

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C2, Catechumenate • The Sacrament of Baptism

BAPTISM An Invitation to Love



John the Baptizer Chosen by God

John the Baptizer was an unusual young man. He wore clothes made from camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist. He ate grasshoppers and honey and lived in the wilderness

far from the villages and towns. The people from miles around came to hear John speak. He told the people to turn to God and begin living a new life. Then he baptized them in the cool, clean waters of the River Jordan.

But God chose John for an even more important job. John's job was to tell all the people that Jesus was coming. John told the people, "One who is more powerful than I is coming after me..."

**I have baptized you
with water; but he will
baptize you
with the Holy Spirit."**
Matthew 3:11



Jesus is the one who is more powerful than John, and today Jesus baptizes every new Christian with the Holy Spirit.

Beginning your new life

The first sacrament you receive when you become a Christian is baptism. When you are baptized, you are reborn into the family of Jesus. In your new life, Jesus leads and guides you in his way of love. In your new life, you live for God, just like Jesus did when he was in the world.

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C3, Catechuminate • The Sacrament of Confirmation

CONFIRMATION

Growing Up In The Faith

Name three things you can do this year that you couldn't do last year.

As you begin your new life in the Holy Spirit, you will learn many new things. As you grow in the Spirit, you will become stronger and braver. At confirmation, the Spirit gives you the strength and courage to face your responsibilities as God's child. You will learn to use your gifts, talents, and special abilities to help the Church in the world.

Name one thing you do well now that can help others.

I'm really good at riding my bike!



6 Faith

5 Love

4 Hope

3 Joy

2 Peace



You first receive the Holy Spirit at your baptism, when you're made a member of God's family. At your confirmation, you receive the power to go out and do good things for God, to speak to others about God's love.

Being confirmed is like growing up in the Spirit you received in baptism.

Growing up doesn't happen all at once. There are so many things you can do this year that you could not do last year. Every day, you learn new things, you grow and change.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he made a promise to all his disciples. He promised they would receive power from the Holy Spirit to go out and tell the world about Jesus.

Jesus kept his promise. When the disciples were all together in a room, something wonderful happened. They heard a noise like the wind all through the house. Then tongues of fire came and rested above their heads. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak about Jesus and God's love. They went out immediately and preached the good news everywhere.

Adapted from Acts 1:8

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C4, Catechumenate • The Eucharist

Here is a story about a meal that Jesus shared with his friends. Today we call it "Eucharist."

The Last Supper of Jesus

Jesus gave a supper, all his friends were there; Peter, James, and John were at his side. "I will eat with you today, before I go away," Jesus told them on the night before he died.

As they gathered at the table, he spoke of many things, and he told them of a love that never ends. "As a mother loves her baby, just so does God love you." Then he added, "You are all my special friends."



He broke and shared the bread. "This is my body," Jesus said. "It will be given up so all of you may live." Then he filled a cup and said, "This is the blood I shed. My own life will be the best gift I can give."

This made his friends feel sad, but he told them to be glad for our loving God had planned it all this way. "I will come again, and you will all know then that the Son of God is in the world to stay."

We call it the Last Supper, but that's not exactly true, because it all happens again at every Mass.

And you can be right there, when Jesus comes to share the supper that his people call his last.

Eucharist:
Jesus is for Real
Sharing a special meal



When people share a meal together, it is usually a loving and sharing time. Families gather at the end of a busy day to talk about their day. Visitors come to celebrate special times together. Holidays call for holiday foods — and for happiness at every table.



List three occasions when you share meals and why they are special.

1

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C5, Catechumenate • The Sacrament of Penance

PENANCE A Sign from Our Forgiving God

Nicholas lives right across the street from Colin. They have been best friends all their lives. Colin can't remember a time when he and Nicholas didn't play together. They both liked riding bikes, playing ball in the summer, and building snow forts in the winter.

But now, Colin and Nicholas aren't speaking to one another. It all started when Nicholas accidentally threw Colin's ball into the neighbor's yard. The neighbor's dog caught the ball and chewed it up. Colin said he never wanted to play with Nicholas again. Nicholas said, "So, who cares?"

