

Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus teaches his disciples that his highest value is service. Jesus puts his arms around a child to demonstrate that welcoming others, even the smallest among us, is welcoming him. *Promise* provides stories and activities that invite your family to connect with Jesus' story and apply the Sunday Gospel message to your life.

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** "Loving God, thank you for bringing our family together to learn about Jesus and how to be his followers. We will try to be kind and loving to one another because we are all your children. Amen."
- Activity • Who are Jesus' followers? (page 3)** Begin by skipping to page 3 and reading aloud the title. Invite your child to think of anyone (family, friends, etc.) who is like any of the children pictured and write their initials under that photo.
- Cover Activity • We learn to follow Jesus. (page 1)** Now turn back to the cover page and look at the picture together. **Ask:** What do you see? *Jesus is at the lower right. A mother brings her children to meet Jesus. Saint Francis of Assisi (feast day: October 4) is the man with the birds. Above him is Saint Juan Diego, the man who saw Our Lady of Guadalupe. The others are people who might be in your parish, school, and community.* Call your child's attention to the children at the top left. Note that they are at the beginning of the path. Read aloud the directions. Invite your child to follow the path and tell what each person might teach us about Jesus. If your child needs some help with this, you might suggest any of the following: *the woman with brownies might teach how Jesus especially loves poor people and fed them when they were hungry. The man with the child might teach that Jesus loves children. The priest can teach about Mass and how Jesus gave us this sacrament to remember him and praise God in his name. The teacher might teach about reading the Gospels. The child pushing the child in a wheelchair is showing that followers of Jesus take care of others. Saint Juan Diego taught about Jesus' mother, Mary. Saint Francis taught us that all Creation shows God's goodness.*

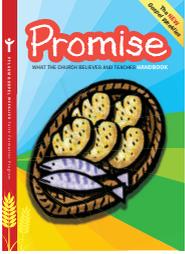
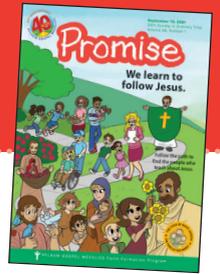
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Welcomes Little Children** After you've looked at the cover picture together, read or tell this Gospel to your child:

Jesus and his disciples went to Capernaum. On the way there, some of Jesus' followers were arguing. After they were inside the house, Jesus asked, "What were you arguing about along the way?" They did not answer him. They had been arguing about which one of them was the greatest.

Jesus sat down, invited his disciples to gather around him,

and said, "If you want the place of honor, you must serve others!" Then Jesus had a child stand near him. He put his arm around the child and said: "When you welcome a child because of me, you welcome me. And when you welcome me, you welcome my Father who sent me."



- **Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 4. Ask:** What is a promise? What other words or feelings does the word *promise* make you think of? Point out that the name of this book and of your weekly lessons is *Promise*. Invite your child to find a promise from God on this page and have your child underline it: “I will send Jesus, my Son, to help you.” Then help your child find and underline a promise from Jesus: “I call you my friends.” Emphasize that God always keeps his promises to us. Jesus is always true to his word.

Now turn to page 5. Read the questions aloud, pausing as your child marks the hearts to answer. As your child considers a promise to make to God, you might repeat the promises of God and Jesus on page 4.

Turn to page 6. Read aloud the title, then take turns reading the paragraphs. Read aloud the directions and solve the puzzle together. **Answer: Bible.** Explain that the stories we hear about Jesus—the Gospels—come from the Bible. We learn about God’s promises in the Bible too.

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

- **Word of the Week • Bible (page 3)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 3. Share this definition: *The Bible is the holy book that tells us about God’s love for us.*

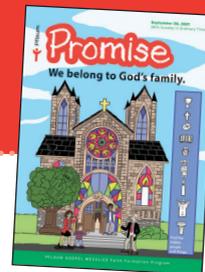
Live the Gospel

- **Activity • We learn about Jesus together. (page 2)** Look at the classroom picture on page 2 together. **Ask:** What is happening in the picture? *The children are learning about Jesus.* Read aloud the words on the board. Since you are your child’s teacher, invite your child to make the face shape look like you. Have your child cut out the picture of *Promise* on the bottom of page 4 and glue or tape it into place on page 2.
- **Activity • We learn about Jesus at Mass. (page 4)** Have your child turn to page 4 and describe this picture. Read aloud the directions for drawing, cutting, and pasting. Note that the ambo is the wooden stand near the priest.
- **Closing Prayer** Sit with your child for a moment and share some things you are thankful to God for today. Then invite your child to do the same. Finish by praying: “For all good gifts, we thank you, God.” Your child can respond, “Amen.”



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

In the beginning verses of this Sunday's Gospel, from which *Promise* derives its lesson, Jesus tells his friends to welcome all those who, like them, want to know and follow Jesus. Sunday Mass is when Catholics most fully experience our identity as Church. This lesson can help your child understand that Jesus is with us at Mass in the people who gather in his name, in the stories from the Bible, in Holy Communion, and in the person of the priest.

