

Sunday Gospel Background

In the Gospel for this Sunday, Jesus begins his public ministry at a wedding feast at Cana in Galilee. He transforms the embarrassing problem of running out of wine into a triumph of hospitality. Jesus provides the best wine for the feast. His actions show us that he comes to gather people together in joy.

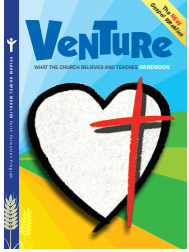
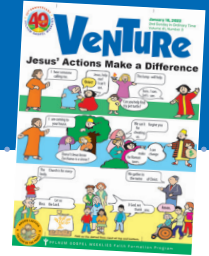
Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Explain that this Sunday's Gospel is about a wedding feast. Jesus turned water into wine and made a big difference to the bride and groom. Begin by raising your hand in the air as if making a toast and say, "I thank you, loving God, for (name a blessing in your life). Invite your child to make a similar "toast."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Jesus' Actions Make a Difference (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the three sets of illustrations on the cover. Talk about what is happening in each. Have your child carefully tear the cover from the *VenTure* lesson. Follow the directions to fold the page. **Ask:** Now what is happening? How is Jesus making a difference?
- ☐ **Story • A Wedding in the Family (pages 2-3)** Read aloud this story together or have your child read it silently. Note: The main character's name is pronounced "My-lay."
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Open-ended; perhaps out of loyalty to their mother or worry that they may no longer have their father's attention. 2. Her dad talks to Kai and Jodie's sons rather than her; the Genesis reading that a man clings to his wife; not being in the wedding and wearing formal clothes. She's afraid Jodie hates her and it's too late to apologize. 3. He invites her to sit at the head table with the rest of the wedding party; Jodie's gift of the gecko charm let Maile know that Jodie did not hate her and wanted her to be as happy and joyful as she was. 4. Reconciliation and love.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Provides Wine for a Wedding Feast (page 4)** Divide up the reading parts and read them aloud to proclaim the Gospel together.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Relatives and friends of the couple, including Jesus, his disciples, and Mary. 2. Jesus is more like the bridegroom because he draws everyone together with a grand gesture of hospitality. 3. He values marriage and celebration, and wants people to be happy. He gathers people together in joy and gladness. (See page 5 for further interpretation of Jesus' first sign.)*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus Gathers People Together (page 4)** Read aloud this summary of Sunday's Gospel message. Jesus models how we can gather people together. We are bound together in our families and in our friend groups.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Open-ended; you can also look at your parish website or social media pages. 2. Open-ended; your child could invite family members to do an activity together, or it could be more profound, like trying to help siblings mend a quarrel. 3. Open-ended; receiving the Eucharist could inspire you to be a better, more generous, or thankful person.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 26. Take turns reading aloud the paragraphs. Explain that Jesus' presence at the wedding feast at Cana shows that he values marriage as an institution. The Church names marriage (matrimony) a sacrament because it gives the couple the grace to live out their promises to each other every day.

(Note: If you or your child have questions about divorced and remarried Catholics or about marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, you may wish to talk to your parish faith formation director, pastor, or deacon.)

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

- **Our Catholic Faith • Jesus Is the Best Wine (page 5)** Have your child read this feature aloud; if needed, help your child respond to the sacrament questions in the text. You can also help your child complete the questions at the bottom of the page. **Answers:** 1. *A while, long enough for the wine to run out* 2. *Six* 3. *20 to 30 gallons* 4. *About 2,400* 5. *The best* 6. *Priest's words: Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.* 7. *The words of the Memorial Acclamation of the Mystery of Faith: Through his Death and Resurrection, Christ has set us free.*
- **Catholic Faith Word • Mystery (page 5)** Read aloud the definition. Invite your child to notice the response to "the mystery of faith" next time you are at Mass.

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • Sacramental Life (pages 6–7)** This board game, loosely modeled after the game of Life, is a journey through our sacramental lives. It isn't necessary to play in groups of three; you can play the game with your child, or invite another family member to join, if possible. After playing, you might discuss together how our Christian lives are shaped by the sacraments.
- **Gospel Review • What Do Jesus' Signs Tell Us? (page 8)** Encourage your child to complete the puzzle using existing knowledge of the Gospels. **Answers:** 1. *You kept the best wine until now.* 2. *Go, your son will live.* 3. *Get up, pick up your mat, and walk.* 4. *I am the bread of life.* 5. *It is I; do not be afraid.* 6. *I am the light of the world.* 7. *I am the resurrection and the life.*
- **Closing Prayer** Remind your child that there are many types of prayer, including the prayers of thanksgiving you offered at the beginning of your learning session. There are also prayers of petition. Invite your child to offer prayers on behalf of people you know who may need God's loving care.



