

## Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Peter, James, and John glimpse Jesus transfigured in glory—a vision of him as God's beloved Son that helps them believe in Jesus. As we get closer to the remembrance of Jesus' Passion and Death during Holy Week, the Transfiguration reminds us of the glorious Resurrection that will come.

## Share Experiences

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

☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, you have given us many wonderful gifts. Help us use the gift of hearing to listen to Jesus always. Amen."

☐ **Story • Liam Learns to Listen** Tell this story about a boy who only heard what he wanted to hear:

Liam doesn't hear when Mom tells him to grab his backpack for school. Liam doesn't hear when Miss Becky tells the class to clean up after craft time. He doesn't hear Dad tell him to hang up his jacket. Liam doesn't hear Mom tell him to put away his toys.

Liam does hear—sometimes. Liam hears Dad say, "Let's go play catch." He hears Mom say, "Cookies!" He hears Miss Becky say, "Time for recess."

Mom took Liam to the doctor to get his hearing checked. Dr. Riley said: "Liam's hearing is fine. It's his listening that isn't working well." Dr. Riley wrote a prescription and handed it to Mom. Liam knew a prescription meant medicine, but Mom didn't stop at the pharmacy on the way home.

When they got home, Liam asked Mom if he could have cookies for snack. She didn't answer and gave him carrots and celery sticks. After supper, Liam asked Dad if they could play catch, but Dad didn't answer. He asked in a louder voice, but Dad didn't answer. Liam was confused and wondered, "Why can't they hear me?"

At bedtime, when Mom and Dad tucked him into bed, Liam asked in a loud voice, "Can you hear me now?" Mom and Dad laughed. Dad said, "We hear you loud and clear, Liam." Mom whispered in Liam's ear, "Our listeners aren't broken, and yours isn't either." Liam thought about that and then smiled and nodded his head. He said, "From now on, my listener is going to work great!" And it did!

**Ask:** Have you ever had a listening problem like Liam's? Why is it important to listen?

## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

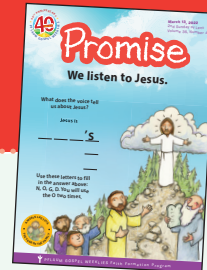
☐ **Sunday Gospel • God Wants Us to Listen to Jesus (page 1)** Invite your child to describe the cover picture. Point out Jesus' friends—Peter, James, and John. Explain that a voice speaks from the cloud. **Ask:** Whose voice do you think it might be? *God the Father's*. **Ask:** Why are there rays of light around Jesus' head? Invite your child to listen for the answer. Tell this Gospel:

Jesus invited Peter, James, and John to go with him to a place where he would pray. They went together to the top of a mountain. While Jesus prayed, Peter, James, and John fell asleep.

While his friends were sleeping, Jesus' face changed, and his clothes became sparkling white. Moses and Elijah appeared

and talked to Jesus about the suffering ahead of him.

Jesus' friends woke up. They noticed that Jesus' face was shining and that his clothes were shining like the sun. They saw him talking with Moses and Elijah. They knew who these great men were, but they also knew Moses and Elijah had been dead for a long time.



Peter said: "It is good that we are here, Jesus. Let's build three tents—one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah." He did not know what he was saying.

A cloud came and made a shadow over everything. Jesus' friends were afraid. A voice spoke from the cloud. It said: "This

is my Son, my chosen One. Listen to him."

Then Moses and Elijah were gone, and Jesus stood by himself. Peter, James, and John didn't tell anyone what they had seen.

**Ask:** When did a voice speak from a cloud in another story about Jesus? *Jesus' baptism.* **Ask:** What did that voice say? "*You are my own dear Son; I am very pleased with you.*" If your child asks about the presence of Moses and Elijah, simply explain they were two great prophets of the Jewish people. Read the directions for the activity on page 1. **Answer:** *God's Son.*

- ☐ **Activity • What does God say? (page 2)** Read the title and words next to the image. Read the directions. Walk your child through the first word: *Son.* **Answer:** *Listen to him.*



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 27. Read aloud the first line next to the third heart. **Ask:** Who is the special helper? Read the three lines about the Holy Spirit. Point out the prayer at the bottom of the page. Remind your child that the Holy Spirit helps us to pray. Read the prayer together and give your child time to decorate the prayer.

Help your child find page 15. Read the section "The Father is God..." **Ask:** When do we say a prayer to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit? *Sign of the Cross, Glory Be to the Father, words of Baptism.*

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

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Holy Spirit (page 2)** Print *Holy Spirit* for your child to read. Share this definition: *When Jesus went back to Heaven, he gave us a special helper. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray and do what is good.*

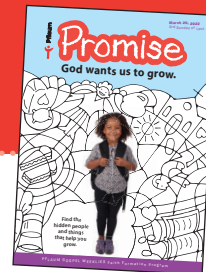
## Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • My Prayer Pocket (pages 3–4)** Open to pages 3–4. Have your child cut off the strip at the top and cut apart the four cards. Explain that the symbols on the cards are something or someone we can pray for. *Our families and friends, peace, food, sick people.* Turn the cards over and read the prayers on the back. Then follow the directions for the prayer circle on page 3. Place the prayer cards in the pocket.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Take turns drawing cards from the pocket to read, and share people or concerns for which you and your child wish to pray. End with the Sign of the Cross.