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** “Dear God, thank you for our parish, a place for our family to praise you and learn about Jesus. Please bless the people of our parish. Amen.”
- Cover Activity • We Gather to Praise God (page 1)** Ask: What do you think it means to “praise” God? *To show respect or admiration for. To honor with words or song. To highly value and respect.* Ask: Who is gathering at the church? Can you find any other people hidden in the picture? Refer to the column of clues on the right. Give your child time to find the objects and people pictured and circle them.
- Story • It's Not Easy Being a Kid.** Read the following story to your child:

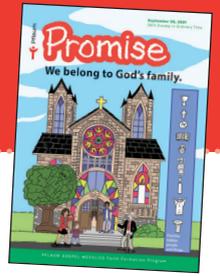
“Being a kid is hard,” Dean muttered. He wanted to tell his mother about hitting a home run, but his mother said, “Dean, I’m glad about your home run, but I’m busy.” The next morning, Dean’s dad buckled him into the back seat and drove down the road past the Grover farm. His dad said, “Look, Dean, the Grovers have a horse now.” Dean stretched to see the horse, but the seatbelt held him down. All Dean could see was sky.

That night, Dean stood near his parents along the sidelines at the football game. When Dean heard a cheer and turned to watch, he could only see the bottom of his parents’ jackets. His dad picked him up just in time to see the backs of the players far down the field.

On Sunday morning, Dean went to Mass with his parents. Dean couldn’t see above the pew when he sat down, and he couldn’t see through the people in front of him when they stood up. That morning, the priest read the Gospel about Jesus’ followers trying to keep children from bothering him. Jesus told them, “Let the little children come to me.”

Then Father Bill said, “I want all the children to come up front.” His dad poked Dean and told him to go to the front of the church. Father Bill said to the children: “Jesus loves you. And we love you.” Father Bill led the children around the altar table. Dean looked around and could see everywhere and everybody in church. “Today is a great day to be a kid,” thought Dean.

Ask: How did Dean feel when his mom didn’t have time to hear about his home run? When he couldn’t see the horse? At the football game? At church? Why did Father Bill invite the children up to the altar? Has that ever happened to you? How did you feel?



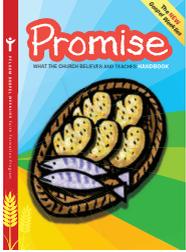
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- ☐ **Sunday Gospel • Jesus Brings People Together (page 1).** Share the Gospel with your child:

One day, Jesus' friend John told him: "Teacher, we saw a man using your name to force bad spirits out of people. But he wasn't one of your group of followers, so we told him to stop." Jesus said to his disciples: "Don't stop him. No one who

works a miracle in my name can say anything bad about me. Anyone who isn't against us is for us. And anyone who gives you a cup of water because you are my follower will be rewarded in Heaven.

Ask: Why did Jesus' friends want the other man to stop? What did Jesus say? What is good about lots of people telling the Good News about Jesus? Invite your child to look at the cover of *Promise* again and see who is coming to Church. **Ask:** Can you remember anyone we saw at Mass on Sunday? Note that the people who belong to our parish are followers of Jesus too.



- ☐ **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 16. Talk about any family gatherings or celebrations you've been able to have. **Ask:** What did you like best? How is our church family gathering for Mass like a family gathering? *We pray and sing together. We share family stories from the Bible. We eat a holy meal.*

Read page 16 together. Invite your child to trace and color the word *Mass*. Tell your child that at Mass, we pray to God to help us and others. Invite your child to think of some people to pray for. Write down these names to add to the lesson's closing prayer. Remind your child of the Sign of the Cross, a prayer that is both words and actions. **Ask:** Can you think of other prayerful actions? Explain that many actions are part of our celebration of the Mass. Invite your child to practice each prayerful action as you discuss it: Genuflect / Bow / Offer a Sign of Peace / Kneel / Stand / Make the Sign of the Cross on forehead, lips, and heart before the Gospel / Fold hands in prayer / Fold arms over chest.

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

- ☐ **Word of the Week • Sunday (page 4)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 4. Share this definition: *On Sunday, we come together at Mass to remember and thank Jesus.*

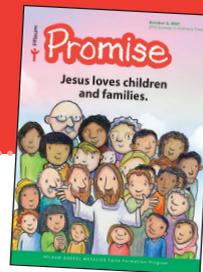
Live the Gospel

- ☐ **Activity • We go to Mass. We go home in peace. (pages 2-3)** Play the game with your child. You'll need a die, plus game markers for each of you. Feel free to discuss any behaviors or parts of the Mass you want to explain or emphasize for your child.
- ☐ **Activity • Church Search (page 4)** If you can't get to your church, check your parish website to see if there are pictures of the interior. Or, ask your parish faith formation leader to take a video of the interior to share on your parish website.
- ☐ **Closing Prayer** Loving God, we praise you because you are so good and loving! Please bless . . . (read the names your child shared earlier.) Amen.



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus welcomes children and their families and invites them to be his followers. He asks his adult followers to be more like children, who are good at responding with their whole hearts to the goodness in others.

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** "Jesus, we know you love children and families. Thank you for giving us our family to love. Thank you for making us part of your family at church. Amen."
- Story • The Birthday Party** Tell this story about a little girl who had her sixth birthday last summer.