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus says he fulfills the words of the prophet Isaiah; he is the one chosen to bring Good News to the poor, sight to the blind, and freedom to captives. When we reach out to people in need, we follow Jesus and continue his work of showing people God's love for them.

Note that we began reading from Luke's Gospel in Advent. We continue throughout the year until next Advent. Each Gospel writer has his own perspective on Jesus and his work of teaching and healing. Luke is especially aware of Jesus' interactions with the poor, outsiders, and women.

Share Experiences

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

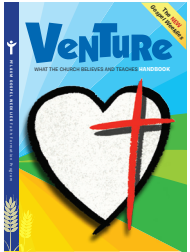
- ☐ **Pray together** Take turns mentioning people and things you would like to pray for. After each petition, respond together: "Loving God, hear our prayer."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • We Share Our Stories (page 1)** Have your child read the introductory paragraphs in the left column. Encourage your child to use the prompts, if they are helpful. You may wish to share your own story as an example.
- ☐ **Article • The Good News According to Luke (pages 2–3)** Call your child's attention to the illustration on page 2. The ox is Luke's symbol because he stresses that Jesus' Death is a sacrifice. The ox was used in animal sacrifices. The middle picture shows the forgiving father and the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11–32). The Good Samaritan has stopped to help the wounded man. The two men at top right did not stop (see Luke 10:25–37). Read aloud the page together, switching at each question.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Luke has decided to write down everything he remembers about Jesus so that the people can better trust what they already have been taught about Jesus. 2. The story of Jesus' birth; stories of Jesus speaking with women; the Rich Man and Lazarus; the Good Samaritan; the Prodigal Son; Zacchaeus, the tax collector; the good thief. 3. Jesus' Resurrection shows that God will be with those who are rejected and persecuted; God will raise from the dead those who believe in him. 4. Open-ended.*
- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Gospel (page 5)** Read aloud the definition together. Use this opportunity to review the names of the four Gospel writers.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Is God's Spirit-Filled Prophet (page 4)** Divide up the reading parts and read them aloud to proclaim the Gospel together.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus brings Good News to the poor, liberty to captives, sight for the blind, freedom to the oppressed, and a year of favor from God 2. That he is the Messiah anointed by God 3. Open-ended.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • We Are All God's Favorites (page 4)** Read this feature as a summary of Sunday's Gospel concept of how we can continue the time of favor started by Jesus. Note that the words *favor* and *favorites* could imply superiority or favoritism; that's not the case here. God reveals his favor through his constant love. Emphasize that God's love is always there.



- Discuss the *Think* questions on page 4. *Answers: 1. Open-ended; help your child brainstorm both material and nonmaterial blessings. 2. Open-ended; showing kindness and sharing what you have with others, offering prayers of gratitude 3. Again, God's favor is not about things; it's about constancy. God walks with us always, most especially during times of trial and sorrow.*



- Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 47 and read about The Mass. Close the handbook for a moment and stand together. Invite your child to pretend that the priest who is to celebrate the Eucharist with you is just beginning to process toward the altar. What would the assembly be doing? *Singing an entrance song.*

Return to page 47 and continue standing as you read about the Introductory Rites. Note that the Collect (pronounced KAH-lect), is the traditional name for this prayer in which the priest invites us to offer prayers for our needs.

Remain seated as you review the Liturgy of the Word, until you get to the Alleluia. By now in your *Venture* year, your child is likely to be familiar with the pattern in the Liturgy of the Word of three readings and a psalm. Note that the Alleluia that comes before the Gospel will be replaced during Lent. Pause at the Prayer of the Faithful. Emphasize that the Prayer of the Faithful is one of the oldest parts of the Mass. It sums up the concern of the whole assembly for the needs of the Church, the world, and the local community. After this prayer, we bring the gifts to the altar and continue with Mass.

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

- **Our Catholic Faith • We Gather and Hear Stories (page 5)** Have your child read this feature, which connects an Old Testament event with our Liturgy of the Word today.
 - **Ezra Teaches the People Their History (yellow box, page 5)** Read this Sunday's First Reading and complete the activity together. Encourage your child to refer to page 47 in the handbook to help make comparisons to the Liturgy of the Word. *Possible answers: priest stands before the people; men, women, and children in assembly; people listen attentively; Ezra stands on platform; people answer "Amen"; people stand and listen; meal comes after the reading.*

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • What Builds Community Among Us? (pages 6-7)** Read aloud the introduction on page 6. Have your child read each dilemma and write responses for as many as possible.
- **Closing Prayer • Create a Prayerful Place (page 8)** Have your child read the text in the blue box and check the top five prayer places. If you already have a prayer place in your home, invite your child to bring something new to it. Pray the prayer together by alternating the reading parts.