## Parent Resources

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### Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus tells a parable about growth. A landowner wants to cut down a barren fig tree, but the gardener wants to fertilize and cultivate it one more year. God is the perpetual giver of second chances. God wants us all to grow.

### Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, thank you for our beautiful world. Thank you for flowers and trees and bushes and vegetables that grow in it. We want to grow in love for you too. Amen."
- ☐ **Cover Activity • What Helps Me Grow? (page 1)** Ask: What are some of the ways you have grown since last year? Give your child time to find and color the hidden pictures on the cover of *Promise*. Clockwise from upper left: *bed (sleep); woman; apple; sun; church; man; book; heart; music notes; water, milk, or juice; carrot; sandwich.*
- ☐ **Story • Who Gets a Second Chance? (page 2)** Explain that today's story is about three boys who get so excited about a party that they cause trouble for their teacher. It is a story with both pictures and words. Read the rebus story aloud, pointing to each picture and helping your child, if needed, to say the words. Use the two questions to help your child discuss the story.

**Ask:** When have you been given a second chance? It's important for children to recognize that being corrected for their behavior is a helpful thing, so they can change and grow to make a better choice next time.

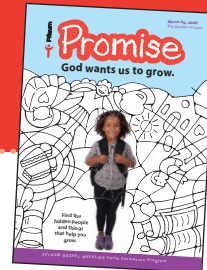
### Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • God Wants Us to Grow** Sunday's parable is difficult for both children and adults because it is about an agricultural situation unfamiliar to many of us. Prepare your child by discussing the following situations:
  - You have a shirt that has holes in the elbows, two buttons missing, and a big stain on the front. **Ask:** What should you do with that shirt?
  - Your family planted tulip bulbs last fall, but nothing is coming up yet. **Ask:** Should you dig up the ground and start over next fall with different bulbs? After these warm-up reflections, tell your child this Sunday's Gospel parable:

One day, Jesus told this parable about second chances:  
A man had a fig tree growing in his garden. Every day, he looked to see if it had ripe figs for him to eat, but he found none. The owner looked at the tree and said: "For three years, I have looked for figs on this tree, and it never has any. Cut it down!"

But the gardener said: "Please, let's leave it for one more year. I'll dig around it and put fertilizer on it. Maybe it will grow figs next year. If it doesn't, we will cut it down then."

**Ask:** What kind of person is the owner of the property? What kind of person is the gardener? Who is like God in the parable—the owner or the gardener? *God is like the gardener.* **Ask:** What will the gardener do to help the tree? What do children need to grow strong? Who helps us grow? God wants everything to grow. God also gives us second chances.



□ **Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 22. Read aloud the title and first paragraph. Talk about the times when Jesus obeyed his Father:**

- He came to earth as a human child.
- He showed us the love of the Father.
- He returned to his Father in Heaven.
- He taught about the Kingdom of God.
- He died on the Cross so we can go to Heaven.

Help your child understand that we can choose to obey God every day. We can choose to do what is right and good. Read aloud the second paragraph. Explain that a sin is freely choosing to do what we know is wrong. It is going against what God wants and is disobeying God. We can't judge whether an action is sinful by looking at how big a mess we've made or how angry someone is with us. What makes an action a sin is choosing to do what we know is wrong.

Read the last two lines of the second paragraph again. Assure your child that when we tell God we're sorry for our sin, he will always forgive us.

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

□ **Word of the Week • respect (page 2)** Help your child find the Word of the Week. Share this definition: *Respect means showing that a person or thing has been created by God. It means caring for and treating that person or thing well.* Explain that we show respect for God's rules when we obey him. We show respect for God when we care for other people, ourselves, and the earth.

## Live the Gospel

- **Activity • Everything is growing! (page 3)** Read the direction for the matching activity. Identify the seeds in the center (from top): tulip bulbs, acorns, pumpkin seeds, avocado pit, sunflower seeds, apple seeds.
- **Activity • I am growing! (page 4)** Complete the activity with your child.
- **Closing Prayer** "Dear God, thank you for all the things that help us grow. Help us to always grow closer to you. Amen."



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## Sunday Gospel Background

Jesus tells his followers a story of a runaway son who comes home. Rather than scold him, his father welcomes him with open arms. That welcome tells the son that he is forgiven and can again be part of the family. The older son cannot understand his father's forgiving attitude. Jesus leaves his story unfinished at that point. Will the older brother understand and forgive, or will he run away from what family means?

## Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, help us to be loving and forgiving like Jesus teaches us to be. Amen."
- ☐ **Story • Bailey and Her New Ball** Share this story:

Bailey had a new ball. It had a great bounce. Mom told Bailey to bounce it outside, not inside the house. One day, Bailey took the ball, threw it into the air, and caught it. She took it with her into the living room. She threw it a little higher and caught it. She threw the ball really high, but she wasn't fast enough to catch it. It crashed on Mom's vase. The vase hit the floor and broke. Mom came running.

"Bailey, what have you done? Why did you play with your ball in the house when I told you it was an outside ball?" Mom

scolded. Bailey started to cry. Mom told her to get a kitchen chair, put it in the corner, sit there, and think about what it means to obey.

Bailey sat, crying and crying. She was sorry she had disobeyed and broken Mom's vase. Ten minutes later, Mom came and gave her a hug. Bailey said: "I am very sorry. I will never play with the ball in the house again." Mom said, "I forgive you." Bailey thanked her, wiped her eyes, blew her nose, and took her new ball outside to play.

**Discuss** Bailey's need for forgiveness and how happy she felt when her mother forgave her. Share your own experiences of forgiveness.

## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Story of the Forgiving Father (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the cover picture while listening to this Gospel:

A man had two sons. The younger son said, "Father, give me my share of your property."

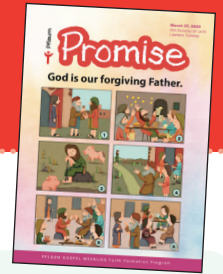
The son took the money and went far away. He spent all the money. When his money ran out, he had nothing to eat. He found a job taking care of pigs. He thought: "I would be happy to eat the pigs' food. My father's workers have plenty to eat. I will go home and beg him to forgive me."

The son began his trip home. When he was still a long way from home, his father saw him, ran to him, and hugged and kissed him. The son said: "Father, I have hurt you by my unloving actions. You shouldn't call me your son anymore."

But the father said: "I am so happy that you have returned! Servants, bring the best clothes and put them on him. Put a ring on his finger. Prepare food, so we can eat and celebrate."

Pause to ask questions about the pictures: **Ask:** Which person is the father? Which person is the son who went away? Explain that Jesus told this story to teach people how forgiving God our Father is. When we do unloving actions, God is waiting to forgive us and welcome us back. Continue the Gospel story:





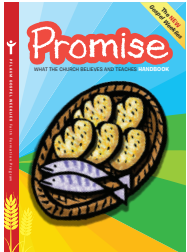
The older son was working on the farm. He came home and saw the party. He got mad. His father begged him to join the party. The older son said: "I have worked for you and obeyed you. But you have never let me have a party with my friends. Your other son wasted your money. Now that he is home, you

have a big party."

The father said: "My son, you are always with me. Everything I have is yours. But your brother has come home! We must celebrate his return to us."

**Ask:** How does the father feel when the older son won't come to the party? Jesus doesn't tell us what the older son did. **Ask:** Do you think he joined the party? Why or why not? What would God want him to do? What could the younger son say to the older son to make things better between them?

- ☐ **Activity • Gospel Story Cards (pages 3-4)** Have your child cut out the story cards and fold them on the dotted lines so that the pictures show. Have your child use the cards to retell the story to you.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 30 and find the Prayer of Sorrow. Read the entire prayer aloud. Break the prayer into two parts and invite your child to repeat the words after you: Jesus, I am sorry / for the wrong things I do. Repeat this a few times until your child is comfortable with the prayer. Encourage your child to use this prayer by saying it frequently yourself, so that your child grows comfortable saying it whenever in need of Jesus' forgiveness.

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

## Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • Forgiveness Scenarios (page 2)** Have your child look at the story at the top of page 2 and talk about what is happening. **Ask:** How does the boy feel? How does he act? How else could he have acted? What will happen next? Look at the second story strip. **Ask:** How do the two sisters feel? Why does the mom get involved? What will happen next?

Read the sentence and the directions at the bottom of the page. **Answers:** 1-Fish, 2-Orange, 3-Ribbon, 4-Glasses, 5-Ice, 6-Vase, 7-Earring; FORGIVE. Read the sentence together. **Ask:** How did the children ask for forgiveness? How were they forgiven?

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Reconciliation (page 4)** Print *Reconciliation* for your child to read. Share this definition: *Reconciliation* celebrates God's forgiveness of our unloving choices.

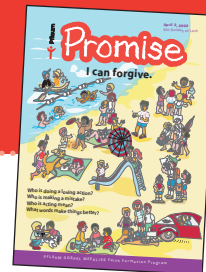
*Reconciliation* means "come together again." That's what we do when we forgive and ask forgiveness. We come together again with the other person. We celebrate a sacrament called Reconciliation (also Penance, Confession). It helps us come together again with God and the Church.

- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Pray together the Prayer of Sorrow: "Jesus, I am sorry for the wrong things I do. Amen."



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## Sunday Gospel Background

Teachers of the Law bring a woman they have caught in the act of adultery. They hope Jesus will defend her and, in doing so, speak against the Law. Jesus avoids their trap by suggesting that the one among them without sin throws the first stone. At this, all the accusers depart. Jesus refuses to condemn the woman and tells her to sin no more.

## Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** “Dear God, you love us even when we sin and choose to do unloving things. Help us to forgive people who hurt us. Amen.”
- ☐ **Cover Activity • I can change. (page 1)** Look at the cover picture together. Read the questions one at a time, and invite your child to respond. **Ask:** How can the people who make mistakes or do mean things change to make things better?
- ☐ **Story • Who Took the Wrench?** You may need to show or explain what a wrench is before telling this story.

One Saturday morning, Dad went to the garage to work on the car. When he went to get his tools, his wrench was missing.

“Those kids,” Dad thought. “They’re always playing with my tools and never putting them back.”

Tony came into the garage. “Where’s my wrench?” asked Dad.

“I don’t know,” Tony answered. “I didn’t take it.”

“Are you sure?” asked Dad. “Last week when my screwdriver was missing, you used it to fix your bike and didn’t put it back. Maybe you borrowed my wrench too.”

“No, Dad,” Tony answered again, “I didn’t use the wrench at all.”

Dad was frustrated. “Well, the wrench didn’t just walk away by itself,” he said. “Are you sure you didn’t take it?”

Tony helped Dad look, but they didn’t find the wrench. Tony knew that Dad thought he had taken the wrench and lost it. Just then, their neighbor Mr. Brown appeared with a wrench in his hand. “Here’s the wrench you lent me last week,” Mr. Brown said to Dad.

**Ask:** How did Tony feel about being blamed for something he didn’t do? How did he feel when Mr. Brown brought the wrench back? How did Dad feel? What do you think happened next?

## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus doesn’t blame. (page 4)** Invite your child to follow the story by looking at the pictures as you read.

One day, Jesus was teaching in the Temple. Some people brought a woman to him. They had caught the woman with a man who wasn’t her husband. One man said: “Teacher, this woman broke the law. According to the law, she must be punished. Don’t you agree?”

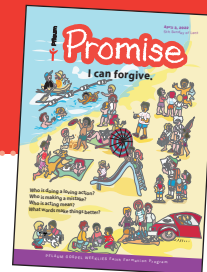
The people kept asking, but Jesus didn’t answer. He bent over and drew on the ground with his finger. Finally, he stood up

and said, “Let the people who have never sinned be the ones to punish her.”

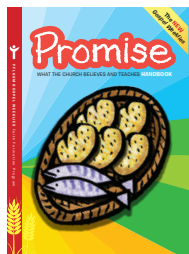
One by one, the people walked away until only Jesus and the woman were there. Jesus said, “Isn’t anyone left to punish you?”

“No, sir,” said the woman.

“I will not punish you either,” said Jesus. “Go now, but don’t sin anymore.”



Invite your child to look at the pictures on page 4. **Ask:** Why did the people want to punish the woman? Why didn't they punish her? Did Jesus punish her? What does this story tell us about Jesus? How do you think Jesus feels when you do an unloving action?



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 22 and find the first heart. Say these words from the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." **Ask:** What prayer is that from? What does it mean? Read the two lines next to the heart. What Jesus says here is like what we pray in the Lord's Prayer: If we want God to forgive us, we need to forgive. Read the next four lines. Teach your child a prayer for when it's hard to be good: "Jesus, help me to do what is right." Repeat the prayer several times.

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

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Mass (page 2)** Print the word Mass for your child to read. Share this definition: *We gather at Mass to remember and thank Jesus.* At Mass, we thank Jesus for forgiving us. We also share a Sign of Peace with others to show that we want to be in good relationship with everyone

## Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • The Glue Mess (pages 3-4)** Have your child cut apart the four Gospel story picture squares and place them faceup in order. Tell your child to follow your directions to find the story on the other side a little bit at a time. Turn over the first square, read the words, and tell what is happening. Continue with the second square. **Ask:** How are the children behaving? Turn over the third square and read the teacher's words. **Ask:** How do the children feel now? How does the boy with the glue mess feel? Turn over the last square. **Ask:** What are the children saying and doing? How does everyone feel? **Ask:** How are the children like the people in the Gospel? How is the teacher like Jesus? How did the child feel when his teacher stood up for him? Jesus doesn't blame, and we shouldn't either.
- ☐ **Activity • What gets the blame? (page 2)** Have your child match the problem on the left side of page 2 with the cause on the right. For each match, **ask:** Does blaming help? What would work better?
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Invite your child to pray the prayer you've learned to ask for Jesus' help: "Jesus, help me to do what is right. Amen."



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## Sunday Gospel Background

Jesus shows his love through his Passion and Death. Sunday Mass begins with a gathering outside for the blessing of palm branches and the Gospel about Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We later participate in the Gospel of Christ's Passion and Death.

## Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Jesus, we welcome you into our hearts. Be with us as we learn about the last week of your life. Amen."
- ☐ **Story • The New Student** Invite your child to listen to this story about a girl's first day at a new school:

Emily was sad. Her friend, Kristen, had moved away. Kristen's desk was next to Emily's. They had been friends since the first day of school. Emily said to Mom: "I don't like to go to school now. Kristen's desk is empty, and I miss her." Mom said, "Maybe a new friend can take her place."

"MOM!" Emily said. "No one can take Kristen's place."

The next Monday, Mrs. Cullen said: "A new student will join our class tomorrow. Her name is Maria. She will sit at the desk next to Emily. What can we do to welcome her?"

The children had many ideas. "Make a welcome banner," Charley said. "Show her where the restroom is," Tanya said. "Ask her to eat lunch with us," Juan said. "Those are all good ideas," Mrs. Cullen said. Then Emily asked, "Can I be her buddy

for her first day?"

"That's a good idea, Emily," Mrs. Cullen said.

On Tuesday, Maria's mother brought her to her new classroom. Maria was very shy. The children said, "Welcome, Maria," and sang a song for her. Maria saw the welcome banner and smiled. The girls asked her to jump rope at recess. Juan showed her where to sit for lunch. And Emily stayed with Maria all day.

At the end of the day, Maria said to Emily: "Thank you for making me feel welcome today. I was scared to come to a new school. I hope we can be friends."

"Me too!" said Emily.

**Ask:** What did the children do to welcome Maria? When has someone welcomed you? When have you welcomed someone?

## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

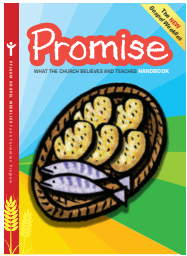
- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • People welcome Jesus to Jerusalem. (page 2)** Open *Promise* and fold it back so only the art and photo in column 1 on page 2 are visible. **Ask:** What do you see? Tell this Gospel story about how people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem:

Jesus and his friends were walking to Jerusalem. He told two of them: "Go into the next village and you will find a donkey. Bring it to me so that I can ride it into Jerusalem." They brought the donkey to Jesus, put their cloaks over its back, and helped Jesus get on it.

As Jesus rode along, people spread their cloaks on the road in front of him. As he got closer to Jerusalem, more of his friends arrived. They praised God for all the wonderful things they had seen Jesus do. They said: "Hosanna! Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in Heaven and glory in the highest."



- ☐ **Story • The Story of Holy Week (page 1)** Turn back to page 1. Use this rebus to share the chronology of Jesus' last days.
- ☐ **Activity • Holy Week celebrates the journey from death to new life. (pages 2–3)** Return to pages 2–3. Read aloud the title. Point to the days of the week and note that four of the days have special names. Begin with Palm Sunday, which you have already looked at together. Invite your child to identify the signs of new life in the second column and color the pictures. Look at the third column and **ask**: What is happening in the drawing? What is happening in the photo? Don't be concerned if your child has an incomplete idea of what is represented. Be sure to take a nature walk together this week and invite your child to draw a picture of a sign of spring you see.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 32 and 33. Help your child find: *Holy Communion*, *Lord's Day*, *Mass*, and *sacrament* one at a time. Go over the meaning of each word. Print the words: *I go to Mass* for your child to read. Have your child copy these words across the top of a sheet of paper. Invite your child to draw himself or herself at Sunday Mass.

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

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Holy Communion (page 4)** Print *Holy Communion* for your child to read. Share this definition: *Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.*

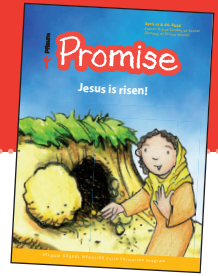
## Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • Jesus died to give us life. (page 4)** Read the title. Explain that Jesus loves us so much that he died on the Cross and rose to new life so that we can go to Heaven. Read the directions. Invite your child to choose one crayon and use only that crayon to color all the spaces that have a plus sign. **Ask**: What did you find?
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** "Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us so much. Thank you for suffering and dying so that we can go to Heaven. Help us to show you our love by making loving choices. Amen."



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### Sunday Gospel Background

Easter celebrates Jesus' Resurrection from the dead. This is the core of Christian faith—God raised Jesus, who was crucified, from the dead. Jesus' Resurrection was a powerful event in the life of the first Christians, so they recorded their experiences of it.

**Editor's Note:** This lesson includes the Gospels for Easter Sunday and the Second Sunday of Easter. Follow the lesson plan at your own pace over these two weeks.

### Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, thank you for Easter, new life we see in nature, and new life in us as we learn and grow. Amen. Alleluia!"
- ☐ **Activity • Easter Is a Time of Joy** Share with your child that Easter is a time of joy, a time we celebrate being followers of Jesus, a time when new life comes out of the earth just as Jesus came out of the tomb.
- ☐ **Word of the Week • God (page 2)** Print *God* for your child to read. Share this definition: *God made the whole world. Everything that God made is good. God made you and me.*
- ☐ **Story • The Little Tree** Share this story with your child.

Sarah's birthday was in September. Grandma gave her a present—a crab apple tree. Grandma helped Sarah dig a hole in the yard for the tree. Together, they patted the dirt around the tree and watered it.