Martina was having a birthday. She would be six years old on Sunday. The Gonzalez family tradition is that the birthday boy or girl gets to choose the place for the family birthday dinner. Since Martina's birthday was on Sunday, the party could be at breakfast or lunch. "Where would you like to have your birthday celebration, Martina?" her father asked. "Whom do you want to come along?" her mother asked. Martina said, "I want everybody—you and you and Alejandro and the baby and Abuelo (Grandpa)." "That's fine," said Dad. "We will all go to Mass together and go to eat after Mass. You decide where we should go." Martina thought about where she wanted to have her birthday celebration.

On Saturday, Martina told her mom, "I think we should go to McDonald's." Mom said, "Dad, Alejandro, and I like

McDonald's, but Abuelo..." Mom hesitated. Martina said, "Abuelo thinks it is too crowded and noisy, doesn't he?"

Martina got another idea. "We could go to the Pancake House," she said. "The Pancake House is nice," said Mom, "but the lines are very long on Sunday. Baby will probably fuss while we wait." Martina sighed and said, "We can't go there either."

Bella the dog came running into the room and jumped into Martina's lap. Martina kissed Bella on her head and petted her. "Mom," Martina said, "I want to have my birthday party someplace where Bella can go." "Let me see," Mom said. "We want a place that Abuelo will like, where the baby won't fuss, and where Bella can come. I have an idea." Mom whispered in Martina's ear.

Invite your child to guess what her ideas was. Then turn to page 2 for an answer.

- Activity • Create a Picture (page 2)** Identify the characters from the story. Have your child cut out the pictures at the top and glue or tape them to the park scene. Ask why each of them would be happy to have a picnic in the park.

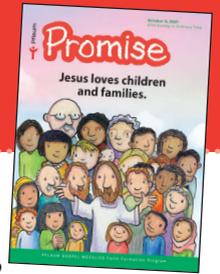
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus loves children and families. (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the cover picture as you read Sunday's Gospel:

Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he would place his hands on them and bless them. But Jesus' disciples told the people to stop bothering him.

When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said: "Let the children come to me. Don't try to stop them. People who are

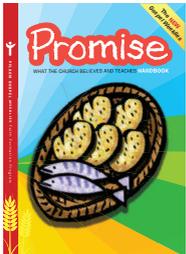
like these little children belong to the Kingdom of God. You cannot get into God's kingdom unless you accept it the way a child does." Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them by placing his hands on them.



Look again at the cover. **Ask:** What do you think Jesus likes about children? Why did he want children with him? What did the children like about Jesus? What does Jesus like about you? Finish by explaining that Jesus loves children today as much as he loves those in the Gospel.

Word of the Week • Church (page 2) Print the word *Church* so your child can see it. Share this definition: *The Church is God's family, the faithful people that God has called together all around the world.*

Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 15. **Ask:** Do you ever say “Cross my heart” when you make a promise? What does that mean? Make the Sign of the Cross together, but stop when you reach for your left shoulder. Explain that we are crossing over our hearts. Encourage your child to think about this when making the Sign of the Cross: We are crossing our hearts to promise to do everything in God’s name. Have your child complete the dot-to-dot activity.



Ask: When do we pray the Sign of the Cross? *At the beginning and end of prayers, when we are frightened, when we need God's help, when we are doing something for God.* Explain that when we enter or leave church, we pray the Sign of the Cross with holy water. It is a reminder of when we became part of God’s family, the Church, through Baptism.

Help your child find page 26. Remind your child of the Gospel. **Ask:** How did this Gospel make you feel? Read the two paragraphs starting with “Jesus wants you...” Invite your child to draw a picture of himself or herself talking to Jesus in prayer.

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

Live the Gospel

Activity • I belong to Jesus' family. (pages 3-4) Help your child fold the page to make a booklet with Jesus on the cover. Read the cover sentences aloud and invite your child to comment on the picture in relation to the Gospel. Your child can write his or her name on the line under “I am.”

Turn to pages 2–3 of the booklet. Read aloud the sentence across the top of the pages. **Ask:** What are some ways you show that you belong to Jesus’ family? Recall the earlier discussion about the Sign of the Cross. Direct your child to complete the dot-to-dot cross on booklet page 2. Read the words aloud and practice the gestures. Complete the activity on booklet page 3.

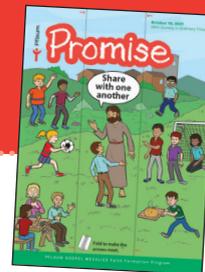
Turn to booklet page 4. Talk about who makes up your family. Explain that a family is the people who know us, help us, and like having us around. That is why we sometimes call the parish our *church family*. Help your child write in the names of your family members.

Closing Prayer • Our family follows Jesus. (booklet, page 4) Read the prayer on page 4. Take turns speaking aloud the names of people in your family and your parish family whom you wish to pray for.



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Sunday Gospel Background

The rich man in Sunday's Gospel wants to be God's friend. But when Jesus suggests he do more than keep the commandments—that he sell his belongings and give the money to the poor—the rich man walks away sad because he has many possessions and doesn't want to part with them.