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Sunday Gospel Background

Jesus fulfills the words of the prophet Isaiah. In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus says that his words—as a hometown boy—will not be well-received by the hometown crowd. And he's right. Jesus' neighbors reject his message; they are sure he is only the carpenter Joseph's son. But Jesus persists in his message that God favors those least expected to receive help. God sent relief to widows suffering from the drought and healing to Naaman, a Syrian, from leprosy.

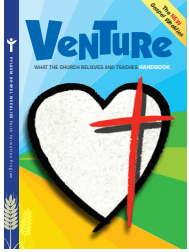
Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Share the name of a leader you would like to thank God for, and invite your child to do the same. The leader can be living or dead, famous or local. After you share about each person, respond together, "Thank you, loving God, for giving us good leaders."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Do We Risk Helping Others? (page 1)** Have your child work independently on the situations and tally up the score. Share with your child that risk is a personal choice; having a high risk score isn't a matter of "winning." Discuss what may influence various people's comfort with risk.
- ☐ **Story • Not Alone Now (pages 2–3)** Take turns reading the story aloud, pausing briefly for questions or comments.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Jared was used to his homeroom where he did not stand out as different. 2. They invited Jared to have lunch with them; they stood up for him at recess. 3. Open-ended; examples could include being a loyal friend, not spreading gossip or rumors, not joining in on something you know is wrong, speaking up in favor/ against something.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • People Reject Jesus as a Prophet (page 4)** Divide up the reading parts and read them aloud to proclaim the Gospel together.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. In last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus said he was the one sent from God to bring the Good News and announce a year of favor from the Lord. This means he is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. 2. Joseph's son. They don't believe he's anything more than a carpenter's son. 3. Israelites reject Elijah and Elisha; two non-Israelites—a widow from Sidon and Naaman from Syria—accept them. Prophets challenge us and ask us to take risks, to think of others, not only ourselves.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • We Believe or Reject Jesus (page 4)** Read aloud the summary of this Sunday's Gospel concept about what it means to claim to be a Christian.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Open-ended; they may be very afraid, but they trust in Jesus, despite the danger. 2. Open-ended; we show it in the way we treat others and through our actions; we may show it in outward ways such as wearing a cross or crucifix or attending Mass. 3. Open-ended; perhaps they risk doing the right thing instead of the popular thing.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 48. Explain that the word *liturgy* comes from a Greek word that means “the work of the people.” Liturgy is when we all offer the sacrifice of the Eucharist together. *Eucharist* means “thanksgiving.” We offer thanksgiving to God for the life of Jesus and for life that he gives to us in Baptism and Eucharist and through the other sacraments. Invite your child to imagine you are at Mass together as you briefly review the Liturgy of the Eucharist, Communion Rite, and Concluding Rites. Point out that the Dismissal isn’t just a goodbye—it’s our reminder to continue the work of Jesus in the world.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture page 8.

- **Catholic Faith Word • Liturgy (page 8)** Have your child read aloud this week’s definition to summarize and conclude your discussion of the Liturgy.
- **Our Catholic Faith • Who Believes What Prophets Say? (page 5)** In Sunday’s Gospel, Jesus compares his own rejection to that of two Old Testament prophets. Have your child read this feature and look up the Bible references to find out what happened to the prophets Elijah, Elisha, and Jeremiah. Choose one of the stories mentioned at the lower-right corner of the page for your child to look up and read.

Live the Gospel

- **Saints • Saint Maximilian Kolbe (page 6)** Give your child time to read this comic. **Ask:** How was Saint Maximilian Kolbe like a prophet? *He published writings that some people did not agree with and was imprisoned for it. He delivered the Word of God despite the risk.*
- **Living the Gospel • Play the Accept and Reject Game (pages 7–8)** Many children experience situations similar to the dilemmas on these game cards. By playing this card game, your child will recognize that it’s possible to respond to tough situations with either an accepting or rejecting action. Acting like a prophet means rejecting the easy answers and accepting the challenge to take risks.

Read the introduction on page 7. You can adjust the directions on pages 7–8 for home use by talking through the “accept” and “reject” solutions together. When you’ve finished, point out the Scripture printed on the reverse side of the cards. Invite your child to assemble and tape the cards in order to reveal a well-known portion (1 Corinthians 13:4–7) of this Sunday’s Second Reading: *Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

- **Closing Prayer** Share the name of a person or group in the news who has suffered rejection or persecution and invite your child to do the same. **Pray:** For (*name of person or group*), we pray to our God. **Respond:** All are welcome in God’s family.



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

Luke's account of Jesus' calling his disciples focuses on Simon Peter. Jesus suggests that he lower his nets in deep waters even though he has fished all night without catching a thing. Simon Peter does what Jesus asks and catches so many fish that two boats can barely haul them to shore without sinking. This great catch makes Simon Peter aware that he is a sinful human being and gives Jesus the opportunity to call him to his new vocation as "a fisher of people."