But Nicholas feels sad all the time now. He watches Colin from his window. Colin looks sad, too. Nicholas' mother said he should tell Colin he's sorry. Nicholas knows it was an accident. Colin would not blame him.

Now everyone is sad, everyone is lonely, everyone is angry — and it looks like it will stay that way until someone does something.

If you were Nicholas, what would you do?

If you were Colin, what would you do?

Friendship — with God and others

It's sad when some little thing causes good friends to stop being together. Friendship is important to everyone. When we are lonely or sad, happy or excited, it is good to have a friend to turn to. That's why Jesus tells us to love one another. He knows that the real secret of happiness is to keep our friendships strong by forgiving and being forgiven when misunderstandings happen.



God is the best friend we have because God will never turn away from us. The secret of God's friendship is forgiveness. Here is a story Jesus told about God's special kind of forgiveness.

GOD IS MY BEST FRIEND!



Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

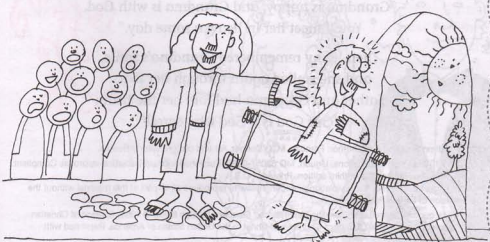
C6, Catechumenate • The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

Anointing of the Sick: God's Healing Touch

Jesus heals with love

Once Jesus was teaching in a house in Capernaum. So many people came to hear him that they filled the house. Four men, carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher, came to the house. They wanted Jesus to heal him, but the door was blocked by the crowd and they couldn't get inside. So they went up to the top of the house, lifted a part of the roof, and lowered the man down to Jesus. He looked at the young man on the stretcher and said, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Some of the people did not believe Jesus could forgive the man's sins. Then Jesus told the man to stand up and go home. The man picked up his stretcher and walked out of the house. All the people were amazed and thanked God for Jesus.

ADAPTED FROM MARK 2:1-12



Four steps to healing

The sacrament of anointing is God's way of healing people with the same loving touch that Jesus used when he healed people.

This is how the sacrament is given:

1

Someone reads a story from the Bible about how Jesus healed the sick and helped those who sinned. As we listen, we remember that Jesus always healed those who asked.

2

The priest places his hands on the head of the one receiving the sacrament. He invites the Holy Spirit to come into the person's heart. We remember that Jesus always touched those he healed as he prayed to God.

3

Then the priest says a prayer of blessing over the holy oil. Remember we are anointed with oil at our baptism and confirmation. Oil prepares the sick person for the Holy Spirit.

4

The priest makes the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of the one being anointed. We remember that Jesus suffered on the cross.

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C7, Catechumenate • The Sacrament of Marriage



Three to Get Married

It only takes two to have a friendship,
and two can play catch or run a race.

Two is enough to start a special club
with a secret meeting place.

It just takes two to play checkers,
and just you and God can make a prayer.

You don't need a crowd to be happy,
just someone with whom you can share.

The sacrament of marriage begins with two,
one bride, one groom, very much in love.
But to stay in love their whole life through,
they need the special help of the Lord above.

They stand before the altar, hand-in-hand,
and they promise to love eternally,
to make God a partner in all their plans,
and bride plus groom plus God become three.

Three to make the new marriage strong,
three to raise a loving family,
three to be together when things go wrong,
and three for all the happy years to be.



Two is not enough for a Christian family,
the sacrament of marriage begins with three.



Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C8, Catechumenate • The Sacrament of Holy Orders

A Promise of Loving Service



"Mommy, God's here!"

©1993 Bill Keane, Inc. The Family Circus. Reprinted with permission.

A sacrament of choice

The sacrament of holy orders is received by those who choose to serve God and God's people as their life's work. When a bishop, priest, or deacon receives this sacrament, we say he has been "ordained," which means "chosen." Through this sacrament, the Holy Spirit prepares them to labor in a special way for God.

