. After your child places each person by the pictures, point out that each of us can help bring peace too. Now go back to page 1. Read the second part of the directions and give your child time to find the hidden message. **Answer:** *Jesus brings us the peace of God. We can bring peace to one another!*
- ☐ **Activity • My Peace Banner (page 2)** Invite your child to color the hidden message. Then cut out the banner, punch a hole at the top, pull some yarn through, and tie a knot leaving a long loop. Hang the banner on a straw or stick and secure with tape if needed.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer • Jesus calls us to make peace. (page 4)** Invite your child to wave the peace banner as you read the prayer on page 4 together.



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd. He tells his friends that he knows and cares for them just as a shepherd cares for his sheep. Jesus says he will even lay down his life for his sheep, whom he knows by name. Jesus cares for all of his followers. Most parishes have a pastor, who leads and cares for the people of his parish, much like a shepherd cares for his sheep. Since Earth Day is April 22, *Promise* connects a shepherd's care for his sheep to our responsibility to care for God's Creation. This week, help your child notice the many people who care for your family like shepherds—crossing guards, bus drivers, police officers, teachers, your pastor, grandparents, and neighbors.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Jesus, you give us people who love us and take care of us. Thank you, Jesus. Help us to show love and care back to them and to you. Amen."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Jesus cares for all of Creation. (pages 1 & 4)** Invite your child to look at the picture on page 1. **Ask:** How are the people in this neighborhood caring for Creation? **Ask:** Are there any areas the children have missed? *The tree with litter around it and the plastic bottles on the ground.* Have your child turn to page 4, cut out the three shapes, and glue them where they belong on the cover picture. Three more ways of caring for Creation are now evident. **Ask:** In what other ways could these people care for Creation? What are your favorite ways of caring for Creation?
- ☐ **Story • Becca and James care for Creation. (page 2)** Have your child close *Promise*. Then tell this story:

Becca and James followed their dad to the barn almost every morning because they liked to help find new lambs. The mother sheep often had twins or even triplets, but sometimes the mothers didn't have enough milk for so many lambs.

One morning, Becca and James found three new lambs lying next to their mother. One lamb was strong and sucking milk from its mother; the other two were too weak to nurse. Becca and James picked up the lambs and took them to the house. They took the lambs to a warm spot on a rug near their wood stove. They filled a bottle of milk for each lamb and

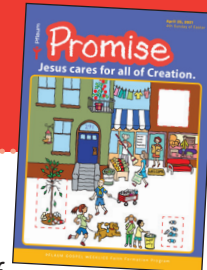
put big rubber nipples on the bottles. They rubbed the lambs' curly wool. Becca held the bottle, and James stroked each lamb's throat to make it swallow milk so it could get stronger.

Becca and James spent all morning with their lambs. After lunch, the lambs slept. Right before dinner, the lambs woke up. First, one stood and then the other. The lambs slipped and fell on the smooth kitchen floor, so Becca and James took them to the warm pen in the barn. Every day, Becca and James returned to feed the lambs until they could eat grass.

Invite your child to open *Promise* to page 2 and look at the drawing of Becca and James feeding the lambs. Give your child time to find the eleven other sheep hidden on the page, as well as the sheep dog and the wolf. Your child can then color the page.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is Our Good Shepherd** Explain that there were lots of sheep where Jesus lived. People made clothes and warm blankets from their wool and drank the sheep's milk to become strong. People wanted to keep their sheep safe and healthy. People who care for sheep are called shepherds. **Ask:** What did you learn from the story of Becca

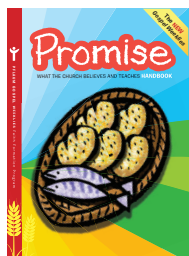


and James and the baby lambs? *James and Becca cared for the lambs like shepherds, people who take care of sheep.* Explain that in today's Gospel, Jesus talks about being a shepherd.

Jesus told his friends: "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd will give up his life for the sheep. A hired shepherd runs away when a wolf comes. He only cares about getting paid. A good shepherd stays with the sheep. A good shepherd

loves the sheep. I know my sheep, and my sheep know me. In the same way, my Father knows me, and I know my Father. I will give my life for my sheep."

Explain that Jesus is our shepherd too. Jesus cares for us and keeps us safe. He wants us to trust him and follow him like sheep trust and follow their shepherd.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 17. Read aloud the top third and invite your child to print the name of your parish on the line. Move on to the middle third. Help your child understand that the pastor takes care of the people of the parish. Print the name of your pastor (and other priests) on a sheet of paper. Give your child time to copy the pastor's name in the book. Discuss what your pastor does for the parish.

Read about the Pope and invite your child to write the name Pope Francis on the line. Encourage your child to listen for the Pope's name the next time you attend Mass. Explain that we always pray for the Pope and for the whole Church at Mass.

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

- ☐ **Word of the Week • pastor (page 2)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition: *A pastor is a priest who leads a parish.* **Ask:** How is a pastor like a shepherd of the people in the parish?