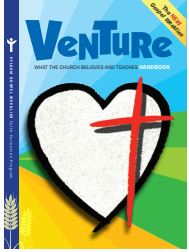
Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, we pray today for all men considering a life as a priest or brother and for all women who will dedicate their lives as religious sisters. Be with them as they pray, study, take their vows, and live their vocations in your service. Amen."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Who Is God Calling Me to Be? (page 1)** Explain that everyone has a vocation. Some vocations are lifelong. They can be our job, but they don't have to be. A vocation is the role God wants us to play in his family. (You might talk about your own vocation.) Give your child time to complete the puzzle. **Answers:** 1. *classmate*; 2. *family*; 3. *activities*; 4. *community*; 5. *citizen*; 6. *talents*; 7. *Christian*; 8. *friend*; 9. *job*; 10. *student*; MY VOCATION
- ☐ **Story-Drama • Who Spreads Jesus' Message? (pages 2-3)** Separate the first four pages of the lesson from the last four so that your child can spread out the timeline (on pages 6-7) in your learning space. Point out that the colored backgrounds in the drama correspond to the sections on the timeline, starting at the bottom (lavender) and working toward present day at the top (light green). Take turns reading aloud. Pause at the question at the bottom of page 3 (Narrator 4). Answer the question together.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Three Fishermen Follow Jesus (page 5)** Before dividing up the reading parts, be sure to point out that Simon is also known as Simon Peter and Peter. Then read aloud to proclaim the Gospel together.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 5.** **Answers:** 1. *Jesus asks Simon Peter to try for a catch of fish even though he had caught none all night.* 2. *They are amazed. Simon Peter may have suspected Jesus' power and been frightened; he fell to his knees before Jesus.* 3. *Jesus is calling them to be his disciples and spread the Good News to others.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus Calls Us to Love (page 8)** Read aloud the doctrine as a summary of this Sunday's Gospel message. As Jesus called his disciples to carry on the Sacred Tradition, all Christians are called to be missionaries for Christ.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 8.** **Answers:** 1-3. *Open-ended; encourage regular prayer as a way for your child to develop a close relationship with Jesus.*
- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Sacred Tradition (page 8)** Read aloud this week's definition. Emphasize that we share the same Scripture that Jesus' disciples preached to the early Christian community.



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 11. Take turns reading each paragraph of section 13. This is a very dense summary of ecclesial theology. Take time to consider some of these main concepts:
- “Gathering” or “assembly” as descriptions of the Church make us focus on the intentional effort to come together to proclaim our belief in Jesus. We give public witness to our faith when we gather for Eucharist.
 - The images of the People of God and the Body of Christ give us two different ways to describe the people gathered in Jesus’ name. *People of God* pictures us as called by God and willingly following as a group. *Body of Christ* reminds us that Jesus is our head, our leader, and that we are all important parts of the people gathered around him.
 - Before he ascended into Heaven, Jesus told us that the Holy Spirit would be with us. The presence of the Holy Spirit in our local assemblies and in the whole Church keeps us true to the mission of Jesus to reveal God’s love for us. Pope Francis said once that “the Holy Spirit annoys us.” The Holy Spirit constantly reminds us that we must always be showing God’s love to the world.
 - The Body of Christ, the People of God, is all believers in Jesus throughout the world and throughout history.
- Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture pages 6-7.*

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • Church Timeline: Christians have lived the teachings of Jesus for 2,000 years. (pages 6–7)** Have your child cut the long strips of text and illustrations from the top and bottom of the pages and then spread open the timeline. Read the sentences and identify the four pictured events in Jesus’ life—birth, Death, Resurrection, and the sending of the Holy Spirit. Your child will now create a timeline that begins with the Church’s foundation in Jesus Christ and his first followers until today.
- To begin, have your child find the four pictures with lavender backgrounds and cut them off. (There are two on each strip). Find the lavender band on the timeline and place those four pictures on the timeline. Note: Show your child how to tape a picture on the timeline by the top edge only, so you can lift the pictures and read about the person or event on the back.
 - The background colors on the pictures indicate where on the timeline they should be placed. Illustrations need not be in exact chronological order.
 - Summarize the history of the Church by having your child review the entire timeline, paying attention to the people who live Jesus’ message in every age. Note the two major events—the split between Eastern and Western Christianity and the Protestant Reformation—that appear on the timeline in print.
- **Saints • Robert de Nobili (page 4)** Explain that Robert de Nobili is not technically a saint; however, his evangelizing work in India helped advance Christianity throughout that country.
- **Closing Prayer** To finish, share the prayer that is shared by all Christians, the Lord’s Prayer.



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

The Beatitudes in Luke's Gospel confront us and confound us with hard-to-believe statements: Happy are the poor, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the persecuted. In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches clearly that the poor, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the persecuted have a place in God's kingdom. Jesus' teaching asks us to reassess our notions of success. Sharing what we have; comforting people who are sad; and laughing with, not at, people—these are the signs of success in God's eyes.

Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** Explain that in this lesson you will be talking about the Beatitudes. Ask what this word sounds like (*attitudes*). The Beatitudes are a series of blessings that don't seem much like blessings at first—being poor, sad, rejected, insulted. But with the proper attitude—with hope, gratitude, and faith in God—each of these becomes a cause for happiness. Pray for something that is a need and something for which you are grateful. Invite your child to do the same. After each prayer, respond together: Lord, hear our prayer.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • What's a Fair Share? (page 1)** This activity will introduce your child to the subject of fairness, a topic Luke raises often in his Gospel account. It is based on "Ten Chairs of Inequality: A Classroom Simulation on the Distribution of Wealth" developed by United for a Fair Economy. To adjust for a home or small class, we suggest using a set of ten objects, such as index cards or pieces of candy. Set up a row of ten objects. Explain that each object stands for 10 percent of the world's wealth. This includes the things we own and the money to purchase opportunities, like an education. Divide the objects in half between the two of you. Share that while there is a lot of wealth in the world, there are areas that don't have access to the basics people need to survive. Other areas have abundant wealth, as well as access to healthcare and education.

Explain that you represent the world's two wealthiest continents. The wealthy require more space and resources. Invite your child to guess how much of the world's resources you (representing two continents) represent. *Eighty percent*. Take three of the objects that are in front of your child so that you now have eight and your child has two. **Ask:** How does it feel to have this wealth taken away from you? How about when you look at what I have? Is the distribution fair? Who decides what's fair?
- ☐ **Article • Start Everything with Kindness (pages 2–3)** Read the article together, switching at the bold sentences.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Open-ended; you may wish to return to this question once you have read the Sunday Gospel on page 4. Jesus turns our usual way of thinking upside down in the Beatitudes. How is leading with kindness perhaps different than the way some people act? Why is a kind act so extraordinary? 2. Elijah's family was very sad; the kindness coin project was a way for Elijah's legacy of kindness to live on. It could give his family hope in the midst of their grief. 3. Open-ended; noting kind actions can encourage people to do more of the same. 4. Open-ended; give your child time to think about this.*

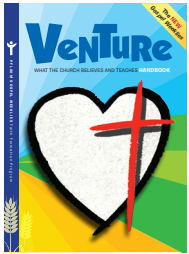
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches the Beatitudes (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by sharing the reading parts.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus says these people are happy because they trust that God will bless them with what they need and reward them in Heaven. 2. Jesus says it is terrible for these people because they have already had*



their happiness; people in our world today see being rich and well-fed as something to be desired and as a sign of success; open-ended.

- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • The Beatitudes Are God's Hope-Filled Promises (page 4)** Some children are confused by the message of the Beatitudes. Assure your child that many adults have a hard time understanding how people who are poor and rejected can feel happy and blessed. Read the doctrine to help understand the Beatitudes.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: Both of these questions are meant to prompt conversation and discussion. Share experiences of your own challenging times or an example of when you have helped someone else.*



- ☐ **Open the What the Church Believes and Teaches handbook to page 36.** Read aloud the first two paragraphs to explain the New Law. Explain that the Beatitudes are also included in the Gospel of Matthew (5:3–10) in a message called the Sermon on the Mount. In Luke's Gospel, the Beatitudes are included in the Sermon on the Plain.

Read the last three paragraphs that continue on page 37 aloud. They offer a good explanation of how people who are meek, poor, and hungry have reason to be happy.

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

- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Sermon on the Plain (page 5)** Read aloud this week's definition to summarize your discussion of the Beatitudes.
- ☐ **Our Catholic Faith • Who Are the Poor in the Bible? (page 5)** Explain that the "B.C." (before Christ) dates in this timeline move from larger to smaller as they approach the birth of Jesus. "A.D." stands for *Anno Domini*, which means "the year of the Lord." These numbers grow larger as they move forward in time from Jesus' birth. Take turns reading this feature aloud. Help identify the illustration that goes with each date: *manna and quail; a farmer planting seeds; the crown of King David; the destroyed Temple; bricks for rebuilding; and a wealthy landowner and a poor man.* Have your child complete the short writing exercise.

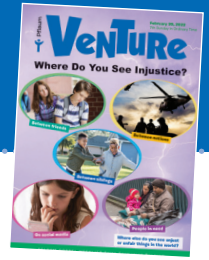
Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Living the Gospel • The Promised Land (pages 6–7)** Play the game to help your child understand why Jesus makes such a point of including the poor in his kingdom.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer • We Hear the Cries of the Poor (page 8)** Read aloud the opening paragraphs and the sections in red type. Have your child write out each "cry." Instead of dividing into groups, work together to write the action responses. Then say the prayer together.



