

Fourth Grade

Big Idea # 1: Who is Jesus Christ?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lessons 1 and 2: Divine Love/Holy Trinity

- Jesus is the perfect image of God, sent to show Divine Love and goodness and to affirm the human potential for good. *Follow Jesus by doing good things.*
- The Holy Spirit is Advocate, Helper, and Guide. *If you need help believing in God, pray: “Holy Spirit, help!” Invite the Holy Spirit to come into your heart with this prayer: “Come, Holy Spirit.”*

Essential Question: What does Jesus Christ teach you about God?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lessons 3 and 4: Holy Family/Paschal Mystery/Jesus Christ

- Jesus, by His life and teaching, taught people how to love God and others. *Find out how Jesus treated people by reading the Gospels. Read one chapter every Sunday before you go to Mass.*
- Jesus exercised a ministry of healing. *Can you participate in this ministry? You can help heal emotional hurts by showing someone you love how much you love them with an extra hug, kiss, or smile. Make a new friend at school with someone who is lonely.*
- The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy illustrate Jesus’ love for the poor and the needy. *Learn the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, listed on page 317 of your textbook. Decide how you can exercise them in your life. There are some good ideas on page 135 of your textbook.*

Essential Question: What do you know about the life of Jesus Christ on Earth?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lesson 5: Creation

- In the beginning, God created people in His own Image and Likeness, and they lived in perfect friendship with Him in the Garden of Eden. *Remember your dignity as one created in the very Image of God; remember that others have this same dignity, too, and treat everyone with love and respect. By praying, you enter into friendship with God, and He is the very best Friend!*
- God entrusts people with the care of all creation. This stewardship extends to the care of animals and the responsible usage of earthly goods to benefit all people. *Remember to praise God when you see something wonderful – like a butterfly; the stars; flowers; strange insects; animals big (horse or elephant) and small (hummingbirds and worms). God allows us to use His creation as humans need it (plants for medicine; animals to help with work), but we are not to abuse His creation for our own selfish ends or maliciously. The beautiful bounty of creation is ours on loan to hand on to the next generation.*

Essential Question: What does Creation teach you about Jesus Christ?

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Big Idea # 2: How do we get to know and love Jesus Christ?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lessons 6 and 7: Sacraments

- The Sacrament of the Eucharist draws people into deeper communion with God and one another.
- Sacraments are sacred signs which celebrate God's love in which the presence of Jesus Christ brings that love into the lives of the faithful and the Church. ***Think about how wonderful a God we have Who wants to share His life and love with us! Thank Him for loving us so much. Be sure to take advantage of the sacraments. Confess often, and if you have received your First Holy Communion, don't let it be your last! Come to Mass and receive the graces which Jesus wants to pour out upon you.***
- Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit helps Christians to think and act as children of God. ***Even Jesus was baptized! He did not need to be baptized, but He wanted to show us a good example. Read all about His baptism in the Bible, Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:7-11; Luke 3:21-22; and John 1:29-34, among others.***
- Baptism gives all people the right and the responsibility to participate in the liturgy. ***Think about your faith as a building. God lays the foundation with the grace He gives you through the sacraments. How will you build upon this foundation? Pray daily; attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation; make frequent use of the sacraments; and model yourself after Jesus: be loving and honest, keep your promises, forgive readily.***

Essential Question: How do the sacraments help me to know and love Jesus Christ?

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Big Idea # 2: How do we get to know and love Jesus Christ?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lesson 8: Prayers