The work of the apostles

Jesus called his twelve apostles as his first priests. He gave them the power to cure every disease and sickness. Then he sent them out to the towns and villages, saying, "Go to the people — the poor, the sick, the sinners — and

tell them the good news about the kingdom of God."

Adapted from Matthew 10:1-8

Serve others

At his Last Supper, Jesus tied a towel around himself, poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet. He said to them, "I have set you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."

Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant.



Adapted from John 13:1-16

Celebrate the Last Supper of Jesus

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, broke it, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup and said, "Drink, all of you; for this is my blood...which is poured out for the forgiveness of sins." He also told them to "do this in memory of me."

Adapted from Luke 22:14-20

Forgive sins

After Jesus was raised from the dead, he appeared to his apostles and said to them, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Adapted from John 20:21-23

Watch over God's flock

When Jesus was with the disciples, he told them these things. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep....I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C9, Catechuminate • The People of God

The Travels of God's People

Since the beginning, God has watched over the people. Here are some of their stories. You can read more about each of these people in your Bible.

DID THE ISRAELITES EVER GET BACK HOME?



Abraham and Sarah

GENESIS, CHAPTERS 15-21

Abraham believed in God when everyone else forgot God. One day, God said, "Abraham, take your wife Sarai and go to a place that I will show you." So they left their home, friends, and family to follow God. When they reached the place where God was leading them, God changed their names. Abram was changed to "Abraham," which means "father of many nations." Sarai was changed to "Sarah," which means "princess of the people."

God promised that Abraham's children and his children's children would outnumber the stars in the sky and the sands on the shore.

Sarah and Abraham were happy in Canaan, but they

grew older and older and still didn't have children. How could God's promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations come true? At last, a son was born to them. They named the boy Isaac, which means "God's laugh."

Isaac and Rebekah

GENESIS, CHAPTERS 24-46

Isaac grew up and married Rebekah. They had twin boys named Jacob and Esau. Later, God changed Jacob's name to Israel. Israel then had twelve sons (Abraham's grandsons). These sons of Israel were the beginning of Abraham's "many nations" that God promised.

Isaac's son, Joseph, had many dreams about his brothers bowing down to him. When he told his brothers his dreams, they were angry. They plotted to get rid of Joseph by selling him to merchants.

The merchants sold Joseph as a slave to the Pharaoh in Egypt. But, what a surprise! The Pharaoh liked Joseph and made him the second ruler in Egypt.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TRYING TO BE, KING OVER US?

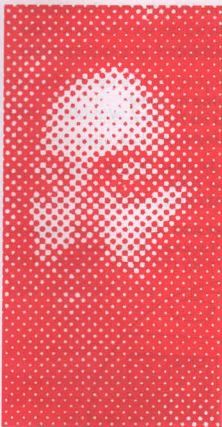


Back home, Joseph's family was starving. The brothers traveled to Egypt to beg the Pharaoh for food. To their surprise, they saw their brother Joseph. He told them to bring his father. The family settled in Egypt, where they lived happily for many years with the blessing of the Pharaoh.

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C10, Catechumenate • Who Is Jesus Christ?

Who is Jesus Christ?



This is the most important question we will answer as we begin our journey toward God. Jesus Christ is the center of our faith. Jesus is what our Church is all about. Without Jesus, there would be no Church.

What do these words mean to you?

"I am the bread of life."

JOHN 6:48

"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live."

JOHN 11:25-26

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

JOHN 14:6

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

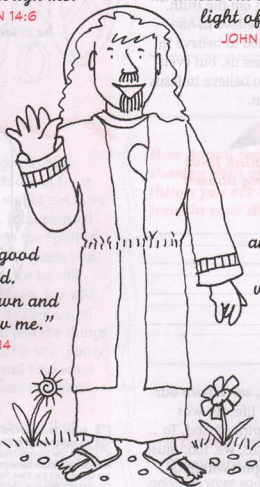
JOHN 8:12

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me."

JOHN 10:14

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower."

JOHN 15:1



Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C11, Catechumenate • The Early Church

Jesus makes a promise

Jesus came to build his Church. He looked for people who could love God, believe in God's only Son, and love one another. He chose twelve apostles to help him, and he taught them many things they needed to know about God and God's love.