In October, Sarah called Grandma. "The leaves on my tree have changed color," Sarah said. "They are dark red now and very pretty."

In November, Sarah called Grandma again. "All the leaves on my tree are gone," she said. "A big wind blew them away. I think my tree has died!"

"Don't worry," Grandma said. "Your tree is just sleeping."

"When will it wake up?" Sarah asked.

"Wait and see," Grandma said.

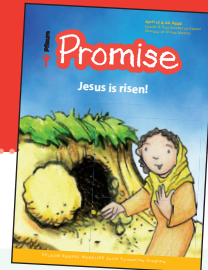
In December, snow covered Sarah's tree. In January and February, it snowed more. When March came, the snow began to melt. Sarah noticed that the branches were a lighter color. She called Grandma. "Do you think my tree is waking up?" she asked. "Wait and see," Grandma said.

Soon, it was almost Easter Sunday. Grandma always came to stay with them at Easter. Sarah met Grandma by her car and said, "I have a surprise for you." She led Grandma to the little tree, all covered with pink blossoms. "My tree isn't dead anymore," Sarah said. "It's alive and has beautiful flowers on it."

"Your tree was always alive," Grandma said. "It was just sleeping."

### Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus is risen! (page 1)** Note: Mary Magdalene's finding the empty tomb is the Easter Gospel. The *Promise* version of the Gospel includes the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene (John 20:10-18). Jesus' appearance on Easter night is the Gospel for the Second Sunday of Easter. They are combined here. **Invite** your child to look at the picture of Mary Magdalene on the cover. Tell the Gospel:



After Jesus died on the Cross, his friend Joseph and some women friends of Jesus buried him. They put Jesus' body in a tomb in a garden. The tomb was cut into rock, like a little cave. A large rock was rolled in front of its entrance.

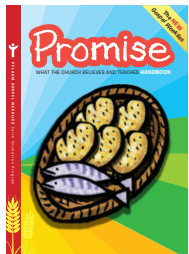
Early on Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene went to Jesus' tomb. She saw that the big rock that closed the tomb had been moved. She stood outside the tomb, crying. She saw a man she thought was the gardener. "Where have you put

Jesus?" Mary asked. The man said, "Mary!"

Then Mary knew the man was Jesus! He told her to go tell his friends that he was risen from the dead. So, Mary did.

That night, Jesus' friends were together in a locked room. Suddenly, Jesus was with them! He said, "Peace be with you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

**Discuss** the Gospel, emphasizing how the friends of Jesus were witnesses to his being raised from the dead. **Ask:** How did they feel after he died? How did they feel when they saw his empty tomb?



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 18. You've done this page before, but it is a good review. **Ask:** What Church season did we just finish? What Church season are we just beginning? Review Lent and Easter. **Ask:** What special things did we do during Lent? Point out that Easter is so important that we keep celebrating it for seven weeks! **Ask:** What special things can we do during Easter time? Encourage your family to keep saying, "Happy Easter!" all through the Easter season.

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

## Live the Gospel

- **Activity • Jesus is with us at Mass. (page 2)** The pictures show four ways that Jesus is with us at Mass. Have your child fill in the missing letters and color the pictures.
- **Activity • Peace be with you. (pages 3-4)** Look at the pictures on page 4. Discuss how Jesus looks in his risen life. Point out Jesus' friends. **Ask:** How do they look? Why are they so happy? *Jesus rose from the dead! When Jesus appeared to his friends, he said, "Peace be with you."* Invite your child to draw a self-portrait in the box. Turn the page over and have your child cut on the heavy solid lines. Invite your child to trace the words.

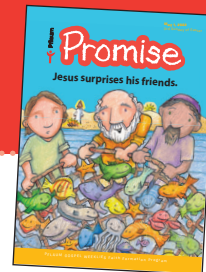
Have your child turn back to the picture side and fold each of the pictures over the picture of Jesus. The name of the character(s) will show. Mary Magdalene, the first witness of Jesus' Resurrection, should be on top. Read Mary's name and fold back the square to show her picture. Do the same with the other squares from left to right to retell the Easter story and show the people who believe Jesus rose from the dead.

- **Closing Prayer** Sit together with the picture of Jesus on page 4. Have your child fold each picture in toward Jesus, saying, "Peace be with you," and then saying the name written. End by sharing a sign of peace with each other.



## Parent Resources

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## Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, the Risen Jesus helps his friends make a great catch of fish and then invites them to come and eat with him. This Easter appearance story is also a eucharistic story. Jesus' friends recognize him in sharing the meal together.

## Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, thank you for the Good News of Easter, new life in nature, and the new life in us as we learn and grow. Amen. Alleluia!"
- ☐ **Story • Who has come to visit? (page 2)** Turn to page 2 and read aloud the title. Invite your child to color the ice cream sundae as you tell the story. Explain that your child will need to wait for clues of what to color.