- Prayer is a conversation with God which God initiates. *Conversation is both speaking and listening. Since God places within us the desire to converse with Him, spend a few moments of your prayer time trying to hear what God is saying to you.*
- One goal for prayer is to come to know and accept God's Will for your life. *Pray every night this week that God will show you His Will – and then be on the lookout for His answer!*
- Important times of prayer are in the morning and at night before going to bed. It is particularly appropriate at night for prayers to include a look back over the day, seeing times of blessing and times when you fell short, a prayer called an "examination of conscience". *Think of what you did well that day; think of what you did not do that you should have; think of what you could have done better; think of what you did wrong and ask God's pardon.*
- In addition to asking for thing for yourself (petition) or others (intercession) or thanking God for good things received, Catholics also praise God for His own Goodness. *Pray the Our Father with your family every night this week. This is the perfect prayer which combines praise of the Father with petitions and a reminder that as He forgives, we are called to forgive one another.*
- The Trinitarian nature of God affects Catholic understanding of prayer. *We remind ourselves of our belief in the Trinity whenever we make the "Sign of the Cross". We approach each Person of the Trinity differently in prayer: we approach the Father with utter reverence and awe, praising Him, wondering at His majesty, and trembling lest He judge us as we deserve, but calling upon His mercy. We approach Jesus as our Friend, our Brother, our Savior, as One who understands our human troubles and joys, and as the Divine Mercy of the Father. We approach the Holy Spirit as One Who speaks for us when we have lost the words to express our prayers, as One Who emboldens us, encourages us, and dispenses His gifts of life, talents, graces, virtues, and all good things.*

Essential Question: How does prayer help me to know and love Jesus Christ?

Fourth Grade

Big Idea # 2: How do we get to know and love Jesus Christ?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lesson 9: Mass & Responses

- The most important form of prayer is participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy. *Sunday Mass is a time when Catholics pray as a community. Jesus promised: “When two or more are gathered in My Name, there I am in the midst of them.” Treat Jesus with the respect He deserves. Come into church quietly; kneel or bow before you sit down in your pew; and spend some time kneeling in prayer to say “hello” to the Master of the house (Jesus in the church). Sunday should be a day of special joy for us, because Jesus rose from the dead and saved all of our souls. Alleluia!*
- Sunday is the most important day of the week in which Catholics remember and celebrate Jesus’ Resurrection. All Catholics are bound to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. *Ask your parents to take you to Mass this Sunday and on all Holy Days of Obligation. These days are:*
- January 1, the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God;
Thursday of the Sixth Week of Easter, the solemnity of the Ascension;
August 15, the solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary;
November 1, the solemnity of All Saints;
December 8, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception;
December 25, the solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- The liturgy celebrates the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. *The Paschal Mystery is the saving life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is not a mystery to be solved like a puzzle, but it is a beautiful Truth for us to ponder – how we have been blessed with so loving a God that He would empty Himself, suffer, and die for us. Is there someone you love enough to die for?*
- In parishes, people gather to pray and worship and have their faith nurtured. *Pray with the prayers during Mass. Pray and sing as much as you can with your parents and the others at Mass. Read the Sunday readings ahead of time or after Mass with your parents. Talk about what those readings mean to you and your family. God is speaking to you – are you listening?*

**Essential Question: How does participating in Mass
help me to know and love Jesus Christ?**

Fourth Grade

Big Idea # 3: How does Jesus Christ teach us to live a moral life?



Ideas to Extend Lesson 12, 13, and 14: Beatitudes/Commandment to Love/God's Rules/Ten Commandments

- Jesus revealed to people God's plan for true happiness. *What is that plan? Look up the Beatitudes in your Bible, Matthew 5:3-10 or on page 122 of your textbook.*
- Loving others and treating them as Jesus taught results in a life of true happiness and freedom. *Think of "being Jesus" to someone you don't especially like, and then act as Jesus would.*
- Catholics love one another based on Jesus' Commandment to "love one another as I have loved you." *Reflect on how Jesus loved us: He left Heaven for us; He suffered and died for us; He rose again from the dead, sends His peace and His Holy Spirit upon us; and promised to always be with us. He is always with us, even when we are ignorant of His Presence, even when we deliberately sin against Him. That is a tough act to follow, but we are called to follow Him.*
- The Ten Commandments have immediate application in daily life. *Remember that these are "commandments", not suggestions! Look at page 77 in your textbook; this list gives you good ideas how to apply the 10 Commandments to your everyday life. Can you think of other ways?*
- There are some moral principles which are true *for all people at all times*. *Can you think of these moral principles? Write them down and post them in your bedroom so you can keep your eyes on the prize: Heaven.*
- All moral laws are at the service of love. *Jesus taught the Two Great Commandments, which are really one: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. If you love someone, you will not lie, steal, cheat, hurt, or wish harm upon them. Loving people fulfills all of the Ten Commandments. Challenge: Can you do that?*

Essential Question: How does Jesus in teach me about good choices?