DID
JESUS
START
THE
CHURCH?



For years, Jesus stayed with his apostles, walking with them, eating with them, and teaching them. By the time Jesus was ready to leave this world, his apostles had learned many things about God. They believed that Jesus was God's Son.

Jesus made them a promise: "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26-27).

The work Jesus left for the

apostles was to go out and preach and teach about Jesus Christ. But they would not have to do this alone. Jesus assured them that, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (John 16:13-14).

Finally, Jesus shared that special meal with his apostles, the meal we share at every Mass. He promised the apostles that

he would be with them always through the bread and the wine of the Eucharist.



If you were Peter or one of the apostles, how would you feel about the things Jesus was asking you to do?

How do you feel about sharing with others the things you are learning about Jesus in your RCIC classes?

The birthday of the Church

When Jesus was crucified, his apostles were sad and frightened.

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C12, Catechumenate • The History of the Church

Your family story

Every family has a story to tell. These stories are passed down from parent to child to grandchild. What happened in your family before you were born can help you understand yourself. If your great-great-grandfather was a pioneer, it might explain why you like to explore things and experience new places. If your grandmother was a seamstress, you might understand your love of sewing. For good or bad, you are affected by your family history.

Ask your parents to tell you something about your family history.

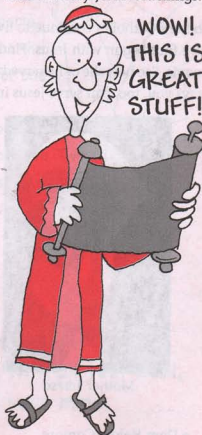


Write one thing that might explain something you do or like today.

The Catholic family also has a history. The story of the Church is about a journey toward faith. This journey took the Church through many stages.

The history of your Church family

You remember we learned about the early Church. The early Christians were persecuted because of their faith. As the Church grew and Christians became accepted, they had more time to study Jesus' teachings.



The fathers, or saints, of the Church helped the people understand their faith. Some of these great saints helped make the Church what it is today. Their saints include: Ambrose, Basil, Gregory, and many more.

When the Church no longer feared persecution, some Christians looked for new ways to give their lives to Jesus. Some chose lives of prayer in a community. Today, you see these communities teaching in schools, helping in hospitals, preaching to people, or living quiet lives of prayer. These are the Jesuits, the Franciscans, the Redemptorists, and others.



Ask your sponsor about communities in your area. Choose one and explain how they serve Jesus.

Other Christians choose to serve Jesus by going into parts of the world where the people didn't know the Lord. They are called "missionaries" and they bring many new people into the Church. Missionary communities, like the Maryknolls, still bring people to Jesus.

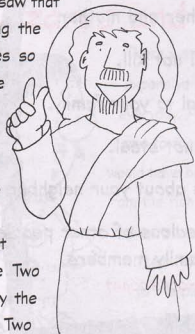
Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C13, Catechumenate • Christian Moral Living

The commandments of Jesus

When Jesus came into our world, he saw that some of the church leaders were using the commandments to make laws and rules so strict that no one could keep them. He said that laws are good, but we have to look at each law with our hearts. He tried to teach the people that the most important thing is our love for one another.

That's when Jesus gave his two Great Commandments. When we follow the Two Commandments of Jesus, we also obey the Ten Commandments of God. Jesus' Two



♥ ONE ♥

You shall love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart, with all your soul,
and with all your mind.

♥ TWO ♥

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

MATTHEW 22:37-39; MARK 12:30-31; LUKE 10:27

A lot of people say they believe in Jesus, but act as though they never even heard the words and teachings of Jesus. Saying it is not enough. If we believe in Jesus, it shows in everything we do. We are like mirrors that reflect Jesus. We listen to his words, we learn from his teachings, and we follow his example.



Have you ever built a sand castle at the beach? What happened to that sand castle when the rain fell or the tide came in? Here is a story Jesus told about building on sand. He used this story to remind us how important it is to build our lives on his example.

"Anyone who hears and obeys these teachings of mine is like a wise person who built a house on solid rock. Rains poured down, rivers flooded, and winds beat against that house. But it didn't fall, because it was built on solid rock."