Carlos came in from playing and found Dad in the kitchen making sundaes. "Who are the sundaes for?" Carlos asked. "One is for you, and one is for me, and one is for a special visitor," Dad said. "Who's the visitor?" Carlos asked. "You will know by the way I make this last sundae," Dad said.

Carlos watched. Dad put two scoops of strawberry ice cream in the dish. *(Color the ice cream.)* "Our visitor isn't Grandma," Carlos said. "She doesn't like strawberry ice cream."

Dad picked up the bottle of colored sprinkles and shook them over the ice cream. *(Draw sprinkles on the ice cream.)*

"I like sprinkles, but who else does?" Carlos asked. "Keep watching," said Dad. Dad picked up peanuts and poured lots of them on top of the ice cream and sprinkles. *(Draw peanuts.)*

"I know who's here!" Carlos said. "Aunt Maria. She likes strawberry ice cream and sprinkles, and she loves peanuts." Carlos added whipped cream on top of the sundaes. "

She surprised us," Dad said, "and she can stay all week." Dad and Carlos picked up the sundaes and went out to the patio where Aunt Maria was waiting to give Carlos a big hug.

**Ask:** How did Carlos know who had come to visit? Talk about family members' likes and dislikes and what foods you could prepare that might give you a clue to a family member who is coming to visit.

## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus surprises his friends. (page 1)** Have your child look at the Promise cover as you share the Gospel.

After Jesus was raised from the dead, some of his friends went fishing. They fished all night but didn't catch any fish. When morning came, they saw a man standing by the lake. They didn't know who he was.

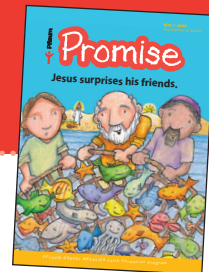
The man called out, "Have you caught anything to eat?"

"No, we haven't," they answered. The man said, "Throw your nets out on the other side of the boat." They did, and they caught so many fish that they couldn't lift the net into the boat!

Jesus' friends rowed the boat to shore. They were dragging the heavy net full of fish. When they got there, they saw that Jesus was cooking fish over a fire and had some bread. Jesus asked them for some of the fish they had caught.

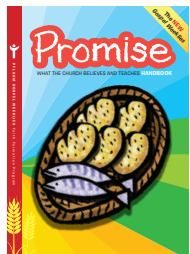
Jesus said, "Come and eat." No one asked, "Who are you?" because they knew it was Jesus. He took the bread and gave it to them. He gave them fish to eat too. This was the third time Jesus visited his friends after God raised him from the dead.





**Ask:** How did his friends know it was Jesus? *He invited them to share a meal.* **Ask:** When did Jesus take bread and give it to his friends during Holy Week? *At the Last Supper on Holy Thursday.* Emphasize that Jesus is *really* with us when we celebrate his holy meal—Holy Communion (Eucharist).

- ☐ **Word of the Week • parish (page2)** Help your child find the Word of the Week. Share this definition: A *parish* is our church family that gathers for Mass and prayer. People in our parish are all Jesus' friends who come to share his holy meal at Mass.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 29. Next to the second star is The Lord's Prayer (Our Father). Read through the prayer and leave out a word from each line for your child to add. You might start by leaving off the last word of every line, then go through it again and leave out a different word in each line. This will help your child learn some of the words and also the rhythm and flow of the prayer. Remember to practice saying it together as a family often.

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

## Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • Make a Celebration Cup (pages 3-4)** **Ask:** How did Jesus' friends feel when they saw him by the lake? How did Carlos feel when he knew whose sundae his dad was making? What other celebrations make people happy? Explain that everyone likes to celebrate. That's why Jesus celebrated his Resurrection with his friends.

Lay pages 3-4 of *Promise* on your workspace with the blue net side faceup. Have your child cut off the picture directions across the top. Follow the directions on page 3 to create a celebration cup. After completing the next activity, fill the cup with a snack such as popcorn or fish crackers.

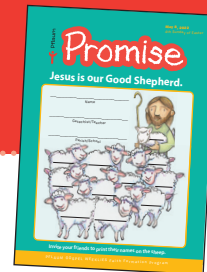
- ☐ **Activity • Make a Celebration Headband (pages 1 and 4)** Return to page 1 of *Promise*. Have your child cut off the heading on the cover that has the word *Promise* and set that aside. Turn over the picture directions for making the celebration cup and cut apart the two blue strips. Have your child lay out the three strips of paper. The *Promise* strip will be bigger than the other two. Note the space for your child's name. Have your child place the two smaller strips on either side of the *Promise* strip. Tape the three strips together as shown on the top of page 4. Then tape the headband to fit your child's head. Invite your child to wear the headband for the rest of the day.

- ☐ **Closing Prayer** "Dear Jesus, thank you for our family, our friends, and the food and special times we share. Amen. Alleluia!"



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## Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus compares himself to good shepherds who care for and protect their sheep. Jesus assures his friends that no one will snatch his sheep—his followers—from him. Jesus promises us eternal life with him and the Father.