Fourth Grade

Big Idea # 3: How does Jesus Christ teach us to live a moral life?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lessons 15, 16, and 17: Prudence/Conscience Formation/Good Choices /Virtues

- Within the Word of God, which is the fundamental guide in making moral decisions, the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes hold a special and privileged place. *Make sure you know the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17 or pg 77 in your textbook) and the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10 or pg 122 of your textbook). How can they guide you if you don't know them?*
- In life, we must make choices and we have a responsibility to make good moral choices. *God trusts us with free will and He hopes that we will use that gift wisely. Think about the consequences before you choose to do something you think might be wrong.*
- Good moral choices are marked by love of self and others.
- Grace is a gift which God has already given us to make right choices. *The grace you received at Baptism and the graces you receive in Holy Communion help you to know right from wrong. Thank God for this gift of Grace! Learning the Ten Commandments will also help you choose right from wrong.*
- Through God's gift of grace, people are filled with love.
- A *well-formed conscience* helps people to make the right moral choices. *Form your conscience by reading the Bible, listening to the readings and homily at Mass, frequently confess your sins to a priest, keep coming to CCE, and ask your parents, a priest, or a catechist if you need helping in making a moral judgment.*
- Leading others to do evil is itself wrong. *Don't be fooled into thinking that "no one will know". God sees all that we do; He even sees into our hearts. Ask Him for help in choosing to do the right thing and resisting doing the wrong thing. He will help! Pray: "Holy Spirit, help!" or "Come, Holy Spirit", and He comes to help you.*

Essential Question: Why and how does Jesus Christ want me to make good choices?

Fourth Grade

Big Idea # 3: How does Jesus Christ teach us to live a moral life?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lesson 19: Care for Others/Dignity of Life

- God gives all people an equal human dignity. *Treat yourself and everybody else as a special creation. There is no one quite like you in the whole world! See all people through God's eyes. He made each one of us and loves us each the same.*
- All people are created in God's Image and have certain human rights. *This means all people – the baby in the womb not yet born, the person in the wheelchair, the patient in the hospital bed, the elderly who forget your name...all human life is sacred. Think about something loving you can do for someone who may not feel that their life is sacred - special to God.*
- Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit helps Catholics to think and act as children of God. *Thank God for this gift of grace which helps us to choose right over wrong.*
- The Holy Spirit calls Catholics to develop moral virtues and to live lives that seek the good for themselves and others. *God gives you the grace, but you have the responsibility to develop yourself in the moral virtues and to seek the good for yourself and others. You were born with physical muscles, but how strong would you be if you just laid around for years and years? It is the same with spiritual and moral muscles – you must exercise them and build them up to be strong in the Lord.*
- The Ten Commandments help us to grow in respect of self and others. *Know when to say “No” if you are uncomfortable with someone's words or actions. Respect the “No” of others if they are uncomfortable with your words or actions. Treat your body well. Remember that the Holy Spirit dwells within you. Treat the bodies of other people with respect, for He dwells there, too.*
- Catholics are called to reflect on God's love, peace, and justice with family, friends, and others.
- Developing an understanding and respect for others who exhibit differences is essential to Catholic life.
- While there is division in the Christian community, Christians who are not Catholic remain a part of the Body of Christ. *We in the Catholic Church are blessed with the Fullness of Truth, and our priests, bishops, and popes have safeguarded this Truth for over 2,000 years. Our Protestant brothers and sisters have some of the Truth, but not the Fullness of Truth. We respect them, as they are still a part of the Body of Christ.*
- Catholics are called to avoid prejudice in all forms, including religious discrimination.

Essential Question: Why and how does Jesus Christ expect me to love and respect myself and others?