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** "Dear Jesus, thank you for your many blessings to us. Help us learn that sharing our blessings with others makes us a happy family. Amen."
- Story • The Clown's Candy (page 2)** Read the following story to your child:

The town of Pleasantville always has a big parade on Popcorn Days to celebrate that they are the popcorn capital. This year, Max, Michelle, and Morgan were ready for the parade! They went early with Max's dad and found places in front of the library. They sat down right away even though the parade would not come by for an hour. They had sacks ready for all the candy they hoped to get.

After a long time, they heard music. Max ran out into the street to look and yelled, "They're coming!" Soon, the color guard with the flags marched by. Everyone stood up. Next was the high school band. A tractor pulled a wagon with girls in

long dresses and wearing crowns. Eight beautiful horses with riders dressed in cowboy outfits pranced by.

Then Max, Michelle, and Morgan heard a strange sound—"Ooh-gah, ooh-gah." A clown riding a little bike was squeezing a horn to make the funny sound. "Ooh-gah, ooh-gah." When the clown saw Max, Michelle, and Morgan, he reached into the bike basket and threw a handful of candy into the air! The three children scrambled to pick up the candy. Max got five pieces, Michelle got nine pieces, but Morgan only got one. What do you think happened next?

Listen to your child's response. **Ask:** What would you do with the candy? Have your child to turn to page 2 of *Promise*. Identify the three children at the bottom of the page. Have your child count the pieces of candy. Ask how the three children could share the fifteen pieces of candy. Have crayons in three different colors ready. Ask your child to choose one color crayon to circle how much candy Max should have, another color to circle how much Michelle should have and another to circle how much Morgan should have. **Ask:** Will this make everyone happy?

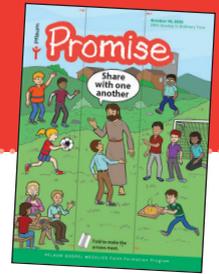
Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Asks Us to Share (page 1)** Have your child turn back to page 1 and look at the picture as you read or tell this Gospel:

As Jesus was walking along, a rich man ran up to him. The man knelt down and asked, "Good teacher, what do I need to do to get to Heaven?" Jesus replied: "You know the commandments. 'Do not murder. Be faithful in marriage. Do not steal. Do not tell lies about others. Do not cheat. Respect your father and mother.'"

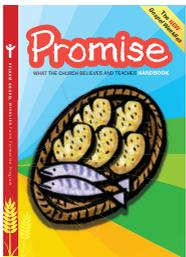
The man answered, "Teacher, I have obeyed all these

commandments since I was a young man." Jesus looked at the man with love and said: "There's one thing you still need to do. Go sell everything you own. Give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in Heaven. Then come and follow me." When the man heard Jesus say this, he went away sad because he was very rich.



Ask: How did Jesus feel when the man walked away? Was he sad? Disappointed? Do you think the man thought it over and came back? What would Jesus say to him if he did that? Why was selling his possessions hard for the man? What don't you want to sell or give to someone else? What are ways you share with others every day?

Invite your child to describe the children in the cover picture. Together, read Jesus' words to the child. Show your child how to fold the page on the right-hand dotted line so the arrows at the top and bottom of the page meet as shown in the small picture at the bottom of the page. Discuss how sharing makes all the children happier. This is what Jesus wanted for the man in the Gospel.



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 21. Invite your child to imagine each teaching of Jesus listed on the page. **Ask:** How could you do each of these? Invite your child to complete the heart activity. Print the words *Jesus Teaches Us* on a poster board or sheet of construction paper. If you have old magazines, invite your child to look through them for pictures that show people helping, sharing, or forgiving. Have your child cut out any photos and glue or tape them to the poster. Display the poster in your home and use it over the next few weeks to remind your child of ways we can follow Jesus' teachings.

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

- Word of the Week • Ten Commandments (page 2)** Help your child locate the Word of the Week on page 2. Share this definition: *The Ten Commandments are laws from God that tell us how to live good lives.* Refer back to the list of ways to be good on page 21 of the handbook. Explain that Jesus followed the Ten Commandments and wants us to also.

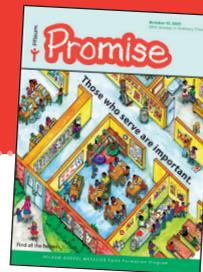
Live the Gospel

- Activity • I can share. (pages 3-4)** Read the words on page 3 with your child. Explain that you will play a memory game using these the rectangles as cards. Turn the page over. Have your child cut out the cards on the heavy lines. Place the cards on a workspace with the pictures facing down. Take turns picking up a card, looking at the picture, and then picking up another card to try to find a match. If the second card is a match, the player may keep both cards; if not, the player must replace both cards and the other player takes a turn. Play continues until all the cards have been matched.
- Closing Prayer** Sit with your child with the set of cards in front of you. Begin the prayer by choosing a card, holding it up so the words show, and saying, "I can share _____" (*name something*). Invite your child to do the same. Finish with a simple prayer thanking God for all those who share with us.



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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, James and John ask Jesus for special places in his kingdom. Jesus defines himself as one who serves, who gives his life to redeem all. This lesson can help your child recognize the good feelings that come from helping others.

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** "Dear Jesus, guide us to carry your light in our hearts. Help us let our good actions shine on others. Amen."
- Cover Activity • Who Are the Helpers? (page 1)** Look at the cover picture together and have your child identify the helpers.
- Story • Touchdown! (page 2)** Ask: Who is the most important player on a football team? Explain that you are going to read a story about an important player. Invite your child to listen for who it is.

On Labor Day, the O'Leary and Rooney families always had a picnic. Jenny Rooney and her cousin Jason O'Leary wanted to play touch football against their little sisters and their aunt. Jenny was a fifth grader; Jason was in fourth. "Jenny and I will play against everybody else," said Jason. Aunt Jan joined the side with the little girls, Angela and Jessie. "We can try some of my special plays and maybe we can win," she told them. Their little sister, Stacy, wanted to play, but Jessie said, "You're too small." The game started. Jenny and Jason ran faster than their sisters and caught passes better. They ran for touchdowns. They figured out all of Aunt Jan's special plays. The score was 24 to 0 when Stacy nudged her way into the

huddle next to Jessie. "You can't play," said Jessie. "Maybe she can," said Aunt Jan, "I have an idea." She whispered the plan, and the team lined up. "Hut one, hut two," Aunt Jan called out. Stacy hiked the ball to Aunt Jan. Angela and Jessie took off running as fast as they could toward the garage, yelling, "Throw it to me!" Jason and Jenny ran after them. Aunt Jan put the ball in Stacy's arms and said, "Run to the back steps." And Stacy ran. By the time Jenny and Jason realized Stacy had the ball, she was way ahead of them. Stacy got to the steps and sat down on the bottom one. "Our first touchdown," Jessie yelled. "Hooray, Stacy!" said Angela.

Invite your child to turn to page 2 and read the picture story aloud to you. Ask: Who was a surprise helper?

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

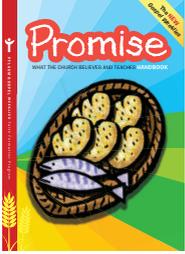
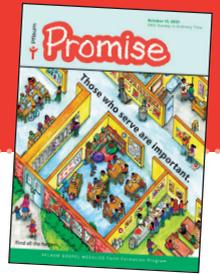
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Wants Us to Be Helpers** Tell your child Sunday's Gospel:

One day, James and John, two of Jesus' disciples, came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, will you do us a favor?" Jesus asked them what they wanted, and they answered, "When you come into your glory, please let one of us sit at your right side and the other at your left."

Jesus told them: "You don't really know what you're asking! Are you able to drink from the cup that I must soon drink from?" (Jesus was talking about how he would die for his friends.) "Yes, we are!" said James and John. Jesus said to them: "You will drink from the cup I must drink. But God

decides who will sit at my right and at my left in Heaven."

When the ten other disciples heard this, they were angry with James and John. But Jesus called them all together and said: "You know that some kings like to order their people around. And some leaders have lots of power over people. Don't act like them. If you want to be great, you must serve others. If you want to be first, you must be a servant to all people. I did not come to be a slave master, but a slave who will give up his life to save many people."



- Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 17. Read the top third of the page. **Ask:** What are some things you like about our parish? Print the name of your parish on a sheet of paper and have your child copy the name into the handbook. **Ask:** Who are some of the helpers in our parish? Explain that our Church needs lots of helpers. A very important helper is the parish priest. Help your child understand that the pastor takes care of the people of the parish. Read the middle third of the page. Print the name of your parish priest(s) and have your child copy the name into the handbook. Then read aloud the section about the Pope. Show your child a picture of our Pope. (You can find one online.) **Ask:** What is our Pope's name? Print his name and have your child copy it into the handbook. Encourage your child to listen for the Pope's name when you are at Mass. Explain that we always pray for him and for the whole Church at Mass.

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

- Word of the Week • pastor (page 4)** Help your child find the Word of the Week. Share this definition: A *pastor* is a priest who leads a parish.

Live the Gospel

- Activity • What makes me important? (pages 3-4)** For this medallion activity, you will need scissors, a paper punch, and some yarn. Begin by reading the question at the top of page 3. Read Jesus' words around the outside of the circle as your child follows along. Then read the sentences inside the circle. Invite your child to turn to page 4 and finish the "I am..." sentence. Have your child cut out the circle. Use a paper punch to make holes on the blue dots. Help your child string yarn through the holes, leaving extra yarn at the ends. Tie the two loose ends of yarn together so that your child can wear the medallion.

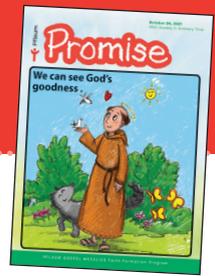
Direct your child to cut off the strip with the word *HELPER* on it. Make a bracelet by taping the strip around your child's wrist. Don't forget to keep the "scrap" from the top of page 4 to scan for extra resources.

- Closing Prayer** Have your child wear the medallion and bracelet. Say: "I am important (*point to self*). I help my family learn about Jesus." Invite your child to do the same: "I am important. I help (*your child can mention a way he or she helps*)."
Pray: "Dear Jesus, thank you for the people who help us. Teach us to be good helpers too. Amen."



Parent Resources

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Sunday Gospel Background

After Jesus gives him his sight, Bartimaeus follows Jesus. Bartimaeus gives an example of a wholehearted believer and follower. We also witness this wholehearted response in the lives of saints we honor on All Saints' Day (November 1).

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** "Dear God, thank you for giving us the gift of sight—so we can see the people we love and the beauty of your Creation. Help us use our eyes to love you and help others. Amen."
- Cover Activity • We can see God's goodness. (page 1)** Look at the scene on the cover of *Promise* together. Play the following game with your child. Say, "I see three butterflies." Pause while your child finds them. Continue by calling out: "I see... one wolf, five flowers, two birds, one heart, one sun, two bushes, one man. **Ask:** How could you have found the things in the picture if you couldn't see? What would you miss seeing the most if you were blind? Explain that the man in the picture is Saint Francis of Assisi. He was a follower of Jesus who lived a long time ago. He loved God's Creation and saw God in every flower and bird, in every part of nature and in every person.
- Story • A Walk with Grandpa (page 2)** Invite your child to point and follow the dotted path on page 2 and notice all the trees, plants, and animals along the path. Then have your child follow the story of Colton's walk with his grandpa as you read it:

Colton looked at the clock in his classroom. Ten minutes to three. Colton knew that his grandpa would get off the bus soon to walk home with him through the nature park as he did every Friday. Outside the school building, Colton's grandma watched his grandpa step down the bus steps. She made sure Grandpa got off at the right bus stop because he was blind and used a white cane with a red tip.

Colton rushed out of school when the bell rang, waved at

Grandma, and took Grandpa's arm. Colton and Grandpa set off on the winding path through the park. Grandpa soon smelled the sheep pen. "How are the sheep looking?" he asked Colton. Colton said: "White with black noses. They are very clean today." "How is the apple tree?" asked Grandpa. "It has lots of apples," said Colton. "Some have fallen to the ground." Grandpa smiled. "I know," he said. "I can smell them."

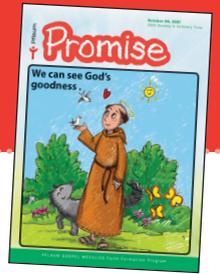
With your child, walk Colton and Grandpa on through the nature park. Have your child pretend to be Colton and describe what Colton sees.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

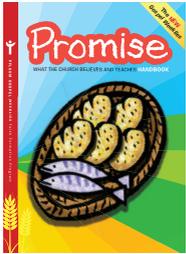
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Helps Bartimaeus See** Share this Gospel with your child:

Jesus and his disciples were leaving the town of Jericho. They were followed by a large crowd. A blind beggar named Bartimaeus was sitting beside the road. When he heard that Jesus was passing by, he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" People told him to be quiet, but he shouted even louder, "Son of David, have pity on me!" Jesus stopped and said, "Call him over!" People called out to the blind man

and said: "Don't be afraid! Get up! Jesus is calling for you." Bartimaeus threw off his coat as he jumped up and ran to Jesus. Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man answered, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him: "You may go. Your eyes are healed because of your faith." Right away, the man could see, and he went down the road, following Jesus.



Ask: Why did Jesus help the blind man? How did the blind man feel when Jesus healed his eyes? What did he do? Impress upon your child that Jesus healed the man because of the man's faith. **Ask:** What is faith? *Believing and trusting in God's promises.* At every Sunday Mass, we say a prayer that tells what we believe about God. That prayer is called the *Creed*.



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 10. If needed, review the story of Noah and the ark. (Don't let your child get stuck on God destroying everything. Emphasize that God took care of Noah and his family because Noah believed and trusted God.)

Read together the top of page 10. Emphasize God's words to Noah (and all people): "I will always take care of you." Children know that we still have floods and other natural disasters. Your family may know someone who has suffered the ravages of a flood or hurricane. Don't let your child think that this was a punishment from God. Gently help your child understand that God didn't say there would never be another flood, rather that no flood would ever again destroy the whole world. God cares about every creature and wants everyone to be saved. Even if people die through a natural disaster, God will take those who are faithful to him to happiness in Heaven.

Have your child complete the activity, then **ask:** How does God care for people? For animals? For the earth? Invite your child to come up with one example for each band of the rainbow.

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

- **Word of the Week • anoint (page 2)** Print the word *anoint* for your child to see. Share this definition: *To anoint means to bless a person with oil to show that he or she is special to God.* Explain that one way the Church celebrates God's care for the sick is through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

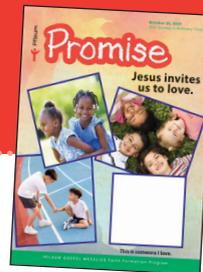
Live the Gospel

- **Activity • Jesus helps a blind man see. (pages 3-4)** Direct your child to cut on the heavy lines and fold on the dotted lines to make a booklet of the Gospel. Then read the Gospel story together, using the version in the booklet.
- **Closing Prayer** "Thank you, Jesus, for our eyes. Help us use them to see ways to help one another and to see all the beautiful things you have made for us. Amen."



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Sunday Gospel Background

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus meets a scribe who asks which of the commandments is the greatest. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:4–5, the great statement of belief, that God alone is to be loved and served above all. Then he adds his own commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** "Dear God, thank you for making the whole world for us to enjoy. Thank you for sending Jesus to teach us about you. We want to be your friends forever. Amen."
- Cover Activity • I Can Love (page 1)** Invite your child to look at the cover photos and identify how each person shows love. Then have your child follow the directions for the box on the lower right.
- Saint Story • Saint Katharine Drexel: An American Saint (page 2)** Explain that today's story is about a real girl who grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

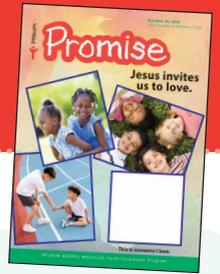
Over 100 years ago, there were two little girls who lived in a big house in Philadelphia with their mother and father. The two girls were Kate and Emily Drexel. Their family was very rich, and the two girls had everything they wanted. But Mr. and Mrs. Drexel didn't spend all their money on their own family. Instead, they helped all the poor people they could. They always helped people who needed food and clothes. They helped people find good jobs. They gave to organizations that helped the poor in other cities. Kate and her sister learned to help when they saw someone in need. Kate's mother died when she was little. Her father married again, then he died too. Kate was only nineteen years old and now she was very rich. Some of the Drexel family friends were priests and bishops. They told Kate that many children in the western and southern parts of the United States did not

have schools. Kate could give money to build schools for these children. She did, but the schools needed teachers. Kate went on a trip to Rome. While she was there, she saw the Pope. "Holy Father," Kate said, "will you send sisters to teach in the schools I have built for poor children?" The Pope asked Kate, "Why don't you teach them yourself?" Kate thought about what the Pope had said. She decided to start her own group of sisters. Their work would be to teach poor children. She called them the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She changed her name from Kate to Sister Katharine. Together, Kate and her sisters built and taught in sixty-five schools in the South, Midwest, and western parts of the United States. Today, the sisters also teach in inner cities. Sister Katharine was named a saint by Pope Saint John Paul II in 2000. Now she is called Saint Katharine Drexel.

Review the story by looking at the pictures together on page 2. Discuss the question at the bottom of the page. Explain that we celebrate Saint Katharine and all the saints on November 1 every year. This day is called All Saints' Day. **Ask:** What saint did we learn about last week? *Saint Francis of Assisi*. Explain that we will learn more about saints in the next lesson.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus' Rule Is Love** Explain that people in Jesus' time kept many rules about religion—613 of them! **Ask:** What rule do you think Jesus would say is the most important? Then tell this Gospel:



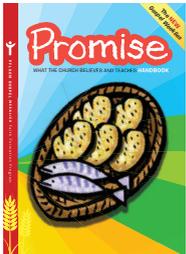
One day, a man asked Jesus, “What is the most important commandment?” Jesus answered: “The most important one is this: ‘There is only one God. You must love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.’ The second most important commandment is this: ‘Love others as much as you love yourself. No other commandment is more important than these.’” The man said: “Teacher, you are right to say there is only one God and that we must love God with all our heart,

mind, and strength, and that we must love others as much as we love ourselves. These commandments are more important than all the sacrifices and offerings that we could possibly make.”

When Jesus saw that the man understood, he told him, “You are not far from God’s kingdom.” No one asked Jesus any more questions.

Ask: How many rules does Jesus want us to keep? What are they? Help your child see that rules about obeying our parents, not fighting, and paying attention in school are ways to show love for God and for each other. **Ask:** How do you love yourself? Summarize by saying that Jesus gave us only two rules so we could remember them and live by them.

- **Word of the Week • New Testament (page 4)** Print the words *New Testament* for your child to see. Share this definition: *The New Testament is the second part of the Bible. It tells us about Jesus’ life and teachings.* Remind your child that the Gospels you share every week come from the New Testament.



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 22. **Ask:** What did Jesus say is the most important rule? *Love. Love God and love others.* **Ask:** How did Saint Katharine show her love for God and other people? Invite your child to read aloud the sentence next to the second heart. Read aloud the directions in red and have your child draw the picture. When finished, invite your child to share about the drawing. Look for ways to connect the actions to the Gospel passage. Help your child identify acts of love that can be done every day.

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

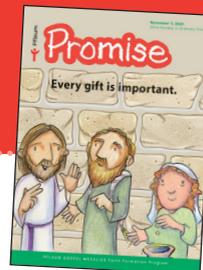
Live the Gospel

- **Activity • Our Father Booklet (pages 3-4)** Have your child cut on the heavy dark line across page 3. The dotted lines are for folding. Show your child how to fold the top piece so the words *Our Father* are on the outside. Then fold the bottom piece so the page with food is on the inside. Slip the pages together and check to make sure the prayer and page numbers follow in sequence. Go through the booklet together, discussing the words and pictures. Have your child complete the dot-to-dot activity on page 7.
- **Closing Prayer** Use gestures to pray the Lord’s Prayer as follows:
Our Father... (*arms outstretched and slightly raised*) Thy kingdom... (*arms make circle in front*) On earth... (*stretch out arms wide*) Give us this day... (*stretch out hands to receive*) And forgive us... (*shake hands with you child*) And lead us not... (*cross hands on chest*) But deliver us... (*fold hands in prayer*) Amen. (*lift arms high*)



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Sunday Gospel Background

Both the Gospel and the Old Testament readings this Sunday call us to share not only from our excess but from what we need to sustain us. In Sunday's Gospel, a poor widow gives all she has to the Temple treasury. Jesus calls attention to her because, unlike the wealthy people who contribute out of their abundance, she gives what little she has.

Share Experiences

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

- Pray together** Begin with the Sign of the Cross. Invite your child to respond "Amen" to each statement: God is love. / God gives us love. / Love means that we share. / Love means that we care. / God is love.
- Activity • The Giving Game (page 2)** Read aloud the game directions. If the coin lands on tails, players each choose *one* thing from your game board that you can give away. If the coin lands on heads, both players put game markers over *two* pictures of things you could give away.
- Story • What Can I Give?** Tell this story about three children who wanted to give away some of their possessions.

When Father Martin told the children in *Promise* class that they could bring some of their toys for the Thanksgiving collection at church, Marcy, Michael, and Malay were excited. Marcy went home and looked at all the toys in her room. She couldn't decide if she should give the Candy Land game, her castle, or Raggedy Ann. "I know," said Marcy. "I will give my doll who has her own high chair. That will be a really special gift."

Michael went to his room and got out all the pieces of his

farm set. He had sheep and cows and pigs, a tractor and a barn, and lots of other pieces. "I know," said Michael. "I have a lot of farm animals. I will give one of every animal. One sheep, one pig, one cow, and one pony."

Malay went home to talk to Little Bear Blue, her only stuffed animal friend. "I love you, Bear Blue," Malay said, "but some little girl has never had a friend like you. You can go to the Thanksgiving collection. You can make someone else happy."

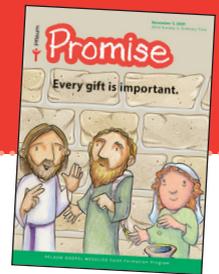
Ask: Which child probably found it easiest to give something away? Which child probably found it hardest? Take your time with this discussion. Its purpose is to help children understand it is usually harder to give away or share the only thing we have than it is to give away or share one among many things. Conclude the discussion by asking your child which of his or her toys is easiest or hardest to share with others.

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

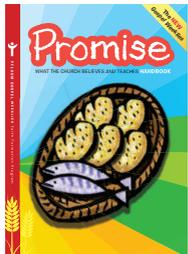
- Sunday Gospel • Every gift is important. (page 1)** Look at the cover picture with your child. **Ask:** Who do you see? Where do you think they are? Explain that they are in the Temple, the holiest place for Jewish people like Jesus. **Ask:** What do you think Jesus is saying to his friend about the woman? Explain that we will find out in the Gospel:

Jesus was sitting in the Temple near the offering jars and watching people put in their gifts. He noticed that many rich people were giving a lot of money. A poor widow came up and put in two coins that were worth only a few pennies.

Jesus told his disciples to gather around him. Then he said: "This poor widow has put in more than all the others. Everyone else gave their extra money. But she is very poor and gave everything she had to live on."



Ask: Why did Jesus say the poor widow put in more than the others? *She didn't just give extra money; she gave all the money she had even though it wasn't very much.* Point out that she was loving God with her whole heart, mind, and strength. She trusted that God would take care of her like he promised. Explain that she is probably a saint in Heaven even though we don't know her name. If we want to be saints in Heaven someday, we need to be generous and love God like the poor widow did. **Ask:** What gifts can you give to God? *Love, attention, prayer, kindness to others.* **Ask:** When do we give to God at Mass? *Offertory collection.* **Ask:** What is presented along with our gifts of money? *Bread and wine that will become Jesus' Body and Blood.*



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 24. If you have an image or statue of Mary or another saint, place it in the center of your learning space and share some background about the saint. Explain that a saint is a person who lived like Jesus and is now in Heaven. **Ask:** What saints have we learned about recently? *Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Katharine Drexel, the poor widow.* Remind your child about the celebration of All Saints' Day on November 1.

Take turns reading the top three paragraphs on page 24. Have your child complete the activity. **Answer:** SAINTS.

Help your child find page 19 in the handbook. Read the page and the directions. Give your child time to complete the activity. **Answers:** *Mary, All Saints, Elizabeth, Patrick, Peter and Paul, Therese, Nicholas.*

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

- **Word of the Week • saint (page 2)** Print the word *saint* for your child to see. Share this definition: *A saint is a person who lived like Jesus and is now in Heaven.*

Live the Gospel

- **Activity • I Can Give (pages 3-4)** **Ask:** Do gifts always have to cost money? What kind of gifts can we give that don't cost money? Have your child cut out the gift certificate slips. On the back of each one, invite your child to draw or write a way to give to someone. Help to fold the "I Can Give" envelope by bringing the two parts of the heart together. Staple, glue, or tape the envelope where marked. Invite your child to complete the gift certificates, place them in the envelope, and decide who to give them to.

- **Closing Prayer** Lead your child in this simple adaptation of Psalm 148. After you read each line, your child responds, "Praise God!"

Sun and moon... / Snow and rain... / Mountains and forests... / Flowers and fruits... / Jungle animals and farm animals... / Birds and crawling things... / Girls and boys... / Everyone and everything... / Amen.



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