## Share Experiences

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

- ☐ **Pray together** "Loving God, thank you for the Good News of Easter. Thank you for the new life we see in nature. Thank you for the new life in us as we learn and grow. Amen. Alleluia!"
- ☐ **Story • Quacker** This animal story can help your child think about experiences of caring for a pet or other animals.

Jason lived in a house by a lake. One summer, Jason met a special friend at the lake. Jason was sitting on the dock when a mother duck swam by. Behind her swam nine little ducklings. Jason ran to get cracked corn to feed them. He saw that one of the ducklings was smaller than the others. It was always last in line to eat. It was the last duckling to get in the water to swim behind the mother duck.

Jason named the duckling Quacker. He always threw extra corn her way. All summer, the ducks came to Jason's dock to get corn. He watched them grow bigger. Even Quacker got bigger and stronger.

One day, Jason noticed flocks of ducks flying overhead. Fall was coming, and ducks were going someplace warmer. "Will Quacker leave when she can fly?" Jason asked Mom. "I think so," Mom said. One day, Jason watched the ducklings try to fly. He knew that soon they would get it right, and off they would go.

Jason visited Grandma at the end of August. When he came home, he ran to the dock. He looked for Quacker and the other ducklings but didn't see any of them. "I guess they're gone," Jason thought. Then Jason heard, "Quack! Quack! Quack!" It was Quacker! Jason spread some corn on the ground. Quacker swam to shore and walked over to the corn. Then Jason heard flapping wings. It was the other ducklings. They all could fly now.

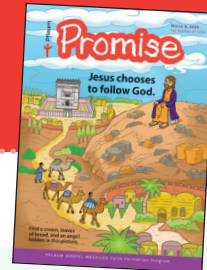
For the rest of the summer, Jason fed Quacker. Sometimes she came alone, and sometimes the other ducklings were with her. Every day, Jason saw more ducks flying south. Quacker was practicing flying around the lake. Jason knew that Quacker would leave soon.

"When Quacker goes south, do you think she'll remember how to get back here?" Jason asked Mom. "I'm sure she will," Mom answered.

- ☐ **Cover Activity • A Shepherd Takes Care of Sheep (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the shepherd on the cover of *Promise*. Ask: How do shepherds take care of their sheep? How did Jason take care of Quacker? Talk about who and what your child takes care of: pets, siblings, toys, etc.

## Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus is our Good Shepherd. (page 1)** Invite your child look at the cover as you share this Gospel:



One day, Jesus was in the Temple. People gathered around him and said, "Please tell us if you are the Messiah."

Jesus said: "I told you before, but you did not believe me. The good works I do in God my Father's name show you who I am. But you do not believe because you are not my sheep."

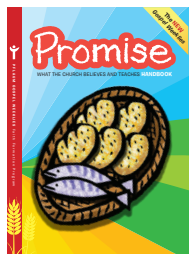
The people asked, "What do you mean?"

Jesus answered: "My sheep hear my voice. I know them,

and they follow me. I will give them life in Heaven where they will live forever. No one can take my sheep away from me."

Jesus loves us even more than shepherds love their sheep. Jesus watches over us, protects us from harm, and wants us to be happy.

- ☐ **Activity • Safe or Scatter? (pages 2-3)** Have your child open *Promise* to the game in the center. The object is to get your sheep marker from the bottom of the page to the sheep pen at the top. Have your child cut out the sheep game markers. Play the game with your child. You can roll a die or flip a penny to move ahead. Move the number the die indicates. With a penny, heads is two moves, tails is one. When a player's sheep marker lands on an up arrow, the marker moves up. When a player lands on a down arrow, the marker moves down. **Ask:** What did you learn about taking care of sheep from playing the game? From what dangers does a shepherd protect the sheep?



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 30. Review the Sign of the Cross. Then help your child find the Glory Be to the Father at the top of page 30. Your child can follow along with a finger as you read the prayer aloud. Go through the prayer line by line, inviting your child to repeat each line after you. Help your child practice this prayer frequently. You might have your child review or learn all of the prayers on pages 29 and 30 over the summer. Your child can color in the star next to each prayer after memorizing it.

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

- ☐ **Word of the Week • creed (page 4)** Help your child find the Word of the Week. Share this definition: *A creed is a prayer that tells what members of the Church believe.* Point out that our belief in the Trinity is a very important part of our Creed.

## Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • God gives us all we need. (page 4)** Read the title. Invite your child to look at the first word on the left side and the illustration that pictures the word. Invite your child to guess the next word and the picture that matches it. Complete the rest.
- ☐ **Activity • We Are Jesus' Sheep (page 1)** Help your child complete the certificate to remember your *Promise* work this year. Invite family members to sign or print their names on the other sheep.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** "LORD, you are our shepherd. You lead us along the right paths. Your kindness and love will always be with us each day of our lives, and we will live forever in your house, LORD" (based on Psalm 23). Your child can respond, "Amen. Alleluia!"



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