Fourth Grade

Big Idea # 4: How are we called to become missionary disciples of Jesus Christ?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lesson 20: My Personal Call

- The Scriptures reminds Catholics that God is always present in our lives to help us grow as loving disciples of Jesus. *Thinking “What would Jesus do?” when making decisions shows that you are one of Jesus’ disciples.*
- Every baptized Christian shares in the mission of Jesus to the world. *Pray every day that Jesus will show you how He wants you to follow Him, how you can serve Him, in the confidence that He will answer your prayer.*
- Every Catholic participates in the mission of the Church, each in a unique way.
- People are called by God to different states of life. These states of life are called “vocations”. *God may want you to become a priest, nun, missionary, or deacon. God may want you to serve Him by marrying and raising a family. God knows the best use of your talents; pray that He will show you His way.*
- Your talents are the special blessings individually received from our loving Creator, Who prizes the diversity and abundant variety of all creation. *Be sure to be good stewards of God’s wonderful creation – and you are one of His wonderful creations!*

Essential Question: Why and how am I called to follow Jesus Christ?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lesson 21: Acting Upon My Call

- Catholics are members of our Church and citizens of our community. We have a responsibility to be involved in both. *Do you know the many ways the Catholic Church helps people in need? Look in the bulletin at our many ministries to see how our parish reaches out to those in need. Our Magdalene House helps people with food, rent, and utility assistance. Additionally, the diocese assists people through Catholic Charities. Can you think of some other ways our Church can help those in need?*
- Families are the basic building blocks of the Catholic community. *Love one another as Jesus loved us – giving our all. Be peaceful and do not fight with your family or friends. Remember Jesus and the peace He gives us when you feel troubled, angry, or want to fight. Since we are all part of the One Body of Christ, let us help one another rather than hurt one another.*
- Healthy and loving family life is not always easy. Society can make family life easier or more difficult. *Remember to reflect before you act: would I want someone to do this to me? Pray especially for those you find difficult to like; pray for them with a loving heart and all good intentions. God can work wonders through such a heart!*
- Though all present at the liturgy are participants, it is necessary for some people to minister in specific ways.

Essential Question: How do I follow Jesus Christ?

Fourth Grade

Big Idea # 4: How are we called to become missionary disciples of Jesus Christ?

✠ Ideas to Extend Lessons 22: The Church's Call

- The Church is the Body of Christ. *Jesus Christ is our Head, as is His Vicar here on Earth, the Pope; we are all members of the Body. Each member has a different talent, gift, or vocation, and each member contributes in the way best suited. This Mystery of our Faith, that we are all (all around the world!) part of One Body, illustrates why when one of us sins, the entire Body is affected; this is one of the reasons why we confess our sins to a priest. The priest stands (a) in the Person of Christ and is authorized by Him to forgive sins; and (b) in the Person of the Catholic Community, which has been affected by our sins. So through the Sacrament of Confession, reparation is made both to Christ, our Head, and to His Body.*
- The Church carries out the mission entrusted to her by Jesus Christ. *There are Catholic hospitals and clinics which give away a lot of free medical care to those who cannot afford it. The Pope has set up free showers for the homeless, so they have a way to clean themselves, and he even offers special tours of the Vatican just for them! Find out for yourself how many ways the Catholic Church extends Christ's love to the world.*
- All the people in the Kingdom of God are brought by the Spirit into union with Jesus Christ, and through Him, into communion with the Father. *Look around at Mass this Sunday and see the beautiful diversity in our Church: there are young people and old; families with young children; young adults and middle-aged parents; people in full health and those who are suffering; and people from every country of the world. We are called from the Four Corners of the Earth and are all traveling to the same destination: Heaven!*
- Evangelization requires a welcoming attitude. *St. (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta told her nuns of the Missionaries of Charity: "Smile when you see Jesus!" She saw Jesus in "distressing disguise" of the poor and the dying, those thrown away by society. We are called to see Jesus in everyone we meet and in the Blessed Sacrament (Holy Communion). So remember: Smile when you see Jesus!*
- Prayer and good works together help to bring God's peace to the world. *Many of the saints recognized by the Catholic Church have worked for peace and justice, and some of them paid for this witness by dying as martyrs. Look up St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Josemaria Escriva, Blessed Oscar Romero, or Dorothy Day, to name just a few Catholics who have given their lives trying to bring justice and peace their communities. Humbly acknowledge God as the Giver of all good gifts, and then use those gifts in the service of your King.*

Essential Question: How do show that I follow Jesus Christ?