Live the Gospel

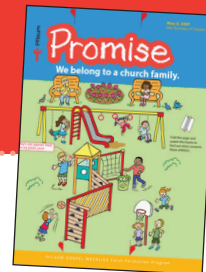
- ☐ **Activity • Jesus is our Good Shepherd. (pages 3-4)** Read the sentence at the top of page 4. Have your child cut out the two pictures on the heavy lines and glue or tape the sides together, following the directions. The sides with the faces should face the front. **Ask:** Who is part of Jesus' flock? Give your child some pieces of paper to write the names or draw pictures. Then have your child put the papers in the sheep pen behind Jesus. You may also invite your child to think of people who especially need help or protection and put their names in the sheep pen.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Invite your child to repeat each line of this prayer after you:

Jesus, we know you are our Good Shepherd. You love us all and take care of us. Please help and protect us and all the people in your flock. We trust and love you. Amen.



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus refers to himself as the vine. He says that his followers are the branches. The branches of a vine share the same life as the vine. Jesus shares his life with us. We share the Good News with others and live like Jesus taught us.

As long as we stay connected to Jesus like branches connected to the trunk of a vine, we will share God's life, grow in faith and love, and produce good fruit. We are the Body of Christ in the world.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, thank you for our family. Help us stay connected to you always as we grow in love for Jesus and our neighbors. Amen."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • We belong to a church family. (page 1)** Look at the picture on the cover of *Promise* together. **Ask:** What is happening on this playground? Explain that your child can change everything that's going on in the picture. Help your child fold your copy of *Promise* so that the hearts match and the children on the playground are now engaged with one another. Fold the cover back and forth a few times so your child sees the differences. **Ask:** What does this picture tell us about this community of friends?
- ☐ **Activity • Words connect us together. (page 2)** Have your child turn to page 2 and read the title at the top of the page. Talk about what the word *connect* means: Holding hands during the Lord's Prayer (Our Father) *connects* many people. Smiling and saying thank you *connects* you with that person. Read the first words in the left column: *Come to*. Have your child make a sentence by matching those two words with words in the right column. The best match is *my party*. Invite your child to finish the activity by drawing lines between the two sets of words to make sentences: *Come to my party. Play with me. I am sorry. I can help you. I like you. You are my friend.*

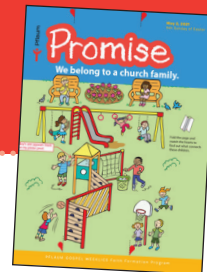
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is the Vine; We Are the Branches** Talk about any plants or trees your family cares for. **Ask:** What happens if a plant or tree doesn't get enough water? What happens if a branch is broken off the plant or tree? Will that branch still grow a leaf, vegetable, fruit, or nut? If possible, show a branch or vine to your child. Explain that Jesus used a plant to help us understand how we are connected to him. Share the Gospel:

Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the vine, and my Father is the vine grower. My Father cuts off branches that do not grow fruit. A branch cannot grow fruit if it is cut off from the vine. You cannot grow fruit if you are not connected to me. I am the vine. You are the branches. You will grow good fruit if you

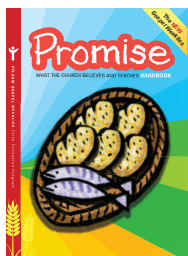
follow me. You can do nothing if you are cut off from me. Stay connected with me and let my teachings become part of you. Then your prayers will be answered. Give my Father honor by growing good fruit with your lives and becoming my disciples.

Ask: How is Jesus like a vine? Does he have leaves growing out of his ears? *Jesus is like a vine that's planted in good soil and reaches its roots way down. Jesus' roots are in God, his Father.* **Ask:** How are we like branches? Do our arms have bark on them? Do our fingers



sprout leaves and grapes or apples? *We are like branches because we are connected to Jesus by Baptism. We are part of his family just as we are part of this, our own family. Every person needs a family to love them and teach them how to love others. We need Jesus to love us and teach us how to love and serve God. We need to stay connected to our family and to Jesus.*

- ☐ **Word of the Week • parish (page 2)** Show your child the word **parish** on page 2. Share this definition: A *parish* is our church family that gathers for Mass and prayer. Explain how being involved in your parish helps you stay connected to Jesus.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 19. Read aloud the title. Take turns reading aloud the next three paragraphs. Invite your child to use the code to find the names of some holy days and feast days of saints.

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

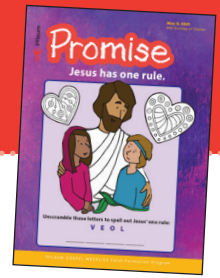
Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • I Belong at Church Booklet (pages 3-4)** Have your child open to pages 3-4 of *Promise*. Show how to cut on the heavy dark horizontal line to create two long rectangles. Have your child find the one with people going into a church and fold it so that the picture is on top. Then have your child fold the other long rectangle so that booklet page 3 is on the top. Help your child nest the two folded pages together to make a booklet. Page through the booklet together, making sure the page numbers are in order. Have your child place the booklet faceup on a workspace. Read aloud the cover title. **Ask:** What is happening in the picture? *People are walking into a church.* **Ask:** Why do people go to church? What happens there? Continue in the same manner with the other pages of the booklet. Point out that the booklet shows many ways that children belong at church and at Mass. Whether you attend Mass online or in person, encourage your child to bring this booklet to your celebration of the Mass, as a way to follow along.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** "Loving God, thank you for the gift of Jesus, the parish we belong to, and saints who help us follow you. Help us always stay connected to Jesus like branches are connected to a vine. Amen."