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C14, Catechuminate • Social Justice

Social justice means we care

The Church of Jesus cares about more than whether we go to church, say our prayers, and obey all the rules. The Church leaders remember how God cared when the Pharaoh enslaved and beat the people to make them work. They also remember that Jesus once said, "The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers."

ADAPTED FROM LUKE 4:18

Like God, the Church cares when people are treated badly. It cares when people are hungry, cold, or in pain. It cares when people are imprisoned for no reason. All these things are social injustices. When leaders of our Church hear of these injustices, they try to do something. They tell the world that these things are wrong, and that it is up to all of us to stop them.

We should care about these things, too. Jesus told the following story so we would understand how important it

A STORY

Lazarus and the Rich Man



There was once a rich man who wore expensive clothes and ate the best food everyday. A poor beggar named Lazarus came to the gate of the rich man's house. He would have been happy just to eat the scraps from the rich man's table. Lazarus' body was covered with sores, and dogs kept licking them. When he died, the angels took him to the place of honor next to Abraham.

The rich man also died and was buried. He went to hell and was suffering terribly. When he looked up and saw

Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side, the rich man said to Abraham, "Have pity on me! Send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and touch my tongue. I'm suffering terribly in this fire."

Abraham answered, "My friend, remember that while you lived, you had everything good and Lazarus had everything bad. Now he is happy, and you are in pain."

ADAPTED FROM LUKE 16:19-25



Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C15, Catechumenate • Life: The Greatest Gift

God's Gift of Life The Greatest Gift

God gives us many gifts.
Every day,
as soon as we wake up,
we can begin to count the gifts
we receive from God.



List three God-gifts you received today.

In the beginning, God made the world for us. The animals, trees, flowers, fish in the sea — all these were gifts God made so our lives in the world would be more beautiful. On the last day, God made people — Adam and Eve — and gave them the greatest gift of all — the gift of life.

Taking care of the gift

When we receive a gift from someone, we are very careful not to break or destroy it. When God gives the gift of life, it is important that people take good care of this perfect gift. But sometimes, the lives of people are not respected and loved, not cared for as needed. When that happens, it is important that all of God's people do what they can to protect life. Here are a few dangers that can hurt God's gift. Let's study them and think about how we can help.

Abortion

Even before birth, some of God's people are in danger. Some people in this world are not happy when a new life begins. Sometimes people don't want to be parents because their own lives have not been cared for and protected. Other people don't want to be parents because they are afraid of not

Journey of Faith FOR CHILDREN

C16, Catechumenate • The Dignity of Life

A CLOSE LOOK AT GOD'S CHILDREN



Did you ever look closely at the people around you — in your class, your neighborhood, your family?

Did you ever wonder how God could create so many people who look so different? Yet each has the same basic features — eyes, ears, a nose, a chin, etc.

Even with twins, there is usually something that makes them different from each other.



We are all created by God; we are all the same; we are all different. And isn't it wonderful? God created us to belong to one another and, at the same time, to be completely ourselves, different than anyone else in the world.



Prejudice

Our differences are God's way of making each of us unique, special. But some prefer to separate people by their differences. They only like people whose skin is the same color as theirs. Or they only like people who speak the same language as they speak. When people think like this, we say they are prejudiced.

Prejudice is a sin. It causes a lot of suffering and unhappiness in our world. Since God made all people and loves all of creation, prejudice is also a great sin against God. Suppose you brought home three pictures from school. These all were pictures you made and were very proud of them. Each picture was different; each picture was unique.

Now suppose you gave these pictures to your mother. She looked at them, chose one, and hung it up. "This is the best picture of all," she told you. Then she threw the other two in the trash. How would you feel? Hurt, of course. Maybe a little sorry for the pictures in the trash. Maybe angry, too, because you worked so hard on all of them. That's how God must feel when we dislike someone because that person looks or talks or acts differently.



Why is prejudice a sin?

Discrimination

One wrong thing often leads to another wrong thing. Prejudice usually leads to discrimination, that is, keeping people out of events or places because of their differences. Have