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Sunday Gospel Background

Jesus asks us to be like God when he calls us to love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, and pray for those who insult us. These teachings come from a part of Luke's Gospel known as the Sermon on the Plain (6:17–49), which parallels Matthew's Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). To love one's enemies asks more of us than the Golden Rule, "Do to others what you would have them do to you." To love an enemy calls us to be compassionate as God is compassionate, to love with unconditional mercy.

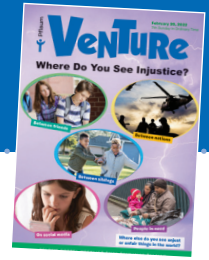
Share Experiences

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

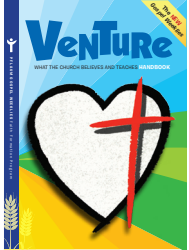
- ☐ **Pray together** Explain that this week's lesson is about Jesus' message to love our enemies. This can be easier said than done, especially when we face injustice and unfairness. Invite your child to offer a prayer for someone facing injustice, whether it's someone in the news or someone your child knows personally. After your child's petition, respond together: Lord, help us seek justice for all.
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Where Do You See Injustice? (page 1)** Talk about the question: Where else do you see unjust or unfair things in the world? Your child may see injustices in the world at large or in your own lives. Both are valid.
- ☐ **Article • Fannie Lou Hamer: A Little Light That Shone! (pages 2–3)** Fannie Lou Hamer was a contemporary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., though twelve years older. Take turns reading her story aloud together.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions, page 3.** *Answers: 1. Fannie grew up with poverty and racism. She didn't want others to endure them. She knew all people have dignity and rights. 2. She risked registering to vote, even after she was beaten. She worked for civil rights organizations. She spoke and sang about equal rights and opportunities. 3. Fannie believed that hating or oppressing anyone was against God's will; open-ended.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Says, "Love Your Enemies" (page 4)** Before reading aloud together, invite your child to notice how different Jesus' advice is from the way many people in our society act today.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. We should love and do good to them, bless and pray for them, offer them still more of what we have. 2. Jesus likely would have been very proud of Fannie Lou Hamer, especially in the way that she believed that Christians should take care of people and put their faith into action.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus Asks Us to Love as He Does (page 4)** It can be very difficult to forgive those who have wronged us. But God does not just love those who do what he wants; God loves everyone. Read aloud the doctrine as a summary of the Gospel concepts of forgiveness and unconditional love.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Open-ended; it can be easy to misjudge someone if we don't know them well. 2. Open-ended; it's easy to like someone who shares our interests and views; conversely, it can be harder to build a relationship with someone who is different from us or even holds opposing views or is a member of a different religion. 3. It's worth working it out for a good friendship; try to see things from another person's point of view.*



- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Reconciliation (page 5)** Read the vocabulary word and definition aloud. You may wish to use this opportunity to review the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. (See page 23 in *What the Church Believes and Teaches*.)



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 33. Begin with an explanation of the structure of the Ten Commandments, also known as the Decalogue. The prefix *deca* means “ten.” The first three commandments guide our relationship with God; the last seven address our relationships with one another.

Explain that you will be focusing on these seven commandments. Turn to the Fourth Commandment—honor your father and mother. Take your time with this. You may choose to read about one or two of these commandments on pages 33-35 each day.

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

- ☐ **Our Catholic Faith • David Turns the Other Cheek to Saul (page 5)** Read the introduction together. If needed, help your child find Sunday’s First Reading in the Bible: 1 Samuel 26:2, 7–9, 12–13, 22–23. Work with your child to answer the questions and look up the other Scripture citations.

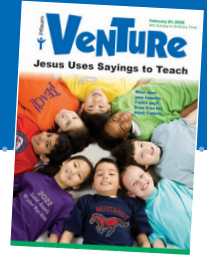
Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Living the Gospel • How Do You Love Your Enemies? (pages 6–7)** Have your child complete the first part of the activity. Adjust the directions in the second part for home use by working together to rate each response. Give your child some quiet time to complete the Reflect on Your Own section at the top of page 7. Have fun with the Gospel Rap on page 7.
- ☐ **GodTalk • We Learn About Faith by Asking (page 8)** Give your child time to read the three questions.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** To close this lesson about forgiveness, pray the Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi (see page 56 in *What the Church Believes and Teaches*).
- ☐ **Looking Ahead: Ash Wednesday (March 2)** This begins the forty days of Lenten fasting, prayer, and almsgiving that prepare Catholics for Easter. The forty days symbolize the time Jesus spent in the desert before he began his ministry. *Lent* comes from the Old English word *Lencten*, which means “spring.”



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

This Sunday's Gospel includes several sayings of Jesus that are vivid word pictures. The blind cannot lead the blind without both falling in a ditch. We should not focus on the splinter in our brother's eye when we have a log in our own. A good tree produces good fruit. They are easy to remember and make common sense. They offer us practical help in living as Jesus' followers.

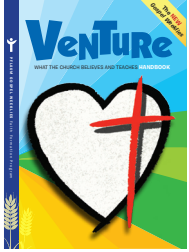
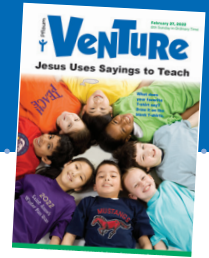
Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, we try to act in loving ways. We know that you always forgive our failings. As we enter into Lent this week, may we see the ways that we need to grow and change. Amen."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • Jesus Uses Sayings to Teach (page 1)** Ask your child to look at the cover of *VenTuRe* and think about a favorite T-shirt or other article of clothing. **Ask:** Why do we wear sayings on our clothes? *To show our team loyalty, to advertise a business or because we support it, to fit in (i.e., brand names).* Have your child follow the directions for drawing a favorite T-shirt on one of the blank shirts in the picture. Explain that, in this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus uses sayings to help us remember his teachings. Ask what message your child thinks Jesus might print on a T-shirt!
- ☐ **Story • Maya's True Colors (pages 2-3)** Introduce the story by asking if your child knows the word *hypocrite*. A hypocrite is a person who claims to believe one way but acts in another. For example, a hypocrite may believe that he is a good friend but talks about his friends behind their backs. Without giving too much away, share that the story is about a girl who acts one way at school, another way at home. Have your child watch for clues that Maya is not all that she seems. Take turns reading the story aloud.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions related to the story.** *Answers: 1. Adelle admits to not feeling very confident in her abilities and she sees Maya as "perfect." However, Adelle doesn't like it when Maya calls her out publicly for things that are not really faults (e.g., accidentally pocketing the marker, not rushing to the aid of their principal). 2. She may wish to privately mention Adelle's neglect of Bubbles to Mr. Stewart to make sure the animal is OK. Adelle's dad cautions her not to speak in anger or upset; he suggests that she pause so she can make good decisions and not escalate the situation. Some of what happened (i.e., how Maya spoke to her mother) is upsetting but is not really Adelle's business. 3. Open-ended; Jesus would approve of Adelle's instinct to speak up, but he, like her father, might caution her to do it gently and with kindness, so that Maya can recognize her errors and change.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Speaks in Images (page 4)** Take turns reading the parts to proclaim the Gospel. This may be a challenging lesson for your child, so make sure to read through the Gospel slowly.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. A hypocrite is someone who says or believes one thing but acts in a way that contradicts what they say. 2. Open-ended; we can be kinder, more patient with ourselves and with others. 3. It means that a good person tends to behave in a good manner. If we work to develop good habits, we will tend to act consistently in the way that God wants.*
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Jesus' Sayings Challenge Us (page 4)** Read aloud this doctrinal summary of this Sunday's Gospel. Jesus' sayings remind us to treat others well and to identify our own weaknesses.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1-2. Open-ended. You may wish to share some sayings if your child has trouble remembering.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 16. Read aloud the first paragraph to begin to answer the question: what is the liturgy? **Ask:** Why do Catholics attend Mass? *It's the way we praise and worship the Holy Trinity.*

Remind your child about the four ways Jesus Christ is present to us during the liturgy: in the person of the priest; in the readings from Scripture; in the praying, singing people; and, most importantly, in the Eucharist. Read aloud the second paragraph together. Invite your child to recall the things we are asked to do the next time your family attends Mass:

- *When we see the priest, we can visualize Christ.*
- *When the Scriptures are read, we imagine Christ speaking them.*
- *When we pray and sing, we feel Christ praying and speaking through us.*
- *When we receive Holy Communion, we recall receiving Christ in our bodies and souls.*

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

- **Catholic Faith Word • Worship (page 4)** Read aloud this week's definition to introduce the Our Catholic Faith feature.
- **Our Catholic Faith • We Gather Together to Worship at Mass (page 5)** Read aloud the feature. Instead of a *Venture* class prayer, your child might want to prepare a family meal blessing prayer. Invite your child to select music and write a prayer for your family to say. Save the prayer service at the bottom of the page to pray on Ash Wednesday.

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • Play the Sayings Game (pages 7-8)** Read the introduction and the directions and play the game together. Ask if your child recognize some of the sayings; this week marks the last of three Sundays from Jesus' Sermon on the Plain.
- **Saints • Saint Joan of Arc (page 6)** Give your child time to read the comic. Saint Joan of Arc is well known for her bravery. Ask if your child can think of any contemporary heroes like Saint Joan.
- **Closing Prayer • Ash Wednesday Prayer Service (page 5)** Say this short prayer and invite your child to repeat it with your name. "Loving Father, protect and guide (*your child's name*) during these forty days of Lent and always. Amen."



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Sunday Gospel Background

This Sunday's Gospel tells of the temptations Jesus faces in the desert and invites us to a personal springtime, to examine ways to grow into our best Christian selves. Jesus rejects being a superhero Messiah and chooses instead to be our brother and to teach us how to live as children of his Father. Lent is also a time when catechumens study our faith. *VenTure* provides Bible studies of our Old Testament ancestors, who are featured in the First Reading for each Sunday. This week's *VenTure* also begins a five-week study of the words and petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

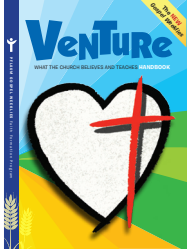
Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together • Lent Is a Time to Pray (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the cover of *VenTure*. Point out the prayer for Week 1. Note that this Sunday's Gospel is the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert. Explain that Lent is forty days long because Jesus spent forty days in the desert. Read the prayer for Week 1 together and pray the Lord's Prayer.
Note: Keep your copy of this week's lesson handy throughout Lent so that your child can pray each week's prayer daily.
- ☐ **Story • Tempted! (pages 2-3)** Talk about temptation. Assure your child that adults can be tempted too. That's why it's important to learn to resist temptation because it's something we face our entire lives. Take turns reading the story.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 3.** *Answers: 1. Gaming is fun and it's easy to get drawn into spending more time than we plan; open-ended. 2. Open-ended; your child may choose to ask for help from you or a teacher. 3. Open-ended; it can be helpful to set a timer or plan things on a calendar. It's also helpful to finish the things we must complete before doing other things we may enjoy more.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Faces Temptation (page 4)** Divide up the parts and read them aloud to proclaim the Gospel.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Jesus wants to be fully human so he can show us that, with God's help, temptation can be overcome, and we, too, can resist evil. People need nourishment for their souls, minds, and spirits, as well as bodily food. 2. Jesus is fully human as well as fully divine. He will live as a human to show us how to come to God.*
- ☐ **Catholic Faith Word • Temptation (page 4)** Read aloud this definition to emphasize the Sunday Gospel message. Like Jesus, we all face temptation.
- ☐ **Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • How Do We Resist Temptation? (page 4)** Read aloud this section together, which reminds us that Lent is a special time that can strengthen us to resist temptation.
- ☐ **Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** *Answers: 1. Open-ended. Encourage your child to continue taking steps, even if there are mistakes or failures along the way. 2. He refers to Scripture. We, too, can find strength in reading the Bible.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 45 and read section 6 together. Briefly review the Seven Petitions of the Lord's Prayer. If your child doesn't remember the term *petition*, explain that it is the things for which we ask God in prayer. Focus on the first petition, which your child will study in depth in the Living the Gospel activity (*Venture* lesson, pages 6–7).

If you have time, you may wish to study the Biblical background of The Lord's Prayer. Begin by looking up Chapter 5 in Matthew's Gospel. Explain that chapters 5–7 constitute the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew gathered sayings people remembered from Jesus' teaching and put them all in these three chapters. Find the Lord's Prayer in chapter 6, verses 9–13. Note that this prayer is right in the middle of all the teachings. This means Matthew considered it key to understanding Jesus' teaching. He follows the Lord's Prayer with other teachings on prayer.

Then ask your child to find the Lord's Prayer in Luke's Gospel, 11:2–4. Both Luke and Matthew address God as Father and pray that God's kingdom will come. They both ask for daily bread and forgiveness, asking to be forgiven in the measure they forgive. They both ask to be delivered from evil. The prayer is the same in the Gospels and in our common tradition, just shorter or longer.

Note that Mark's Gospel does not include the Lord's Prayer. He wrote earlier than Luke and Matthew and maybe did not know the tradition of this prayer. John's Gospel does not have the prayer either.

Conclude that the Lord's Prayer is a very old prayer. It has come to us from people who actually knew Jesus and passed on the story of his giving them the prayer. Christians all over the world pray the Lord's Prayer.

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

- **Our Catholic Faith • Lent Helps Us Remember and Look Ahead (page 5)** Invite your child to read this feature and, if needed, help look up this Sunday's First Reading. Give your child plenty of time to work on the chart. If your child has trouble deciding on a commitment, help brainstorm ideas based on the activity. Encourage your child to include this commitment, along with the Lord's Prayer, in daily prayers during Lent.

Live the Gospel

- **Living the Gospel • We Study the Lord's Prayer During Lent (pages 6–7)** This activity begins a five-week series on the Lord's Prayer. Read together the introductory copy at the top of page 6 and the first words of the Lord's Prayer. Take turns reading aloud the text in the circles, beginning with the "Our" circle. Talk about the two questions on page 7, top right.
- **Closing Prayer** Finish by praying the Lord's Prayer. Remind your child to pray this week's cover petition every day.



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