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture



Sunday Gospel Background

Sunday's Gospel comes from the long talk Jesus shared with his Apostles at the Last Supper. He gave them a great command: "Love one another as I have loved you."

Jesus asks us to love one another. Loving actions connect us. They help us create communities of friends and neighbors who care about one another. The Holy Spirit unites us and helps us to love God and others.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Jesus, we want to be like you. Help us obey your laws of love and act in loving ways toward everyone. Amen."
- ☐ **Story • Rules, Rules, Rules! (page 2)** Tell your child this story:

Ben was at the crafts table at school when the teacher clapped his hands for silence. "Boys and girls," Mr. Harper said, "it's time to put away your things." Ben quickly glued one last heart on his Mother's Day card. "Remember, I have just one rule for you: clean up your scraps and put everything away." Kaylee brought the paper recycling bin over to the crafts table. Ben swiped his arm across the table, and the paper scraps fell into the basket. Randall and Elise put the scissors and glue away. "Thank you," said Mr. Harper.

Later that day, Ben was waiting to cross the street with his friend Andy. "I have only one rule," the crossing guard told the boys. "Don't step out until I tell you it's safe." Ben and Andy waited together.

The next day was special—a field trip to the science museum! When they lined up, one of the moms told them to grab the hand of their buddy and hold their hands high. "I have just one rule," the mom said. "Don't lose your buddy." Ben and his buddy stayed together for the whole time at the

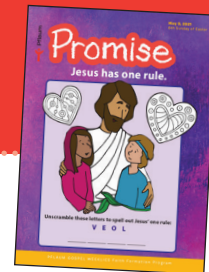
museum.

After school, Ben's dad took him to tee-ball practice. Ben hit the ball every time he was up to bat. After his turns at bat, he took his baseball mitt and went out by second base. "I have only one rule," the coach told Ben. "Keep your eye on the ball." Ben crouched down like the big boys did and waited for the ball to come his way.

That night, Ben said to his mom, "I have to keep a lot of rules." "What rules do you mean, Ben?" his mom asked. Ben told her about cleaning up the crafts table, waiting for the crossing guard, staying with a buddy on the field trip, and keeping his eye on the ball at tee-ball practice. His mom gave him a hug. "I know you're good at following the rules," she said. "You're very good at keeping the one rule we have at home too. It's the one rule Jesus told us about." "Love one another," Ben said with a big smile. "You got it," said his mom. "Now go love your sister Jasmine by reading her a book while I get supper ready."

Ask: How does Ben feel when he keeps the rules? Why does Ben's mom have only one rule for him? What is it? How does Ben keep that rule?

- ☐ **Activity • Jesus loves and obeys. (page 3)** Have your child open *Promise* to page 3, folding it so that only page 3 shows. Read the title aloud. **Ask:** Who are the three people in this picture? *Jesus, Mary, Joseph*. Talk about ways this is like or not like the chores and tasks your family does. Give your child time to find and circle the hidden objects. Explain that we honor Mary during the month of May.



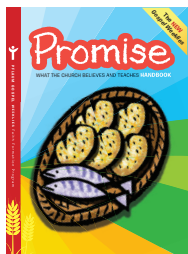
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus has one rule. (page 1)** Explain that Jesus' friends liked to talk with Jesus and listen to him. Jesus had supper with his friends the night before he died. He told them many things he wanted them to remember:

Jesus told his friends: "I have loved you just as my Father has loved me. Live in my love. You will live in my love if you keep my commandments. "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you. I want your joy to be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. You

are my friends if you obey me. I call you friends. I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. "You did not choose me. I chose you. I send you out to grow good fruit that will last. When you pray in my name, God will hear you. I command you to love one another."

Ask: How does Jesus' rule about loving one another make you feel? This is a good time to talk about love as respect and tolerance. It isn't just hugs and kisses. Sum up that Jesus is always with us to help us grow into people who love other people the way he loves us. Show your child the *Promise* cover and read the title together. **Ask:** What do you think Jesus is telling the two children? Invite your child to unscramble the word and finish coloring the picture.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 27. Read aloud the first line next to the third heart. **Ask:** Who is the special helper? Read the three lines about the Holy Spirit. Explain that whenever we need help, we can pray to the Holy Spirit. Point out the prayer at the bottom of the page. Remind your child that the Holy Spirit helps us pray. Read the prayer together or break it into sections for your child to repeat after you. Invite your child to color and decorate the prayer.

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

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Confirmation (page 2)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition: *Confirmation celebrates the Gift of the Holy Spirit and gives us strength to do Jesus' work.*

Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • The Holy Spirit is my helper. (page 4)** Read the title and directions on page 4 together. Give your child time to connect the dots. *The image is a dove.* Explain that in the Bible, the Holy Spirit sometimes takes the form of a dove, wind, fire, or water.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Together, pray the prayer under the dove on page 4.



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture