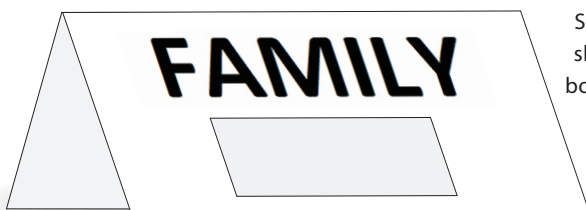


Family Name Card Directions & Template

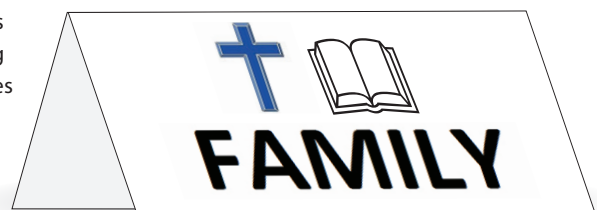
Family Name Cards Directions:

- Please keep your name cards on the covered table.
- See the samples below and use the template to practice your name and design.
- First, fold the card stock in half, like a tent. With the fold on top, write your family's last NAME in large letters on your name card.
- Then, include a symbol or two to indicate how your family lives your faith or lives the Gospel.
- Repeat this on the other side of your name card, so that it may be seen from both sides. Make sure the name is large enough to be seen easily when approaching the table.
- When finished, please leave your name card on the table.

Template Practice Sheet for Name Card:



Samples
showing
both sides

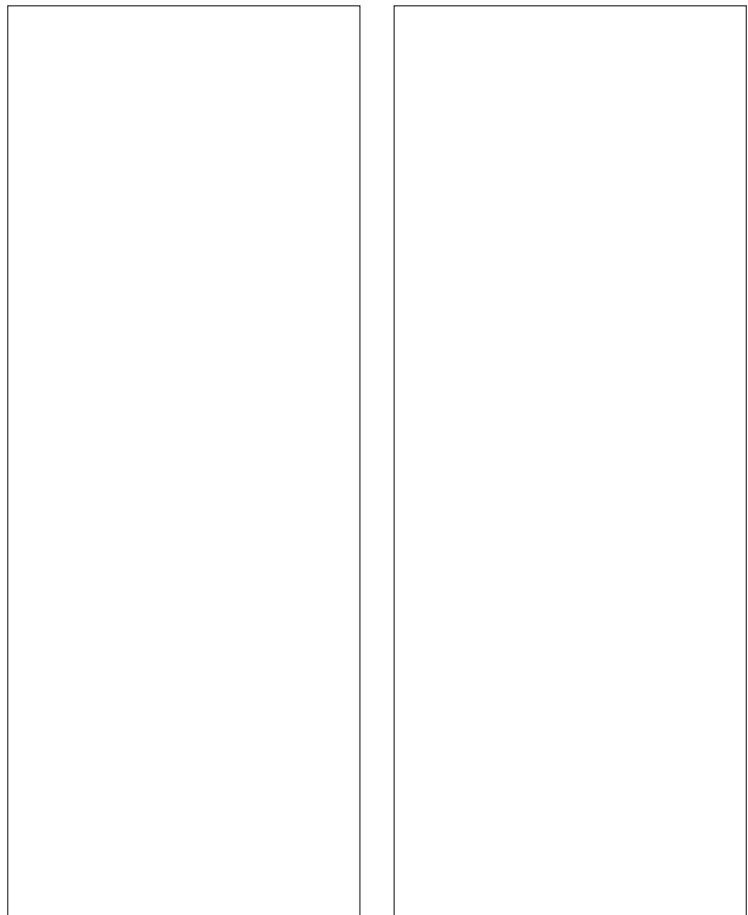
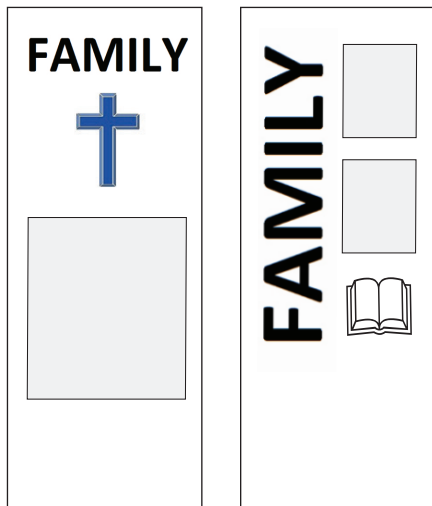


Family Name Banner Directions & Template

Family Name Banner Directions:

- Please keep your banner on the covered table.
- See the samples on this sheet, and use the template sheet to practice your letter size and spacing before you use paint on your banner.
- Puffy paint may stain your clothes, so please be careful when using it, and supervise young children.
- Share your paint with families at other tables, as they may have different colors.
- Please be frugal with the paint, as large globs of paint take a long time to dry.
- First, write your family's LAST NAME in large letters on your banner.
- Then, include a symbol or two to indicate how your family lives your faith.
- Leave room at the bottom or side, in case you want to fringe or cut one edge into a V after it dries.
- When finished, please leave your banner on the table to dry.

Actual paper size for banner will be
4 1/4" w x 11" h
(half a letter size sheet of paper)



Scripture Passage Reflection



Scripture Reflection

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

1 Corinthians 13:4-7



Scripture Reflection

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

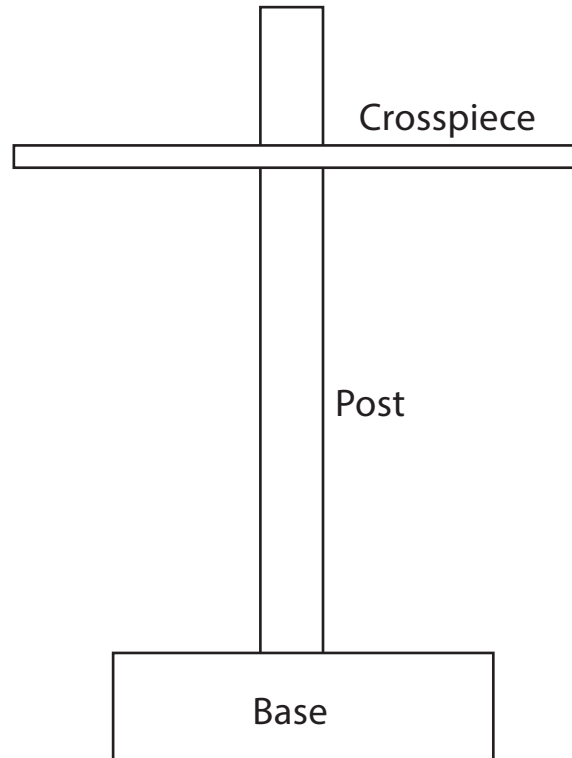
1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Banner Pole Instructions *(for banners page 91)*

Follow these instructions to construct banner poles for each table.

On each pole, you can hang two fleece name banners.

1. Construct the base, which is a wood block that measures $5\frac{1}{2}" \times 5\frac{1}{2}" \times 1\frac{1}{2}"$. Drill a 1" hole in the middle of the base, into which will go the post.
2. Cut the upright posts, which are dowels 16" tall and 1" in diameter. Drill a $\frac{1}{4}"$ hole 1 $\frac{1}{2}"$ from the top of the post, into which will go the crosspiece.
3. Cut the crosspiece hanging bars, which are dowels 12" long and $\frac{1}{4}"$ in diameter.
4. Insert the post into the base. Insert the crosspiece bar through the hole in the post.
5. Hang a banner on the crosspiece bar, on each side of the post.



Adult Formation Questions

For this session, some reflection talking points and questions might be about Pope Francis' exhortation on family:

The papal exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* is meant to be encouragement to families today. The title is Latin for "The Joy of Love." It begins "The Joy of Love experienced in families is also the joy of the Church." It was intended to help the Church grow close to families in various situations. It is based on the belief of the goodness of the family.

Consider this passage:

"The family is the first school of human values, where we learn the wise use of freedom. Certain inclinations develop in childhood and become so deeply rooted that they remain throughout life, either as attractions to a particular value or a natural repugnance to certain ways of acting. Many people think and act in a certain way because they deem it to be right on the basis of what they learned, as if by osmosis, from their earliest years: 'That's how I was taught.' 'That's what I learned to do,'" (Amoris Laetitia, 274).

- What values in life are most important to you, as a person? As a family?
- How are you teaching them to your family?
- What values from your Catholic faith were passed on to you?
- What values from your Catholic faith do you want to pass on to your child(ren)?

Consider this passage:

"In the family we can also learn to be critical about certain messages sent by the various media. Sad to say, some television programmes or forms of advertising often negatively influence and undercut the values inculcated in family life" (Amoris Laetitia, 274).

- For the most part, do you believe television and media reflect your family's values?
- What are strategies or ways you are teaching your child(ren) to be critical thinkers about what they are exposed to in through entertainment, advertising, and social media?
- How are you able to monitor the influence entertainment, advertising, and social media in your child(ren)'s life? Do you know of positive ways other families handle this issue well?

Consider this passage:

"In our own day, dominated by stress and rapid technological advances, one of the most important tasks of families is to provide an education in hope," (Amoris Laetitia, 275).

- Hope is a theological virtue. It is a gift from God but also it is our responsibility to cultivate it ourselves. How are you cultivating a hopeful perspective in life in your child(ren)?
- How can we help our child(ren) find hope in the disappointments they experience in life?

Adult Formation Questions *continued*

Consider this passage:

"The Church is a family of families, constantly enriched by the lives of all those domestic churches," (Amoris Laetitia, 87).

- In what ways might your child(ren) benefit from relationships with other families in your church community?
- In what ways might you as a parent benefit from friendships with other parents in your faith community?

Consider this passage:

"This begins with baptism, in which, as Saint Augustine said, mothers who bring their children 'cooperate in the sacred birthing'. Thus begins the journey of growth in that new life. Faith is God's gift, received in baptism, and not our own work, yet parents are the means that God uses for it to grow and develop. Hence 'it is beautiful when mothers teach their little children to blow a kiss to Jesus or to Our Lady. How much love there is in that! At that moment the child's heart becomes a place of prayer.' Handing on the faith presumes that parents themselves genuinely trust God, seek him and sense their need for him ...," (Amoris Laetitia, 287).

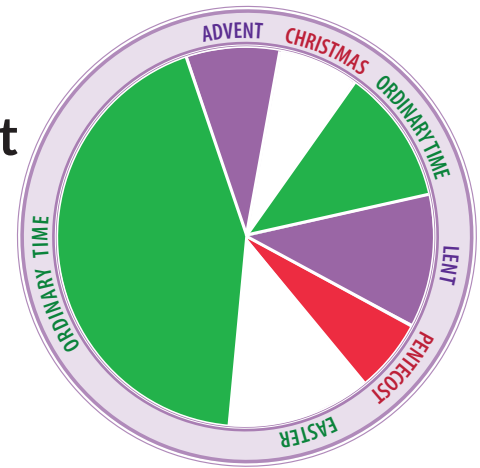
- What practices of faith did, or do, you teach or model for your child(ren) when they were young?
- What are you doing now to teach or model your faith?

Consider this passage:

"Parents always influence the moral development of their children, for better or for worse. It follows that they should take up this essential role and carry it out consciously, enthusiastically, reasonably and appropriately Families cannot help but be places of support, guidance and direction, however much they may have to rethink their methods and discover new resources. Parents need to consider what they want their children to be exposed to, and this necessarily means being concerned about who is providing their entertainment, who is entering their rooms through television and electronic devices, and with whom they are spending their free time. Only if we devote time to our children, speaking of important things with simplicity and concern, and finding healthy ways for them to spend their time, will we be able to shield them from harm," (Amoris Laetitia, 259, 260).

- When you were a child, who or what influenced your moral development?
- What do you think are the factors that are influencing your child(ren)'s moral development?
- In what ways do you support, direct, and/or guide your child(ren)'s moral choices?

The Liturgical Year Information Sheet



Have you ever stopped to look back over your family calendar at the end of the year? What a record it holds of your family life! There are all kinds of things there that have been important to your family—birthdays, sports activities, plays, concerts, vacation days, family gatherings, doctor visits, conferences, among others. Marking these events gives us a picture of who we are.

The Church has a calendar too, the liturgical calendar, a record of the life of our family of faith. The liturgical calendar is both a *description* of the most important mystery of our faith and a *prescription* for keeping that mystery alive in our lives. The liturgical year helps us to die and rise with Christ and to remember the saving power of God throughout history. We are invited to enter more deeply into the central mystery of our faith: the suffering, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ, what we call the Paschal Mystery. The Church teaches, “Within the cycle of a year, [the Church] unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from his incarnation and birth until his ascension, the day of Pentecost and the expectation of blessed hope and of the Lord’s return.”*

Each week at Mass, we remember that Christ lived, died, and rose from the dead, and this grace and mystery is actually made present. Our liturgical celebrations make Christ present to us today! “Recalling ... the mysteries of redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the riches of the Lord’s powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present for all time, and the faithful are enabled to lay hold [of] them and become filled with saving grace.”*

But the Paschal Mystery of Christ is so great that we can’t see it by looking from just one perspective. The liturgical year helps us by highlighting different aspects of the mystery throughout the year. Each season has its own readings, color, tone, unique rituals, and prayers to give us another perspective.

The liturgical year revolves around two major cycles—Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter. Each begins with a period of preparation and ends with a period of celebration. During the darkest time of the year, we honor Jesus Christ, the Light of the Word, we celebrate his presence with us today, and we long for his return in glory.

Between these seasons is Ordinary Time—not ordinary in the sense of unimportant, but ordinary in the sense of normal. This season is far from ordinary. Its name comes from the word ordinal, as we track the season by counting its Sundays. In the first, shorter part of Ordinary Time, we focus on the life and ministry of Jesus, we listen to his teaching, and grow as his disciples by living out his Good News. In addition, the liturgical year includes days to celebrate the special role of Mary, the Mother of God, and the Saints.

* Quotations are from Chapter 5 of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (Sacrosanctum Concilium) of Vatican Council II. The entire constitution is online on the Vatican website, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html.

Liturgical Year Chart

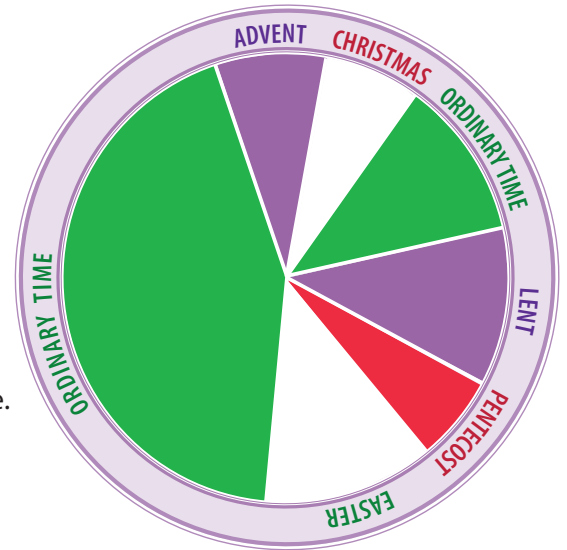
Season	Days	Color	Theme	Did You Know?
Advent	Four Sundays leading up to Christmas	Dark Blue or Purple	<i>Preparation & Waiting</i> We remember Christ's birth and await the Second Coming	The color of the third Sunday of Advent is Rose.
Christmas	December 25 and 12 days after Christmas	White	<i>Joy & Peace</i> Christmas is more than a day; it's an entire season in which we celebrate God made flesh—the Incarnation.	The Feast of Epiphany, 12 days after Christmas Day, recognizes Christ as the Light of the world.
Ordinary Time	Winter weeks	Green	<i>Growth & Journey</i> Focusing on the Mystery of Christ, we make this normative time sacred.	The readings during Ordinary Time help us journey through the Bible.
Lent	The six weeks before Easter	Purple	<i>Preparation & Penitence</i> In Lent we focus on preparing ourselves for the transformation of Easter, we examine our lives, repent, and return to the Gospel.	Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. In Lent we practice almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. The 40 days of Lent remind us of Jesus' 40 days in the desert.

Continued on page 98

Liturgical Year Chart *continued*

Triduum	The three days before Easter	There are different colors for each day: White, red, and white	<i>Three Holy Days</i> We recall the passion of Christ on these three holiest days of the year—Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.	The liturgies of these days are really one, which begins on Holy Thursday and ends at the Easter Vigil. This is also when many are initiated into our faith.
Easter	Easter Sunday and the following seven weeks	White	<i>Alleluia!</i> Easter is 50 days during which we rejoice in Christ's Resurrection and celebrate our own transformation in Christ's love.	This was the first annual feast of the Church—and the only one for 300 years! During the Easter Season we remember our Baptism with a sprinkling rite.
Pentecost	The Sunday after the Easter season	Red	<i>Spirit</i> We remember the gift of the Holy Spirit.	This feast is sometimes called the birthday of the Church.
Ordinary Time	Summer and Fall weeks	Green	<i>Growth & Journey</i> Ordinary in the sense of normal, not unimportant.	On these Sundays we read through books of the Bible.

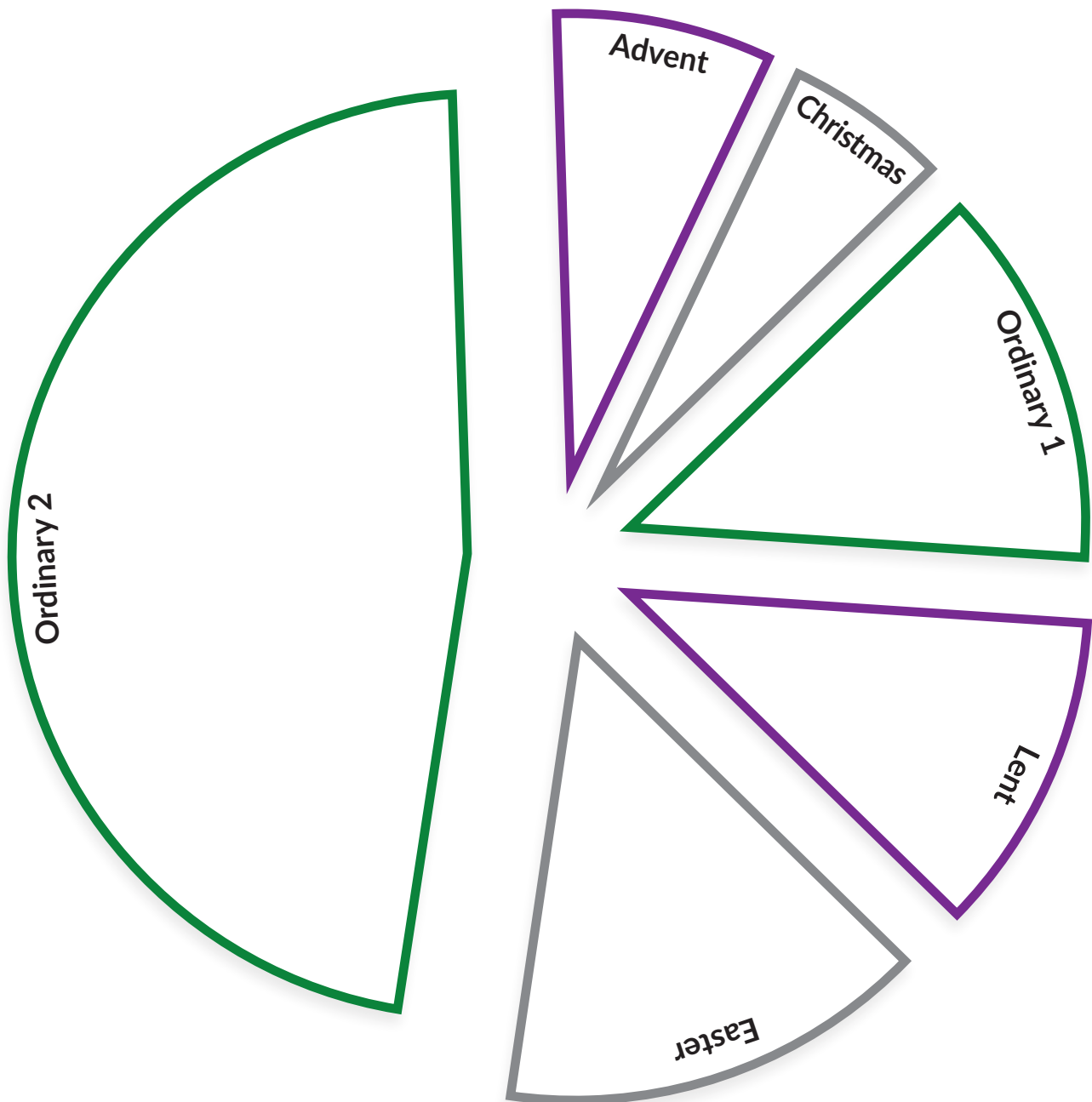
Liturgical Year Wheel Directions



1. Put your family name on the back of your cardboard circle.
2. Find the pattern in your family folder.
3. Cut out each piece of the pattern.
4. Use a pen to carefully trace the pattern onto the appropriate color of foam or construction paper –position both green and white pieces so that you will have enough foam.
5. Cut out the foam shapes.
6. Poke a hole in the center of the cardboard circle with a pen.
7. Beginning with the BLUE or PURPLE piece for Advent glue each piece onto your cardboard circle. (Glue on each piece in the order in which they occur in the liturgical year.)
8. Decorate the white cardstock circle for the center of the wheel – see sample on the back of this sheet. Be sure to include a pointer.
9. Attach the white circle to your wheel with the brass fastener in the center.
10. Write the name of the season on each color. As time allows, talk with your children about aspects of each season, such as the focus, theme, and color.
11. Cut the red ribbon in half and cut one half in half again. Glue the longer piece at the end of the Easter Season to indicate Pentecost and glue 2 smaller pieces into the shape of a cross at the end of Lent to indicate the Triduum.
12. Add the holy days of obligation and special feast days—see back of liturgical year explanation.
13. Personalize your Liturgical Year Wheel—write in important family dates, such as birthdates, anniversaries, and family celebrations.
14. Please save your scraps for another project—place them in the scrap box.
15. Bring this wheel home to help your family make every day sacred—bring God's time into your time!

Continued on page 100

Liturgical Year Wheel Pattern



Adult Formation Questions

For this session, some reflection talking points and questions about the liturgical year might be inspired by the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* from the Second Vatican Council:

- If someone looked at your family's calendar and schedule, what might they say about what is important and of value to your family? What would they indicate about your priorities?

The Church observes a liturgical calendar, which marks liturgical seasons and celebrates days we consider holy, such as feasts of Mary, the Mother of God. The liturgical year is a way we pray together as one Catholic Church. It shows we are one in our worship. The document from the Second Vatican Council, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, promotes greater engagement of lay people in the liturgical life of the Church. To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in his Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 7).

- Now that you have reviewed the liturgical year in making your calendar, what is the Church indicating about what should be important to your family?

Within the cycle of a year, the Church unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from the Incarnation through the Ascension and Pentecost, and includes the expectation of blessed hope and of the coming of the Lord (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 102).

- How can you help your children learn about Jesus Christ by attending to the seasons of the liturgical year?
- What are your memories of Advent as a child?
- What are your memories of Christmas?
- Do you have any memories of any religious traditions in your home around these seasons?
- How might you make the liturgical season of Advent more about prayer and preparation and less stressful and commercial for your family's life?
- What is your experience with the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving?
- What might be a Lenten practice that would have meaning to your family?

Saints have been traditionally honored in the Church and their authentic relics and images held in veneration. The feasts of the saints proclaim the wonderful works of Christ in his servants and display to the faithful fitting examples for their imitation (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 111).

What saints did you learn about as a child or hear about in your own religious education?

Is there any feast day of a saint your family of origin or your family today celebrates (for example, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Saint Patrick, Saint Francis of Assisi, or All Saints Day)? How do you celebrate?

- Who is a saint that might be a good example for your family?

Pass the Basket Questions

What's the difference between a community and a Church community?	What kinds of things did Jesus do with his disciples?
Our parish is a Catholic community. What do we do that Jesus did?	<i>Disciple</i> comes from the Latin word meaning, "a student of a teacher." How can we be students of Jesus?
How many disciples did Jesus have? Can you name any of them?	What would be common beliefs, interests, and attitudes of a community of disciples?
What is one way your family follows Jesus?	Jesus had friends. Jesus said, "I call you friends." Why do you think it's important to have friends?

Personal and Family Inventory

Section ONE	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I try to meet new people at Mass.			
I genuinely greet people warmly at the Sign of Peace at Mass.			
I try to support friends in my parish community, my school community, and my family who are having a tough time.			
I participate and am respectful in my Faith Formation sessions.			

Section TWO	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I pray alone.			
I pray with others.			
I put my worries in God's hands.			
I tell people I will pray for them and then I do.			
I support friends who are having a tough time – school, work, family.			
I read the Bible and reflect on what I read.			

Section THREE	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I openly talk about God - in my family, with my friends, at work.			
I share a book or article about my faith with others or post it on social media.			
I work on my personal relationship with God and then try to live it with others.			
I am a joyful person.			
I discuss what we I do and learn at Faith Formation sessions with others.			
People can recognize my religious values by what I say			
People can recognize my religious values by what I do.			

Continued on page 104

Personal and Family Inventory *continued*

Section FOUR	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I perform Random Acts of Kindness.			
I protect and help the young and the old in my neighborhood.			
I volunteer or serve others in my parish.			
Our family volunteers for activities and opportunities to serve those in need outside of my parish.			
I contribute money and participate in fundraisers to help those in need.			
I support laws which promote human dignity.			

Alternative Inventory for Families with Young Children

Section ONE	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I am friendly and kind to people I meet.			
I include everyone when I play.			

Section TWO	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I am learning the prayers of our Church.			
I am learning to talk to God by praying			

Section THREE	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I listen to and talk to people in my family about God.			

Section FOUR	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I help with chores at home.			
I go to my friends when they need help.			
I give things to other children who may be poor.			

Discipleship Reflection

How does the way you spend your time match up with the way Jesus spent his time? Let's look at four areas Jesus made a priority in his life.

Each section represents a different way Jesus taught us to be a community of disciples. Read together and respond as a family to the question at the end of each section.

Section ONE: Jesus Built Community

Think of a time in Jesus' life when he built community. What did he do?

Look at your answers in the [blue section](#). They are about building community.

How does your family make *building community* a priority in your life?

Section TWO: Jesus Prayed

Think of a time in Jesus' life when he prayed. How did he pray?

Look at your answers in the [yellow section](#). They are about prayer. How does your family pray and make *praying* a priority?

Section THREE: Jesus Spread the Good News

Think of a time in Jesus' life when he spread the Good News about the Kingdom of God. In what ways did he share the Good News?

Look at your answers in the [green section](#). They are about spreading God's Word. How does your family live in a way that people know the *Good News* of Jesus' love, and how is this a priority for your family?

Section FOUR: Jesus Helped Those in Need

Think of a time in Jesus' life when he helped someone in need. What did he do to help them?

Look at your answers in the [pink section](#). They are about service and helping others in need.

How does your family serve others and make *helping those in need* a priority?

Discipleship Reflection for Families with Young Children

Each section below represents a different way Jesus taught us to be a community of disciples.
Read together and respond as a family to the question at the end of each section.

Section ONE: Building Community

Look at your answers in the [blue section](#). They are all about friendship and building community.

Jesus taught us to be friends with everyone. How are you being a friend to others?

Section TWO: Praying

Look at your answers in the [yellow section](#). They are all about praying.

Jesus taught us to pray to God the Father. When do you pray to God and what do you say to him?

Section THREE: Spreading God's Word

Look at your answer in the [green section](#). It is about sharing our faith in God.

Jesus taught us to share his message of love. Tell about one time you have shown love to others.

Section FOUR: Service

Look at your answers in the [pink section](#). They are about serving and helping others in need.

Jesus taught us to help other people who are in need. Who has needed your help, and how did you help them?

Our Family Discipleship Plan

How will your family be a part of Jesus' community of disciples?

As a family, make a plan to follow Jesus more closely at home and in your community.

As a family:

- We intend to build this community by _____
_____.
- We commit to be a family of prayer by _____
_____.
- We will spread the Good News about the Kingdom of God by _____

_____.
- We will help those in need by _____
_____.

End by reading this Scripture passage together:

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

(John 13:35)

Alternative for Families with Young Children

How will your family be a part of Jesus' community of disciples?

As a family, make a plan to follow Jesus more closely at home and in your community.

Our family:

- Can be friends to others by _____
_____.
- Will pray by _____
_____.
- Will talk about God by _____
_____.
- Will help others by _____
_____.

End by reading this Scripture passage together:

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

(John 13:35)

Adult Formation Questions

For this session, some reflection talking points and questions might be:

"This holiness of the Church ... is expressed in many ways in individuals, who in their walk of life, tend toward the perfection of charity [love], thus" helping others to grow in holiness, (Lumen Gentium, 39).

- What practices of your faith have nurtured your relationship with God and helped you live your faith?
- Share one thing that inspires you to live as a Catholic?

"Thus every layman, in virtue of the very gifts bestowed upon him, is at the same time a witness and a living instrument of the mission of the Church itself ...", (Lumen Gentium, 33).

- Have you personally felt called to contribute to respond to the needs of others in a way that has called you out of your comfort zone?
- If so, what helped you to rise to the occasion?

"[A parish] is the place where all the faithful can be gathered for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. The parish initiates the Christian people into the ordinary expression of the liturgical life: it gathers them together in this celebration; it teaches Christ's saving doctrine; it practices the charity of the Lord in good works and brotherly love," (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2179).

- Discuss what your parish community means to you and your children.

"And since in God's plan it has been established as an 'intimate community of life and love,' (Gaudium et spes, 48) the family has the mission to become more and more what it is, that is to say, a community of life and love, in an effort that will find fulfillment, as will everything created and redeemed, in the Kingdom of God," (Familiaris Consortio, 17).

- How has the call of being a parent challenged you and brought meaning into your life?
- Discuss what are the obstacles to making faith a priority for your family?

"In fact, every act of true love towards a human being bears witness to and perfects the spiritual fecundity [richness] of the family, since it is an act of obedience to the deep inner dynamism of love [nature of love] as self-giving to others," (Familiaris Consortio, 41).

- Discuss the ways your family has lived out discipleship.

Saints Skit

(Saint Francis, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, and Saint Teresa of Calcutta emerge from the book.)

Leader:

Wow, I didn't know you were all right in there! Well, how great to have you come to visit us. We really are honored! Boys and girls, moms and dads, this is a real treat for us. Look who's here! Please meet Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, and Saint Teresa of Calcutta. It is wonderful to have you all here!

Saint Francis:

Well, we are delighted to be here. We heard you are discussing the Catholic tradition of Saints, and you know we are honored that you remember us. We don't think of ourselves as special, but if it helps all of you to love God more deeply and in more real ways, we are happy to help! That is the one thing I think the three of us have in common ... we have a great love of God. Wouldn't you say that, Saint Teresa and Saint Thérèse?

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux and Saint Teresa of Calcutta:

Oh, yes, Saint Francis, absolutely!

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux:

You know Francis, I don't think I did anything big or special in my life. I've explained it this way: "I want to seek a way to heaven, a new way, very short, very straight—the way of trust and self-surrender. ... I am a very little soul, who can offer only little things to Our Lord."

Saint Teresa of Calcutta:

Yes, Saint Thérèse, I understand what you mean. I was born in Albania, and the name my parents gave me was Agnes. I left my home at age 18 to become a religious sister with the Sisters of Loreto, to be a missionary sister. You know I took the name Teresa after you, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, because you were my favorite saint.

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux:

Oh, that is such a compliment, Saint Teresa of Calcutta!

Saint Teresa of Calcutta:

You are welcome, Saint Thérèse. I was a happy sister, but on a train ride in 1946, I received a special call from God. I'm not sure I can explain this, but Jesus told me of his sorrow at the neglect of the poor, and that no one told the poor how much he loved them! He asked me to go and take care of the poorest of the poor. "Take care of the sick and the homeless, the most destitute people," God said, "for they are my children, too." Then God said to me, "Come, be my light." Yes, these were his exact words! I don't think of the work I did as anything special. I just knew that with God's help, I could do anything. I always said, "He will show me the way."

Saint Francis:

Well, you know, Saint Teresa and Saint Thérèse, I did have an interesting life. I was born when my father, a wealthy merchant, was out of town, and my mother named me Giovanni, in honor of Saint John the Baptist, hoping I, too,

Saints Skit *continued*

would be a religious leader. When my father heard this, he was hopping mad. He renamed me Francis, in honor of the commercial and business success he had in France.

I was something of a free spirit. I was born about 800 years ago in a wonderful place called Assisi. As a young man, I was a troubadour, kind of like an old school rock star. I guess you could say I was kind of a fun-loving guy ... a real party animal. Not to sound like I am bragging but ... I was kind of a popular guy. I dreamed of becoming a noble knight who would accomplish great deeds. I loved to sing and play my lute and wear fine clothes. And you should have seen me dance!

(Play dance music. Francis breaks out in some dance moves. The other Saints join in.)

I was the life of the party. I wanted to be rich and famous. Well, I was already rich, I guess, but I also wanted to be famous, so I put on my shining armor and rode into battle. Unfortunately, we were defeated, and I spent time in chains, imprisoned in Perugia. The prison was cold and damp and my fellow prisoners were very sad. I tried to cheer them up, but over time I became sick and sad, too.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta:

Francis, I would have cared for you if I was around. That is my calling—to care for the sick and those no one else cares about.

Saint Francis:

Thanks for the thought, Saint Teresa. Fortunately, my rich father ransomed me, and I went home to Assisi. My mother nursed me back to health, but I remained unhappy, until one day on one of my sad walks, I knelt to pray at the church in San Damiano. I heard a voice say, "Francis, my church is falling into ruin. Go and repair it for me." I burst out of my sadness, and all of a sudden, I heard the birds sing again and smelled the flowers, and once again I danced. I thought: if creation is this beautiful, how much more awesome must God be! I danced again! This time I danced for joy, as I was so aware of God's beautiful creation! I am still known as the Saint who appreciates and loves creation.

Well, then I took some of my father's money to repair the church. I thought that was what God wanted me to do, to kind of repair the leaky roof and such. Oh-h-h, my father did not like that! I knew that was what God wanted me to do, so I said, "Father, I won't take your money or anything, and right then and there, I took off everything my father gave me and walked out the city gates. From then on, I sought out the poor and the sick. I repaired God's churches from the inside out, by making the leaders act with honesty and integrity. I loved all of God's creatures and called them my brothers and sisters. Well, enough about me for now.

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, how did you show your love for God? Why are you a Saint?

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux:

You know, there isn't a lot unusual in my life, which is why I am a good example everyone can follow. I was born in France to a loving and caring family, (turn to the audience) probably a lot like your families, boys and girls. My father was a watchmaker and my mother, a lace maker. One sad thing is that my mother died when I was only four years old. I was raised by my four older sisters. I did have a special place in my father's heart. He called me his "little queen." He would take me fishing with him, and I would look at the beauty of the lake and the sky and pray, thanking God for the beauty of everyday life. I hope that you boys and girls spend time just enjoying God's beautiful world and taking care of it and, of course, thank God for it in prayer. Parents, I hope you treasure all those

Saints Skit *continued*

special moments with your children the way I treasure those times I had with my father.

I wanted to be a religious sister so badly that I made a fuss in front of the Pope! Well, it must have been a good one because they allowed me to become a Carmelite Sister, at the very young age of 18.

I prayed and did the most ordinary tasks, like scrubbing floors, setting the table, cooking and cleaning. Oh, and I loved to care for the sisters who were sick.

I guess it was because of that I am called the Saint “of the little way.” I decided to do every act, even picking up a piece of litter, as an act of love for God. I bet you all know it isn’t easy to avoid complaining or criticizing, to smile when someone blames you unfairly. But I believe if we try to do these things, we show our love for Jesus. I wrote a book about my life and that is actually how people came to know of my “Little Way.” I always say ... and maybe you, too, would like to say, “My vocation is love.” I know the sisters I lived with were not perfect, and maybe the people you live with in your family and at school and work are not perfect, but we can love them as if they were Christ himself. I think that is a way we could change the world.

Saint Francis:

Well Saint Thérèse, you have that one right. What do you think (turn to audience)? Do you think we can change the world in little ways, like the way we act toward each other, and not complain or criticize others?

Saint Teresa of Calcutta:

Yes, and watching out for the most neglected. I hope you can find ways to help the poor and those most in need. Maybe your family can help another family by bringing them a meal or helping an elderly neighbor with yard work! The ways we can care for each other are endless. I think through those acts of kindness and compassion, you can change the world! We hope you find them helpful to make a difference in your own lives and make a difference in the world.

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux:

And don’t forget it may be the small ways—the little things you do in your homes—that change the world. Even helping with family chores without being asked is a way to serve. I don’t know if I would have become the Saint I did, if I didn’t grow up in such a loving home. Just being a great Mom or Dad may be the way you become a Saint.

Leader:

Well, it was great to have you join us! I’m sure you have a lot of people to inspire. Maybe we should let you go, and we can get back to our project for today. But gosh, thanks for joining us; and oh, by the way, Saint Francis, thanks for letting me bury your statue upside down in my yard when I was selling my house. It worked great!

Saint Francis:

Well, actually, that wasn’t me ... that was Saint Joseph, but I will pass on your gratitude. I’m the one who is the biggest statue you have in your garden ... (in a soft voice) I guess fame is fleeting.

Leader:

Oh, yeah, sorry about that. Well, anyway, thanks to all of you for the great visit. I don’t think we will ever think of the Saints the same way again after this visit. Say goodbye, boys and girls, and thanks again!

(Turn dance music on. Saints dance away and wave goodbye.)

Saints Cards



Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

1873-1897

- French Discalced Carmelite nun
- Known as "The Little Flower"
- Famous for her "little way" of trusting in Jesus to make her holy and relying on small daily sacrifices instead of great deeds
- Patron Saint of Missions
- Feast Day: October 1



Saint Francis of Assisi

1181-1226

- Italian friar, deacon and preacher
- Believed we should protect and enjoy nature and praise God for his creations
- Founded the Franciscan Orders of the Friars Minor and the Poor Clares
- Patron Saint of Animals and Ecology
- Feast Day: October 4



Saint Teresa of Calcutta

1910-1997

- Albanian nun and missionary
- Known for caring for the sick and the poorest of the poor in India
- Established a hospice where the terminally ill could die with dignity
- Founded the Missionaries of Charity
- Patron Saint of World Youth Day
- Feast Day: September 5



Saint Anthony of Padua

1195-1231

- Portuguese priest and friar
- Known for his powerful preaching and knowledge of Scripture
- Had an undying love for the poor and sick
- Patron Saint of Lost Things
- Feast Day: June 13

Saints Cards *continued*



Saint Joseph

- Jesus' earthly father and Mary's husband
- Was a carpenter and worker and was compassionate and caring
- Came from royal lineage, the house of King David
- Patron Saint of fathers, workers, travelers, immigrants
- Feast Days: March 19 and May 1



Saint Monica

331-387

- The mother of Saint Augustine of Hippo
- Known for her patience and strong character
- Prayed for her husband and son's conversion for years, which was accomplished
- Patron Saint of Wives
- Feast Day: August 27



Saint John (Don) Bosco

1815-1888

- Italian priest, teacher, and writer
- Known as the "Father and Teacher of Youth"
- Took care of poor boys and spread the Gospel to them, promoting vocations to the priesthood
- Patron Saint of School Children
- Feast Day: January 31



Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

1656-1680

- Was the first Native American to become a Catholic Saint
- Known for being very devout and patient and a skilled worker
- Was a Mohawk Indian who converted to Catholicism and refused to marry
- Patron Saint of the Environment, Ecology and Native Americans
- Feast Day: July 14

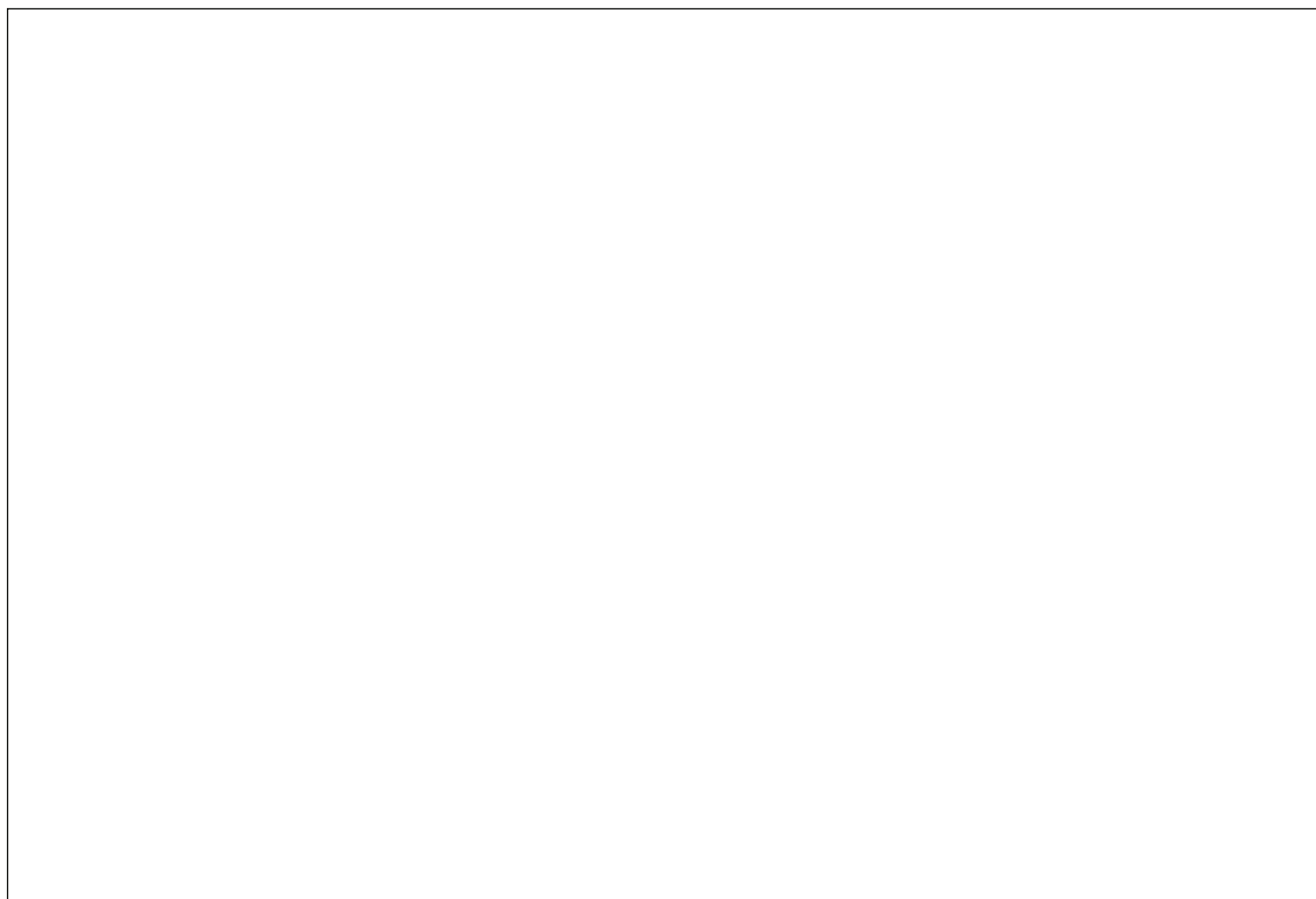
Reflection on Our Saint

- The Saint our family chose is: _____
- This Saint showed his or her love of God by: _____

- Our family chose this Saint because: _____

- In what ways can we live so that we show God's love as our Saint did? _____

For families with young children, draw a picture of how you'll live like your chosen Saint:



Stories of Mary

1. Annunciation (Mary finds out she is to be the Mother of Jesus): Luke 1:26-38
2. Visitation (Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth): Luke 1:39-56
3. Nativity (the birth of Jesus): Luke 2:1-20
4. Jesus lost in the Temple: Luke 2:41-52
5. Wedding at Cana: John 2:1-12
6. Mary at the foot of the Cross (Jesus' Death): John 19:25-27

Reflection Question:

Read one of the stories listed. What does the story tell you about Mary that you want to remember?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Prayers of Mary

Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided.
Inspired by this confidence
I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.
To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions,
but in thy mercy hear and answer me.
Amen.

The Magnificat

My soul magnifies the Lord
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;
Because He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaid;
For behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;
Because He who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is His name;
And His mercy is from generation to generation
on those who fear Him.
He has shown might with His arm,
He has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and has exalted the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich He has sent away empty.
He has given help to Israel, his servant, mindful of His mercy
Even as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity forever.

Adult Formation Questions

Here are some reflection talking points and questions for Session 4 on Mary and the Saints:

- Who has been a hero or exemplar for you in your life? In your faith life?

"We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church; and we believe that in this communion, the merciful love of God and his saints is always [attentive] to our prayers," (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 962; Paul VI, CPG § 30).

- Have you had questions about the role and significance of the Communion of Saints or the tradition of canonized or officially recognized saints in the Catholic Tradition? What are some of your questions if you have them?

"The term 'communion of saints' therefore has two closely linked meanings: communion 'in holy things ...' and 'among holy persons ...,' (CCC, 948).

- Has this session given you any new or helpful information or insight that would make you more confident in talking about the Catholic perspective of Saints?

"The term 'communion of saints' refers also to the communion of 'holy persons' ... in Christ who 'died for all,' so that what each one does or suffers in and for Christ bears fruit for all," (CCC, 961).

- Is there any Saint you were familiar with as a child who was significant or important to you? Is there any Saint you would like your children to know better? Is there a Saint you might like your family to learn more about?

(Mary) benefits redeemed individuals by her example, (Signum Magum, 14).

- Has Mary, the Mother of God, had a role in your spiritual life? How might she be an example in ways to nurture your family?

"What the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ," (CCC, 487).

- Look at the three prayers of Mary presented in this session. Is there a phrase or sentence in any of them that resonates with you and that you might like to remember in a special way?

"Mary is truly 'Mother of God' since she is the mother of the eternal son of God made man, who is God himself," (CCC, 509).

- How do you think Mary teaches us to relate to Jesus?

"And so they turn their eyes to Mary who shines forth to the whole community ... as the model of virtues. ... The Virgin in her own life lived an example of that maternal love, by which it behooves that all should be animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for the regeneration of [mankind]," (Lumen Gentium, 65).

- Mary is the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church. In what way might Mary be a guide for how you relate to each other in your family?

Opening Survey: Sacrament Questions

Sacrament Survey

1. How many sacraments use oil in their ritual?
2. What sacraments do you typically celebrate as a child or adolescent?
3. What sacraments can you receive as many times as you want?
4. What two sacraments are identified with service?
5. What sacrament is associated with the Last Supper?

Sacrament Survey with Answers

1. How many Sacraments use oil in their ritual?
(Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Anointing of the Sick)
2. What Sacraments do you typically celebrate as a child or adolescent?
(Baptism, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Confirmation)
3. What Sacraments can you receive as many times as necessary?
(Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick)
4. What two Sacraments are identified with service?
(Holy Orders, Matrimony)
5. What Sacrament is associated with the Last Supper?
(Eucharist)

Scoop on the Seven Sacraments

(Younger Children)

Direction:

Read this together as a family before you start your Sacraments Mobile project.

Sacraments allow us to experience God's grace and to share in his life. They are ancient signs and sacred rituals. Rituals involve repeated words and actions that help us remember important events, such as singing "Happy Birthday" to someone on the day that remembers their birth. Sacraments link to the past, especially in the life of Jesus. Through the sacraments, we experience God's presence working in our lives.

Our lives as Christians begin with the three Sacraments of Initiation. **Baptism** is often celebrated when we are babies. First Eucharist usually takes place when we are young children, and Confirmation likely occurs in later childhood or adolescence. In some circumstances, they are celebrated all at one time.

Baptism washes away our sins and makes us sons and daughters of God and members of his family, the Church. The signs we see in Baptism include water, a lit baptismal candle, Sacred Chrism oil, and a white garment. The priest or deacon baptizes someone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. We see the anointing with oil again in Confirmation when we are sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit, and the bishop lays hands on our heads. Baptism and **Confirmation** are received only once.

The **Eucharist** is so important because in this sacrament, we receive Jesus Himself. The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass. During Mass, we pray together, and we listen to readings from the Bible. We remember and share in Jesus' life, and we celebrate as Jesus told us at the Last Supper.

Two Sacraments heal us: **Reconciliation** (or Penance) and **Anointing of the Sick**. These can both be celebrated many times. In Reconciliation (or Penance), our sins are confessed, our sorrow is expressed, and we are forgiven as the priest, acting for Jesus, extends his hand over us.

Anointing of the Sick is the Sacrament in which the priest lays hands on the sick person, who is anointed with oil, a symbol of strength. This Sacrament helps to strengthen, heal, and give comfort to the sick.

Through **Matrimony** (or Marriage) and **Holy Orders**, people give themselves in service. In Marriage, God joins a man and a woman together in love as they exchange vows (or sacred promises).

In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, bishops, priests, or deacons promise to serve God and the Christian community. A bishop anoints the newly ordained person with oil and "lays hands" on him. A prayer of consecration is said.

Through the Sacraments of the Church, many aspects of our human life are blessed and made holy. Jesus, as God's Son, is the sign of God's great love.

Scoop on the Seven Sacraments (Older Children)

Direction:

Read this together as a family before you start your Sacraments Mobile project.

Sacraments are instituted by Christ. They tell how God is with us. They are signs of the new covenant made through the life and sacrifice of Jesus. They are ancient signs and sacred rituals. Rituals involve repeated words and actions that help us remember important events, such as singing “Happy Birthday” to someone on the day that remembers their birth. Sacraments link to the past, especially in the life of Jesus. They are a process for God’s love and grace to wash over us. Through the Sacraments, we experience God’s presence working in our lives, lifting us and strengthening us to follow and build our relationship with the Lord and the Christian community.

Our lives as Christians begin with a process of initiation that sometimes happens all at once, as with adults in the early Church or in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, known as RCIA. However, many celebrate the three Sacraments of Initiation at different times and different ages.

Baptism is often celebrated when we are babies; First Eucharist usually happens when we are young children; and Confirmation occurs in later childhood or adolescence. In Baptism, through the pouring of water, we are cleansed from Original Sin as well as personal sin. We are given new lives with Christ. We light a baptismal candle from the Easter or Paschal candle, symbolizing the light of Christ coming into our lives. We are anointed with a holy oil called Sacred Chrism. We are covered with a white garment as a sign of dignity and purity.

The anointing with Chrism is also a sign we see in **Confirmation** when we are sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit and the priest or bishop lays hands on our head. Baptism and Confirmation are received only once.

In the **Eucharist**, we are nourished spiritually each time we participate in Mass. The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Nourished by readings from the Bible and by the Eucharistic ritual recalling the Last Supper, we are strengthened to go forth and live the Gospel and Christ’s love in a hurting world. The Eucharist is the center of the Church’s life because it unites Christ’s followers to him and to one another.

Two Sacraments that heal us are Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. They can each be celebrated many times. In **Reconciliation** (or Penance), our sins are confessed, our contrition is expressed, and we are forgiven through the priest, who extends his hand and prays words of absolution to give us “peace and pardon.”

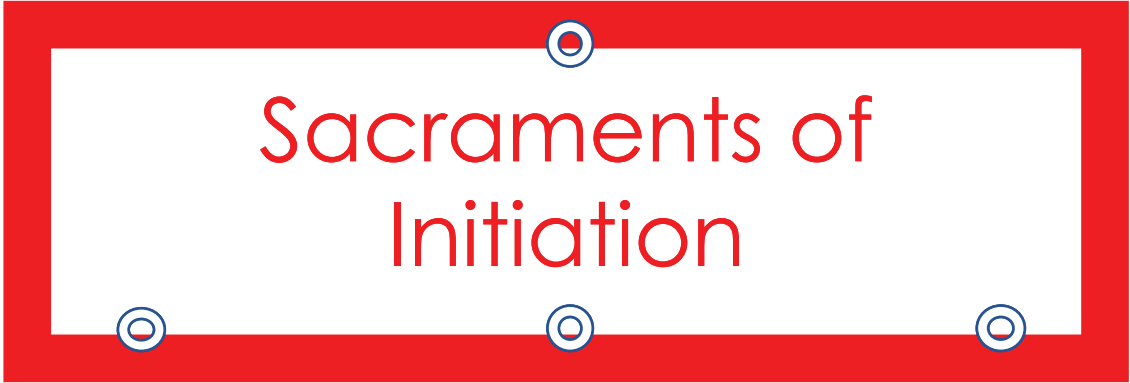
In **Anointing of the Sick** the priest lays hands on the sick person and anoints him or her with oil, a symbol of strength. The anointing of the forehead and hands with the Oil of the Sick helps heal, strengthen, and give comfort to the person. Other effects of the Sacrament include forgiveness of sins, preparation for eternal life, peace, courage, and union with the suffering of Jesus.

Through **Matrimony** (or Marriage) and **Holy Orders**, people give themselves in service. In Marriage, a couple is joined together by God through the exchanging of vows (or sacred promises). The man and woman getting married are the ministers of the Sacrament.

In the Sacrament of **Holy Orders**, men are ordained to serve the Church faithfully as bishops, priests, or deacons. A bishop anoints another bishop, priest, or deacon with oil and lays hands on them during the ritual that includes the prayer of consecration. Bishops continue the ministry of the Apostles and promise to lead the Church in faith with other bishops and the Pope.

Through the Sacraments of the Church, many aspects of our human life are blessed. Sacraments help us to become holy people through the grace of God. Sacramentality is central to how we understand God’s presence to us in the world. The essential signs and effects of the Sacraments have the power to make God present to us.

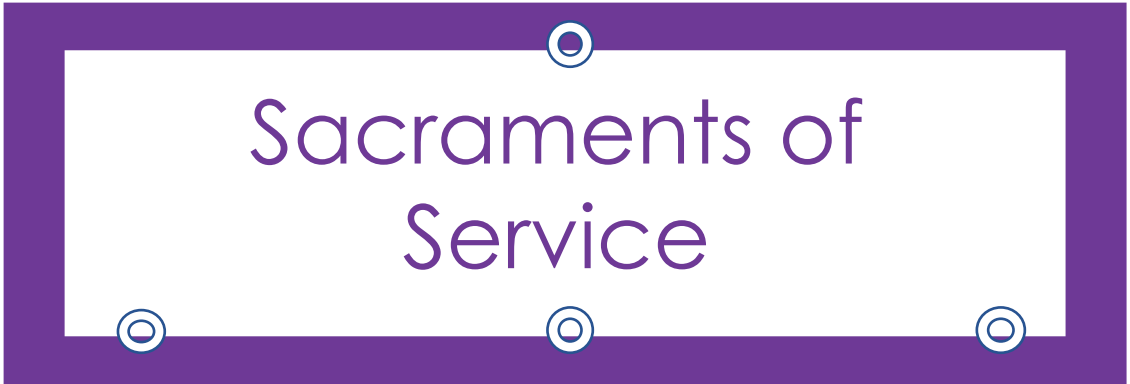
Sacrament Category Signs



Sacraments of
Initiation



Sacraments of
Healing



Sacraments of
Service

Signs and Symbols of the Sacraments

Here are some examples of signs and symbols from the Seven Sacraments.



Priest wearing a Roman collar (Holy Orders)



Picture of water being poured on baby's head (Baptism)



Picture of a person in a hospital bed with a priest anointing him or her (Anointing of the Sick)



Picture of a chalice and host (Eucharist)



Picture of two wedding rings in a dish or on a small pillow (Matrimony)



Picture of a bishop anointing someone being confirmed (Confirmation)



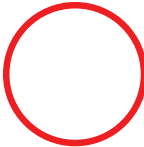
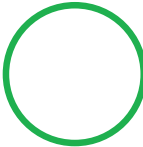
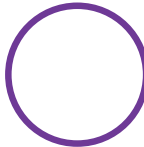
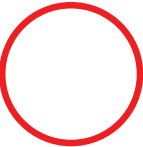
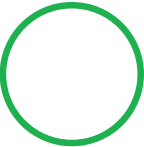
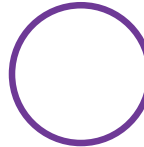
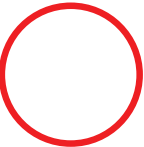
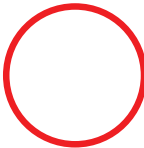
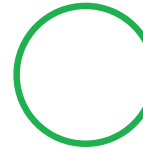
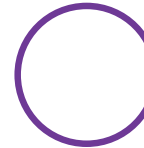
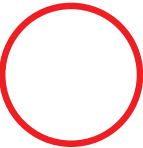
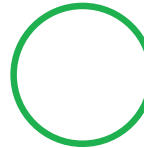
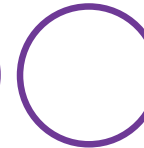
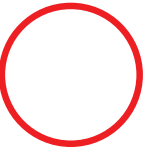
Sacrament Signs & Symbols

Cut these apart and attach under the correct categories.

Consecrated Bread and Wine	The Couple, Their Wedding Rings	Laying on of Hands, Anointing with Oil, Sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit
Laying on of Hands to confer role and responsibility	Sign of the Cross, Water, Oil, White Garment, Candle	Confession of Sins, Words of Absolution
	Oil, Laying on of Hands for healing	

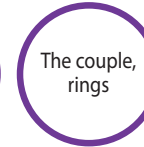
Sacrament Chart (blank)

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

The Sacraments of	The Sacraments of	The Sacraments of
		
		
		
		
		
		

Sacrament Chart (with answers)

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

The Sacraments of Initiation	The Sacraments of Healing	The Sacraments of Service
 Baptism	 Reconciliation and Penance	 Holy Orders
 Confirmation	 Anointing of the Sick	 Matrimony
 Eucharist		
 Water	 Confession, Absolution	 Laying on of Hands to confer role & responsibility
 Sealed with Gift of the Holy Spirit	 Laying on of Hands for Healing	 The couple, rings
 Consecrated Bread and Wine		

Scripture Quotation



In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Mark 1:9–11



In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Mark 1:9–11

Adult Formation Questions

For this session, some reflection talking points and questions might be:

- What are some rituals you have in your family around holidays and special events, like birthdays or Thanksgiving?

Research studies have noted that children who learn to appreciate rituals in their family life cultivate appreciation for religious ritual and grow in faith.

- What are some things you have done with your children to raise them in the Catholic faith?

In the Rite of Baptism, parents are asked to promise to raise their children in the practices of the faith.

- What is most challenging aspect about raising children in the faith today?

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are given at Baptism and sealed in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Gifts of the Spirit are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

- What gifts do you hope your children embrace in their lives? What gifts do you need in your life?

"The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.' The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch," (PO 5) (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324).

- What are some memories you have of Mass when you were growing up?
- What do you hope the Mass means to your children, as such a central ritual of our faith?

Start with Sunday

For discussion: How does your family spend a typical Sunday? _____

How would participating as a family in the celebration of Mass each week help you to grow in faith?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Start with Sunday

For discussion: How does your family spend a typical Sunday? _____

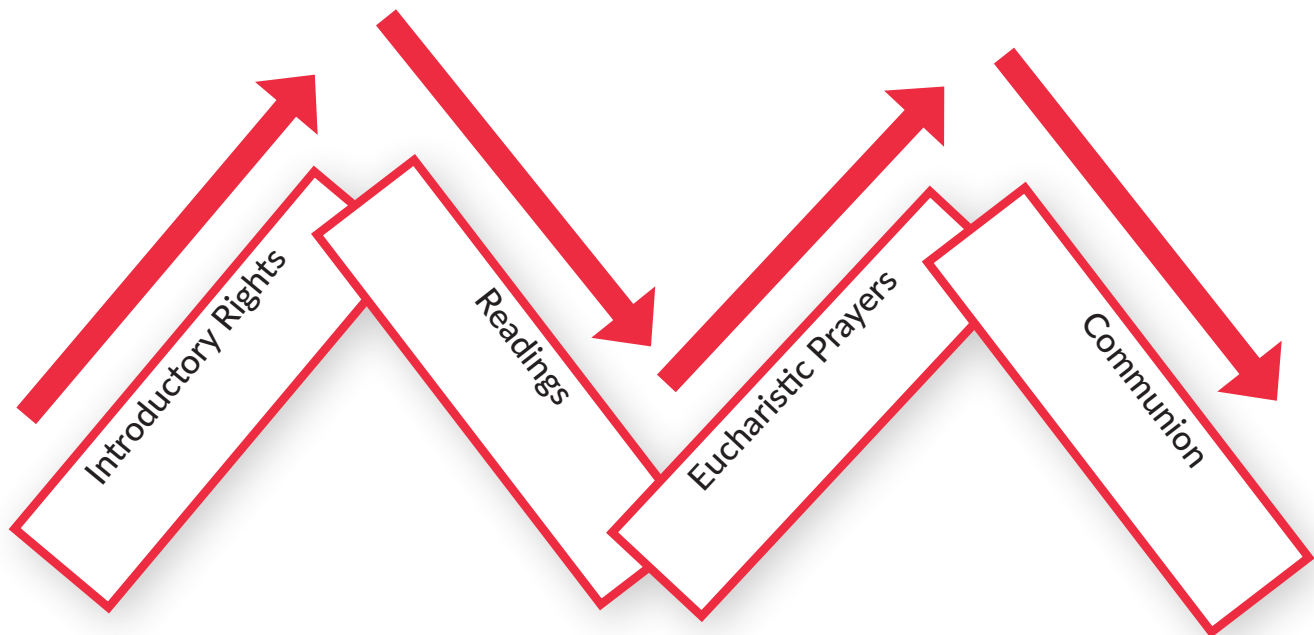
How would participating as a family in the celebration of Mass each week help you to grow in faith?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Map of the Mass:



The *M* in *Mass* can be seen as:



Order of Mass Game Board:

Introductory Rites: *Gather*

1. This is the way we begin our celebration together.

2. Before we begin, we have to say we're sorry.

3. We sing our praises to God.

4. The priest prays for our needs. We answer Amen.

Liturgy of the Word: *Listen*

1. We listen to a reading from the Old Testament that is read by a lector.

2. This is usually sung and comes from the Old Testament.

3. This reading comes from the New Testament. We respond, "Thanks be to God."

4. We prepare to hear the Good News by standing and singing and singing, "Alleluia."

5. The priest or deacon proclaims the Good News. We respond, "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ."

6. The priest or deacon "breaks open" the Word of God so we can apply it to our lives.

7. This prayer, which we all pray together, includes the word "consubstantial."

8. This is also called the General Intercessions.

Liturgy of the Eucharist: *Respond*

1. We bring our offering to the altar, and the priest prays over it.

2. The Preface, Holy, Holy, Holy, the Consecration, the Mystery of Faith, and the great Amen are the _____.

3. This is the prayer that Jesus taught us.

4. This is a gesture of unity and forgiveness.

5. We sing a litany for mercy and peace.

6. Before we receive this, we say, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

Concluding Rite: *Send Forth*

1. We bow our heads to receive the blessing, and we are dismissed to "go in peace."

2. We sing together before we go forth as brothers and sisters in Christ to live out the Word of God.

Order of Mass Game Cards:

Print these cards on colored paper and cut apart.

Entrance Song & Procession	Penitential Act
Gloria	Opening Prayer
First Reading	Responsorial Psalm
Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation
Gospel Reading	Homily
Creed / Profession of Faith	Prayers of the Faithful
Lord's Prayer	Sign of Peace
Lamb of God	Communion
Blessing & Dismissal	Closing Song

Order of Mass Game Directions

Components:

1 game board, 20 game cards

Object of the Game:

Be the player to place the last game card on the board and have all the cards match their descriptions.

Setup:

Spread the game cards on the table face down. Choose who goes first.

Playing the Game:

1. Taking turns, pick up one card from the pile on the table and see if you can identify the space on the game board that matches the part of Mass named on the card. Place the card on that space on the board.
2. If the next player thinks the first card was placed incorrectly, that person may pick it up and try to place it on the correct space, or that person may choose a new card from the table and place it on the board, matching the name with its description.

How to Win:

The winner is the player who correctly places the last card on the board. If the last remaining space doesn't match the last card, there is a mistake somewhere on the board. If that happens, continue taking turns to find the mistake, until the last card is played correctly. The person who places that correct card is the winner!

Sharing Questions About the Mass

1. Why do we have Introductory Rites? Put into your own words how you would approach God.
2. Why do we have Penitential Rites?
3. In the Liturgy of the Word, we have the First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, the Second Reading, and the Gospel. Which of these usually speaks to you the most?
4. In the Concluding Rites, we are sent forth to bring the Good News of the Gospel to the World. In your family, what is one way you will bring the love of the Eucharist to others? What's one way you'll do this in your faith community?

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What Does Mass Mean to Me?

<i>What does Mass mean to you?</i>	<i>What does Mass mean to you?</i>
<i>What does Mass mean to you?</i>	<i>What does Mass mean to you?</i>

Adult Formation Questions

For this session, some reflection talking points and questions about the Mass might be:

- Many people remember their First Communion. Can you share something you remember about your First Communion?
- What would help you cultivate love of the Sacraments, especially of the Mass, for your family?

The Church teaches that the Eucharist is the “source and summit the Christian life” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324).

This signifies the Mass offers a mystical and communal connection with Jesus Christ that deepens our spiritual lives. Some dimensions of the experience in Mass are praising God, asking for God’s mercy and forgiveness, listening to the Word of God proclaimed, remembering Jesus example of complete self-sacrifice and triumphal Resurrection, union with Christ in receiving Communion.

- How do these dimensions of Mass nourish your spiritual life?
- What are the parts of Mass that speak to your heart?

We listen to the readings from the Bible proclaimed at Mass. They are a reading from the Old Testament, a psalm, a reading from the New Testament, usually a letter, and a reading from one of the four Gospels.

- What might help your children to listen attentively to the readings?
- Have you ever thought of reading the Gospel to your children before coming to Mass or offering a question to discuss about one of the readings after Mass?

In the Eucharist, Jesus is really and truly present—Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. We may not understand this completely, but our belief often brings deeper meaning to the Mass. You might express to your children, that Jesus loved us so much he looked for a way to be very close to us or Jesus hoped in Communion we would know he is always with us.

- How might you share the importance of this belief with your children?

After the blessing, the deacon dismisses the people. In fact, the dismissal gives the liturgy its name. The word “Mass” comes from the Latin word, “Missa.” At one time, the people were dismissed with the words “Ite, missa est” (literally meaning “Go, she—meaning you, the Church—has been sent”). The word “Missa” is related to the word “missio,” the root of the English word “mission.” The liturgy does not simply come to an end. Those assembled are sent forth to bring the fruits of the Eucharist to the world (Concluding Rites, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops).

Have you ever thought of your family as being on a mission “to bring the fruits of the Eucharist to the world?”

What is one way you, as parents, might continue to live the mission of Christ in your family life?

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* reflects the meaning of the dismissal sending us out “so that each may go to doing good works, praising and blessing God” (90).

- How could you take the challenge of the dismissal of Mass to heart, to go out and “do good works?”
- What might that look like for you and your family?
- How are you already doing that?
- How does the regular practice of weekly worship at Mass strengthen you and your family to live as Christians?

Jesus and the Pharisees Skit

Narrator (holding an open Bible): *In the Gospel of Mark 12:30-31, Jesus was teaching a group of people. The parents were bringing their children to him. And some Pharisees were asking him questions about the law.*

Jesus (coming on stage toward where the narrator is standing): *Did I hear my name mentioned?* (Jesus turns to the audience.) *Did all these children and teens and parents come here to listen to me?*

Narrator: *Well, we did all come to learn more about your teaching, Jesus. We didn't really expect you to be here yourself, but we're glad you are!*

(The Pharisees come out and join the scene, loudly interrupting the leader.)

All Pharisees (shouting over each other): *Jesus! Jesus! Where did you go? Oh, there you are!*

Jesus (turning to the Pharisees): *Yes, here I am. May I help you?*

Pharisee One (holding a BIG scroll that has the word MITZVAH showing on the outside): *Yes. Back there with that other crowd (motions into the Bible), you impressed everyone by the way you answered their questions, but I am a scholar of the law (holds up the scroll), and I am a little skeptical of your authority. Here is a little test for you: There are 613 commandments here in the mitzvah; all of them are laws given to us by God. Of all his Commandments, which one is the greatest?*

Jesus: (holding his chin and thinking): *Which mitzvah, or divine commandment of the law, is the greatest? Well, there is really one Great Commandment with two parts. The first is this: "Hear, oh Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as much as you love yourself." There are no greater Commandments than these.*

Narrator: (pausing briefly): *I guess you can't argue with that!*

(The three Pharisees confer.... then...)

Pharisee Two: (turning to the audience): *We are trying to come up with another question that would stump Jesus.*

Pharisee Three: *Let's try this one. What will be the final score of the game this weekend?*

Narrator (interrupting the Pharisees): *Excuse me, this is great, but we have a program here, and well, I really don't think you are going to be able to stump Jesus. Thank you for stopping in, Pharisees, but we need to continue here.*

(The Pharisees walk off.)

Narrator: *Thanks for being here, and sorry for the interruption, Jesus.* (Turning to the audience): *So, let's get back to the Great Commandment that Jesus just taught us. Can any of you tell us both parts?*

Jesus and the Pharisees Skit *continued*

Jesus: (If someone offers to answer, affirm what they say, and/or help them repeat it. Otherwise, just remind them again.) *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. And, you shall love your neighbor as much as you love yourself. That's right – those are the greatest Commandments.*

Narrator: *Well, Jesus, we thought we could have the Great Commandment as our theme today.*

Jesus: *What a good idea!*

Narrator: *Thanks, we thought so, too. We have something here to remind us of that.*

Jesus: *You mean those papers with the house pictures?*

Narrator: *Yes, the house is to remind us of our families, which is the place we first learn about love.*

Jesus: *Did you know that my people, the Jews, have a saying, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"?*

Narrator: (talking to Jesus): *Yes, it's in the first part of the Bible, the part we Christians call the Old Testament. It's in the Book of Joshua, isn't it?* (Turning back to the audience): *So, the theme today is the Great Commandment, which are based on the Old Testament and summarized the New Testament. We will spend time learning both parts, and more importantly, learning how to live them. We will be learning about LOVE.*

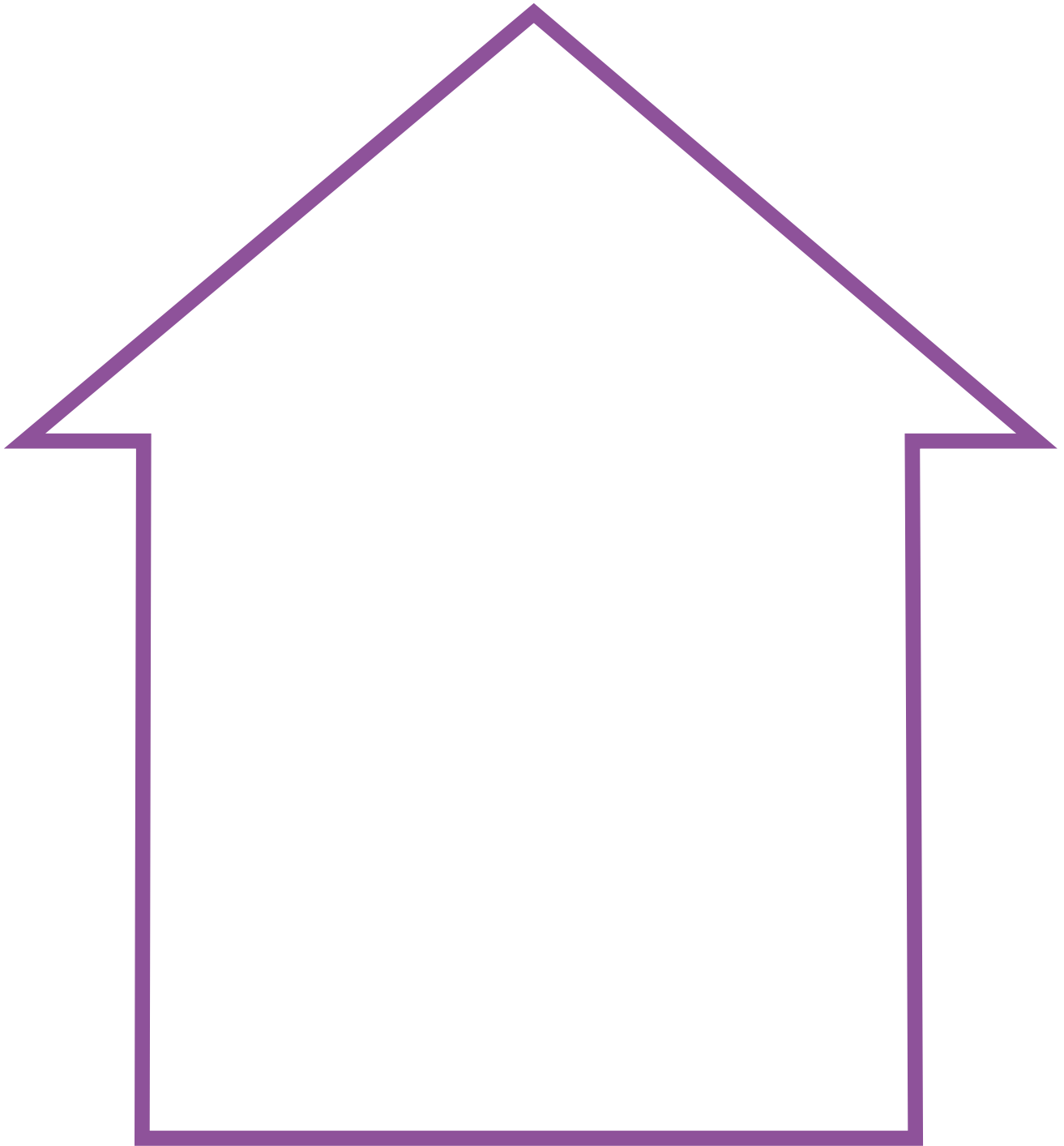
Jesus: *Love one another. I want all of you, my people (he gestures to the audience) to love one another as much as I have loved you. "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." Now, that's called the New Commandment.*

Narrator: *Hmmm, I've heard that somewhere. Wow, Jesus, you certainly gave us a lot to think about today.*

Jesus: (walking off the stage): *Well, I usually do ... (small chuckle) I believe the Great Commandment will give you a lot to think about today.*

Narrator: *You know, the Great Commandment sounds simple enough: love God and love your neighbor as yourself. But when we actually try to put that into practice—when we stop and think about how we actually spend our time and energy—we might remember that we don't always realize what the word LOVE really means. We say we love the (insert favorite local team), or we love playing soccer, or we love rock music, or we love chocolate ice cream. But what does LOVE mean when we are trying to love God and one another? How do we show our love for God every day? And how do we know if we are loving other people as much as we love ourselves? These are important questions for our families to think about and discuss!*

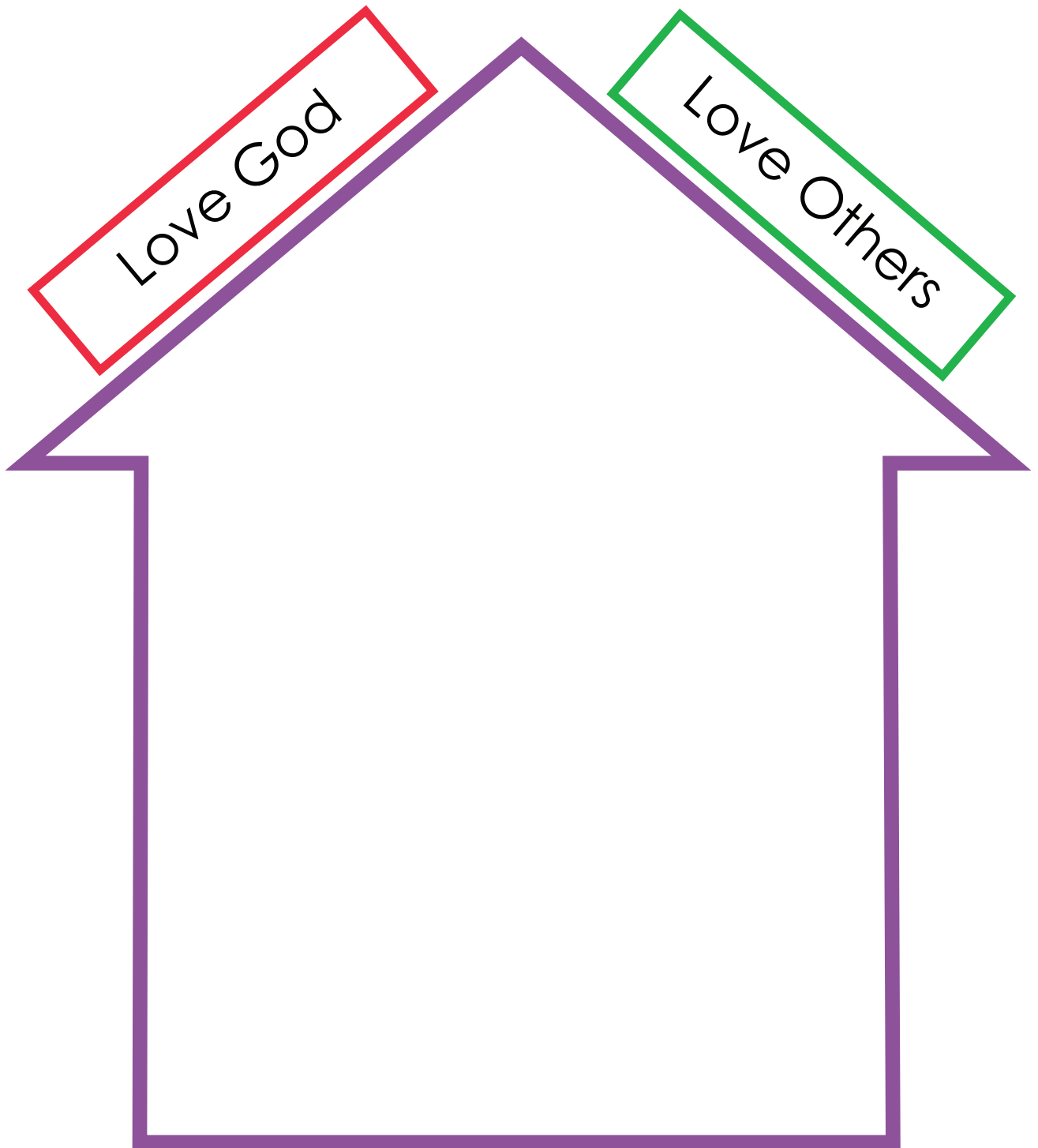
The Great Commandment House



The Great Commandment House Strips

You shall love the Lord your God	You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,	with all your heart,
with all your soul,	with all your soul,
with all your mind,	with all your mind,
and with all your strength.	and with all your strength.
You shall love your neighbor	You shall love your neighbor
as you love yourself.	as you love yourself.
You shall love the Lord your God	You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,	with all your heart,
with all your soul,	with all your soul,
with all your mind,	with all your mind,
and with all your strength.	and with all your strength.
You shall love your neighbor	You shall love your neighbor
as you love yourself.	as you love yourself.
You shall love the Lord your God	You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,	with all your heart,
with all your soul,	with all your soul,
with all your mind,	with all your mind,
and with all your strength.	and with all your strength.
You shall love your neighbor	You shall love your neighbor
as you love yourself.	as you love yourself.

The Great Commandment House Younger



Gestures for the Great Commandment



LOVE



GOD



LORD



HEART

Gestures for the Great Commandment

continued



SOUL (Series of 2)



MIND



STRENGTH



SOUL (Series of 2)



LOVE

Gestures for the Great Commandment

continued



NEIGHBOR (Series of 2)



LOVE



NEIGHBOR (Series of 2)



YOURSELF

Adult Formation Questions

For this session some reflection talking points and questions about the Great Commandment might be:

- How do you think you learned the moral code you lived by as a child?
- How is that the same or different from how you have helped your child(ren) develop a moral code?
- What is challenging about living both parts of the Great Commandment?

Those you have deeply loved become part of you. The longer you live, there will always be more people to be loved by you and to become part of your inner community. The wider your inner community becomes, the more easily you will recognize your own brothers and sisters in the strangers around you (Henri J. M. Nouwen, The Inner Voice of Love).

- Who have you loved deeply? How has that shaped your life?

I know now that the words spoken to Jesus when he was baptized are words spoken also to me and to all who are brothers and sisters of Jesus. My tendencies toward self-rejection and self-deprecation make it hard to hear these words truly and let them descend into the center of my heart. But once I have received these words fully, I am set free from my compulsion to prove myself to the world and can live in it without belonging to it. Once I have accepted the truth that I am God's beloved child, unconditionally loved, I can be sent into the world to speak and to act as Jesus did (Henri J. M. Nouwen, Beyond the Mirror).

- Have you ever thought about being God's beloved child, unconditionally loved?
- Why do you think many of us find it easier to love or forgive others than to love or forgive ourselves?
- Have you specifically taught your children they are God's beloved child as well as your beloved child?

Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love (often attributed to Saint Teresa of Calcutta).

- What small thing could you do today (or tomorrow or next week) with great love?

I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God Who is sending a love letter to the world (often attributed to Saint Teresa of Calcutta).

- What are little ways you find you can love God? What are little ways you find you can love others?
- Have you seen your children loving God or others in some small ways that touch your heart?

"At the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1022; Saint John of the Cross, Dichos 64).

As a group pause, and personally reflect silently on this quote for two or three minutes before ending your session together. Ask yourself about how you would be judged if today was the "evening of your life?"

The Footprints of the Beatitudes



Beatitudes Stepping Stones on the path to a happier, more holy life

1. Write a word that comes to mind when you read this Beatitude.
2. Write the name of a person who reminds you of this Beatitude.
3. Write a phrase about how you could live this Beatitude out in your family.

1st Beatitude:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2nd Beatitude:

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3rd Beatitude:

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4th Beatitude:

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5th Beatitude:

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

6th Beatitude:

Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

7th Beatitude:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

8th Beatitude:

Blessed are they who suffer persecution, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Beatitudes Stepping Stones Parent Handout

Parents, use this as a reference guide when you are completing the stepping stone activity with your family.

On the Beatitudes Stepping Stones sheet:

1. *Write a word that comes to mind when you read that Beatitude.*
2. *Write the name of a person who reminds you of that Beatitude.*
3. *Write a phrase about how you could live it out in your family.*

The Beatitudes are like stepping stones on the path to a happier, more holy life and a deeper relationship with Jesus. Let's look at the steps one by one:

1 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This means we know that we all need God and must put our trust in God above anything else. There is nothing we own or possess that will make us happier than our relationship with God. However much or little we have, we are all poor in spirit because we all depend on God's love and mercy. Every material and spiritual gift we have is from God.

2 "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted." This means even in the sadness of loss, we can be strong and loving because we know God's care and comfort. We know we are not alone because God is with us even in the sad times, and because of that, we can share the sorrows of other people. We can comfort and help others who are suffering.

3 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Meekness means having a gentle spirit and treating other people with patience and respect. We do not think we are better than others, nor do we react too quickly in anger. Jesus showed meekness when he served others. He said, "Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart ..." (Matthew 11:29). We serve one another with generosity and kindness.

4 "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." People who hunger and thirst for righteousness want everyone to be treated fairly and justly. When we have concern for the suffering of others, we realize that people are not always fair to each other. To hunger and thirst means we feel a passion for how others are treated. We do not always think of ourselves first but work to build the kind of world God wants.

5 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." People who are merciful see others as God sees them. They reach out to help people and show them mercy. Merciful people know God has forgiven them and so they more easily forgive others. We show mercy because God shows us mercy.

6 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." When we have a heart for God and others, we have a pure heart. The heart refers to the things we most seek and desire. A pure heart means we have a singlemindedness in love for what God loves. When we know how much God loves us, we can reflect that love. In that sense, we can see God.

7 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." When we see as God sees, we show mercy and justice for others. As our heart becomes simple, clean and pure, we become a person who can help make peace in conflict. As we are drawn into God's love for us, we come to see others as God's children and made in God's image. We do not want to see that person hurt or harmed, and so we become protectors of others and heal the brokenhearted. We work to build a more peaceful and loving world.

8 "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The prophets in the Old Testament were persecuted for calling the people of Israel, who had strayed from God's ways, back to faithfulness. Jesus himself was persecuted for our sake to bring us back to faithfulness into union with God. As followers of Jesus, we know that others might not welcome his message of justice, peace, forgiveness, and love. We should rejoice when we are persecuted for standing up for the message of Jesus, who never hurt anyone but lived and died for us. If we follow Jesus, we will live forever in his love.

Beatitudes Reflection Prayer

Leader: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

ALL: Help us to trust in you, Lord, and know that you only want us to be happy. Show us how to live simply, knowing that you will always take care of us.

Leader: Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

ALL: Help us to realize we are not alone when we are suffering and in pain. Let us see the sadness in others and care for them, too.

Leader: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

ALL: Show us how to be kind, humble, and understanding in all that we do. Help us embrace the value of peace in our homes and in the world.

Leader: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

ALL: Show us how to be fair and just to all people, no matter who they are. Lead us to help those are less fortunate than us.

Leader: Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

ALL: Open our hearts to your love so we can forgive those who have hurt us.

Leader: Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.

ALL: Give us a clean heart and mind, so we always surround ourselves with goodness and show your love to others.

Leader: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

ALL: Help us to remember to bring peace to those we meet, both in our family and around the world.

Leader: Blessed are they who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

ALL: When we have a choice, help us to choose the good and the kind. Guide us to do what is right in all things, even when it is hard to do.

Amen.

Adult Formation Questions

For this session some reflection talking points and questions about the Beatitudes might be:

For this session every adult should have a copy of the Beatitudes on a sheet of paper or a Bible available where they can reference the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew 5: 3-12.

The Beatitudes describe the characteristics of someone who would want to cultivate being a follower of Jesus. Jesus told us that as we live these values and practices of charity and compassion and develop a concern for justice, we create blessings for ourselves in this life and in some way move us toward the Kingdom of God. These “blessings” not only last beyond what we know on earth—they lead us to heaven.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us the Beatitudes “are at the heart of Jesus preaching.”

- When you were growing up, in your own religious education and formation, did you learn the Beatitudes? What do you remember being taught about them?
- As you look at them, does anyone from your childhood or youth come to mind who lived any of the Beatitudes in a way you remember?
- As you look at the Beatitudes, what Beatitude did you most witness as a child in the home or church in which you grew up?
- A spirit of “Social Justice” is implicit in the Beatitudes. What do you think a “hunger and thirst for righteousness” means?
- What does mercy mean to you?
- Who do you know who exemplifies mercy?
- Who comes to mind when you think of a “peacemaker?”
- Who is a “peacemaker” in your family?”
- What practices in your home would lead to cultivating peace in your family?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes the Beatitudes as “paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulations.”

- Have you ever experienced some sort of “tribulation” that required you to hold onto hope?
- What gave you hope?
- Who helped you believe in hope?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, “The Beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness.” Thomas Aquinas said, “God alone satisfies.”

- What does happiness mean to your children?
- How can you help them to understand that lasting happiness is not something the world will ever fully provide? What practices can cultivate a higher understanding of happiness?
- What might you do in the future to help your family cultivate the meaning of the Beatitudes into your spiritual lives?

The Particulars on Prayer

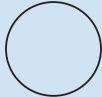
A Prayers of Adoration are said for praise and worship of God, to tell God how wonderful he is.	C Prayers of Contrition are what we say when we're sorry for something we've done wrong.	T Prayers of Thanksgiving are said when we express our gratitude for all the blessings God has given us.	S Prayers of Supplication are said when we are asking God for something we need.
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The Particulars on Prayer

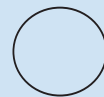
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Pick Your Prayer

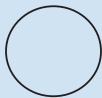
**We ask God for
forgiveness.**



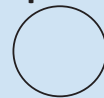
**We can pray for
ourselves or for others.**



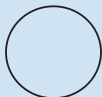
**We express gratitude
for all God has
done for us.**



**This is a prayer of
praise and worship.**



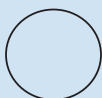
**This can be a prayer of
petition or
intercession.**



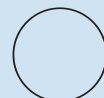
**We acknowledge God's
love and his sacrifice
for us.**



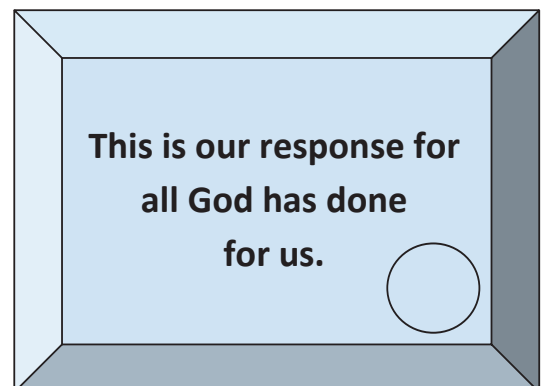
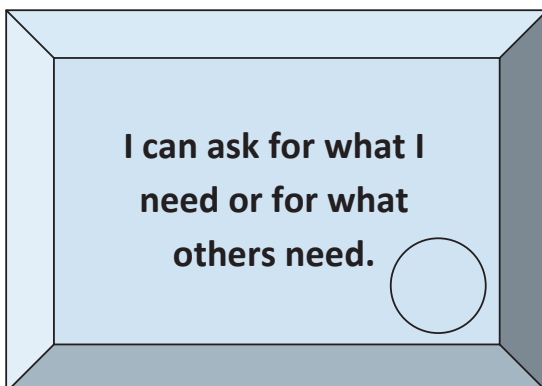
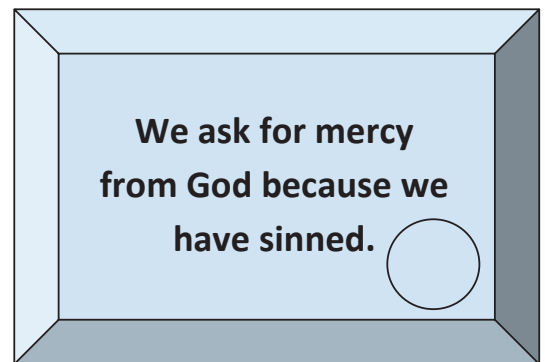
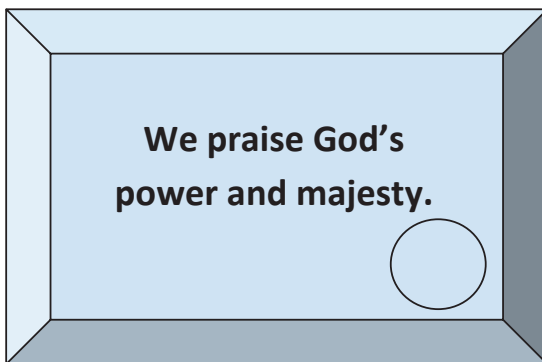
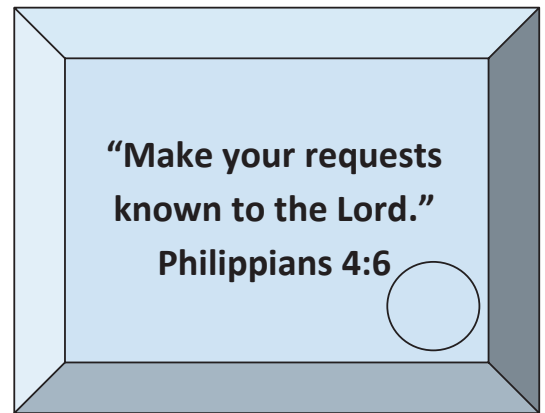
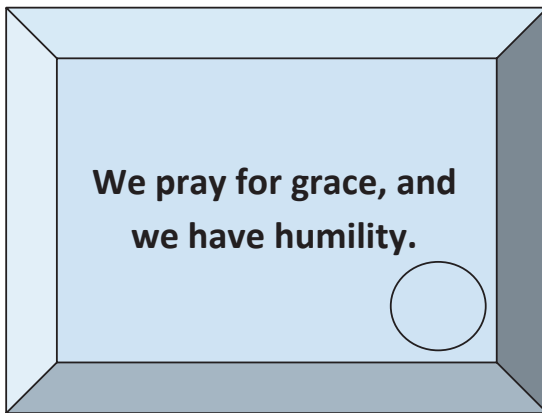
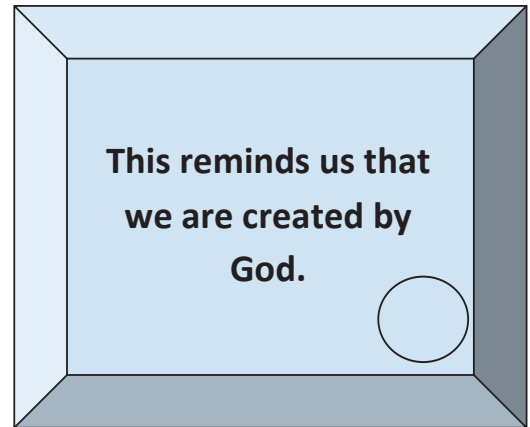
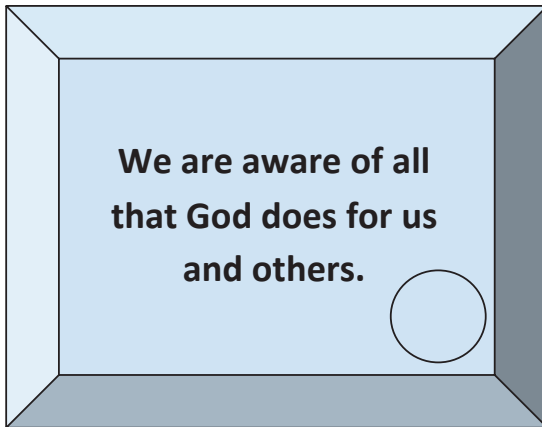
**We notice how
awesome God is.**



**We know we have
done something
wrong.**



Pick Your Prayer *continued*



Pick Your Prayer Answer Key

We ask God for
forgiveness.

C

We can pray for
ourselves or for others.

S

We express gratitude
for all God has
done for us.

T

This is a prayer of
praise and worship.

A

This can be a prayer of
petition or
intercession.

S

We acknowledge God's
love and his sacrifice
for us.

T

We notice how
awesome God is.

A

We know we have
done something
wrong.

C

Pick Your Prayer Answer Key *continued*

We are aware of all
that God does for us
and others.

T

This reminds us that
we are created
by God.

A

We pray for grace, and
we have humility.

C

“Make your requests
known to the Lord.”
Philippians 4:6

S

We praise God’s
power and majesty.

A

We ask for mercy
from God because we
have sinned.

C

I can ask for what
I need or for what
others need.

S

This is our response for
all God has done
for us.

T

ACTS Prayer Sheet

A

doration _____

C

ontrition _____

T

hanksgiving _____

S

upplication _____

A

C

T

S

Adult Formation Questions

For this session, some reflection talking points and questions about prayer might be:

- When did Jesus set an example about taking time away from the busyness of life to spend time with God in prayer.
- How do you find a way to carve out time for solitude and prayer? What are the obstacles to doing that? What are the benefits?
- How did your family of origin pray? Is there something you have or would like to pass on to your children? Is there anything about the practice of prayer that you didn't do in the family in which you grew up, but you would like to do with your children?

The Our Father is the prayer Jesus gave us. As a group, invite someone to recite the first part of the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven ...

In this part of the Lord's Prayer, we learn about who God is.

- How are you teaching your children to praise God?
- What does the Kingdom of God mean to you?
- When have you accepted God's will though you didn't understand it? What has that done to your relationship with God?

Ask someone to recite the second part of the Lord's Prayer:

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

This part of the prayer is about us and what our needs are as human children of God.

- What do you think your family most needs? What in your family life represents "daily bread?"
- How are you teaching your children to forgive?
- Have you experienced forgiveness? If you can, share an experience of a time you gave or received forgiveness.
- When you hear the phrase, "Pray as you can, not as you can't," what comes to mind as ways to pray that are effective for you? What way of praying might you like to try in the future?
- Can you share any personal experience of prayer that has been meaningful in your life?

For you created my inmost being;

you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

your works are wonderful,

I know that full well. (Psalm 139: 13-14)

You reflected on this Psalm as a family. It is about our goodness and how much we are loved as a child of God.

- What have been ways you help your child(ren) know their goodness and how loved they are?
- How have you helped them know their value especially when they have been discouraged or felt alone?

Sacramental Prayer Meditation Cards

The Candle

Have you ever been in complete darkness? Imagine a time without electric lights, without flashlights, when the only light came from the sun, the moon, and the stars. A cloudy night would be pitch black. In that time and place, the light from even a small candle would be a relief. Jesus is the Light of the World. If we let Jesus be our guide, we are never lost. Jesus shows us the way.

Incense

"Lord, make our prayer rise like incense in your sight..." The smell of the burning incense fills the air, we breathe it in, a pure offering, pleasing to the Lord. The scent reminds us of the sacred, the sacred which surrounds us, which permeates us. We are reminded God is always with us whether we can see that or not.

The Rosary

The smooth, circular beads of the rosary roll over my fingers as I pray, over and over... "Hail Mary... The Lord is with thee... Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death..." Praying the rosary is a devotion to Mary, the Mother of God. I recite the prayers and meditate on the five joyful, five glorious, five sorrowful and five luminous mysteries of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. The rosary reminds me how much God loves us.

Holy Oil

Oil—we use it in cooking, we use it to lubricate, to soften. Oil strengthens and makes things run smoothly. Oil is a sign of the Holy Spirit. Scented oil is the sign of anointing, of being chosen. We are anointed with holy oil, or chrism oil, at our Baptism, at Confirmation and with the oil of the sick when we are very ill. The scent of chrism oil lingers, stays with us, reminds us of the presence of the Holy Spirit. We are strengthened by the Spirit.

The Scapular

Hanging around my neck, the rope sometimes itches. One part hangs in front, on my chest, one part in back, a symbol of the apron of a monk. This is a reminder for me: Christ before me, Christ behind me. In times of trouble, it reminds me to trust in God.

Statues

A little plastic statue on the dashboard of the car, a solid statue of St. Francis standing guard over my garden, the stature of Mary we crown with flowers in May; there are all kinds of statues I see every day. These statues help me stop and think about the life of that saint, or presence of Jesus in my life. I may admire the work of the artist, the life-like image, but more than that, these statues lead me to pray, to let my life be a prayer.

Sacramental Prayer Meditation Cards *continued*

Bells

Bells have been part of the tradition of worship since the earliest Christian times, functioning in a variety of ways. Pulled by a rope in a bell tower or automated from a church, they summon us to prayer. Pealing bells or a choir of handbells signify special times of celebration, like a wedding, or times of loss, ringing mournfully at a funeral.

The Icon, a Sacred Image

We gaze upon the image; it draws us in, pondering the mysteries of faith. We cannot see God, but the icons, the sacred images, speak the Gospel to us without words. To hear the Gospel in the icon, we look, we meditate.

Medals

The medal is cool, hanging around my neck or on a bracelet. It is something I can touch, I feel the raised surface of the medal, the image of the saint; I touch the medal and think about that saint or the image of Christ. It reminds me to imitate the saints, to choose to follow Jesus every day.

Palm Branch

"Hosanna!" the people cried, as Jesus entered Jerusalem in triumph. We join our voices with theirs as we raise our palm branches and remember the triumph of the resurrection. Each time I see the palms, I pray, "Hosanna!"

The Crucifix

The crucifix is more than a cross. See the figure of Jesus on the cross, hanging, dying, arms open, accepting even death, death on a cross, and at the same time praying, "Father forgive them..." Out of his deep love for us, Jesus was willing to truly suffer for us. He gave us the ultimate gift, the gift of his life. What do we do out of love for Jesus? Would I do what Jesus did, out of love for another?

Holy Water

Water is essential, the source of life—clear, refreshing, invigorating. Water is also powerful enough to wear away rock; the water of a flood washes away crops. Water can take away life. The water of our Baptism is a sign of our death to sin and also of our new life in Christ. With the water of Baptism, we are born into the people of God, the Church. We thank God for the gift of everlasting life each time we touch Holy Water.

Sacramental Source Guide

	Candle		Bell
	Incense		Icon
	Rosary		Medal
	Holy Oil		Palm Branch
	Scapular		Crucifix
	Statue of Saint		Holy Water

Sacramental Reflection Sheet

1. What have you learned about sacramentals? _____

2. Which sacramental has special meaning for your family and helps you feel closer to God?

3. What have you learned about sacramentals? _____

Sacramental Reflection Sheet

1. What have you learned about sacramentals? _____

2. Which sacramental has special meaning for your family and helps you feel closer to God?

3. What have you learned about sacramentals? _____

Blessing Cards

*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



*May the angels and saints
Be with you today
To guide and protect you
As you go on your way.*



Simple Blessing Cards

**I LOVE YOU.
GOD LOVES YOU.**



**I LOVES YOU.
GOD LOVES YOU.**



**I LOVE YOU.
GOD LOVES YOU.**



**I LOVES YOU.
GOD LOVES YOU.**



**I LOVE YOU.
GOD LOVES YOU.**



**I LOVES YOU.
GOD LOVES YOU.**



Adult Formation Questions

For this session, some reflection talking points and questions about sacramentals might be:

- Do you have any objects in your home that hold a special meaning to your family that remind you of something deeper, like a relationship with a loved one or a memory from a family vacation? Some things might be: A gift from a grandparent or loved one; a favorite childhood storybook; or a memento from a family trip. Share what that might be, and why it is important to you.
- Would your children be able to say what that object or memory might be and why it is important? Might they have a different object or memory that is important to them?

"Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church. They prepare [us] to receive the fruit of the sacraments and sanctify different circumstances of life" (CCC, 1677).

- What are sacramentals that you experienced in the family in which you grew up?
- Did you have any objects that were sacramentals you remember from your childhood, such as a statue in your home or a medal with the image of a Saint that you wore? Share some of your memories about them.
- Did you have any family rituals such as lighting candles on an Advent wreath? Share as many as you can remember.
- Are there any certain sacramentals you experienced that you want to pass on to your children?

"Among the sacramentals blessings have an important place." They are in the form of praise for God and intercessory that we God's gifts in our lives (CCC, 1678).

- Blessings can be part of a sacramental ritual like the blessing of mothers and fathers at a Baptism, or they can be simple ones in your home, such as praying a meal prayer blessing. How might you incorporate blessings into your family life?
- Might you bless your children as they begin a new year of school, or on their birthday light their baptismal candle and say a simple blessing for your child, or make a visit to your church and light a vigil candle, saying a little prayer intercession for a loved one who is sick? Do you think any one of these might be anything you would try as a family? Why or why not?
- Do you have any other ideas for blessings your family might engage in?

Various pieties nourish the Christian life. (See CCC, 1679.)

- A piety is a religious term referring to practices or devotions that engender virtue. There are many forms of pieties. Some are universal. Some are particular to a culture. Has your family participated in any common pieties such as praying the Stations of the Cross with your parish family or on your own? What might be the value of participating in something like this for your children?
- Has your family participated in any personal pieties? What benefits might children receive by participating in a piety such as praying the Rosary as a family, or making a visit to church to pray before the Blessed Sacrament?
- Do you have any pieties particular to your family's culture that you have experienced, such as a Marian procession?
- How might awareness of sacramentals help your family deepen their faith life?