

Contents

Philosophy and Process	iv
Components and Website	v
Scope and Sequence	vi-vii
Catechetical Communities	viii
Restored Order	ix
Sacraments and Liturgical Catechesis	x-xi
The Role of Music	xii
Respecting Cultures	xiii-xiv
Welcome	xv

Children's Lessons

Chapter 1 We Belong	2A
<i>For Restored Order implementation, use these two sessions after Chapter 1:</i>	
<i>Restored Order (Confirmation): Gifts of the Spirit</i>	CE23-33
<i>Restored Order (Confirmation): We Are Holy</i>	CE34-44
Chapter 2 We Gather	12A
Chapter 3 We Are Forgiven	22A
Chapter 4 We Listen	32A
Chapter 5 We Prepare	42A
Chapter 6 We Remember and Give Thanks	52A
Chapter 7 We Share a Meal	62A
Chapter 8 We Go Forth	72A

Catholic Source Book

Words of Faith	82-87
Order of Mass	88-99
Receiving Communion	100-101
Catholic Prayers	102-105
Index	106

Program Resources, Activity Masters, and Scripture Stories

We Belong	CE1-2
<i>Restored Order (Confirmation): Gifts of the Spirit</i>	CE23-33
<i>Restored Order (Confirmation): We Are Holy</i>	CE34-44
We Gather	CE3-5
We Are Forgiven	CE6-8
We Listen	CE9-10
We Prepare	CE11-12
We Remember and Give Thanks	CE13-15
We Share a Meal	CE16-19
We Go Forth	CE20-22

General Instruction of the Roman Missal

"When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, proclaims the Gospel. Therefore, all must listen with reverence to the readings from God's word, for they make up an element of greatest importance in the liturgy." (no. 29)

Catechism Connection

To deepen your own background and reflection on the word of God, refer to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 101–104, 136, 141, 1154, 1190, 1349, 1408.

Catechist Resources

Listening to God's Word: Activities and Stories

Eileen Drilling and Judy Rothrock

Liturgy Training Publications

Stories, questions, games, prayers, and blessings for the entire liturgical year

Threshold to God's Word (23 min)

Stephen J. Bing

Twenty-Third Publications

How to read the Bible as a basis for prayer

Children's Resources

The Listening Walk

Paul Showers

Harper Collins

A father and daughter go on a listening walk

God Speaks to Us in Feeding Stories

(God Speaks to Us Series)

Mary Ann Getty-Sullivan

Liturgical Press

Church stories with med themes

Catechist Formation

"Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light for my path."

Psalm 119:105

Feasting on God's Word

Readers of good books know what it means to say a book is "delicious." At times people use the expression, "I devoured that book." In daily life, good books nurture and provide sustenance. They teach lessons. They make other worlds real. So, too, does the Bible.

When one reflects on "feasting" in reference to the Mass, the focus is usually on bread and wine, table and Communion. However, "feasting" at the Eucharist is accomplished from "the one table of God's Word and Christ's Body" (CCC 103). Just as readers of good books find nourishment and transformation from their words and stories, so do we, as we listen to the inspired word of God proclaimed and alive in our midst. The breaking open and sharing of God's word is a primary part of our liturgical celebration. Christ, the Word of God, is present in the Scriptures as he is under the appearances of bread and wine which is the Body and Blood of Christ.

Liturgy of the Word

We are called both to listen attentively and to respond to the Scriptures during the Liturgy of the Word. What we see and hear during this part of the Mass is a dialogue between God and his people. Within each of us is another dialogue not necessarily seen or shared with others at the time. It is the internal dialogue inspired by the Holy Spirit that occurs as we listen to God's word. We are inspired by its meaning, and respond to whatever call or challenge we may hear.

When have you experienced the power of God's word in your life?

Which Scripture story do you find particularly nurturing or challenging?

Catechist Prayer

Dear God, nourish me with your word. Empower me to be a living witness of your Son, Jesus, in my daily life. Amen.

Lesson Planner

Go to www.osscurriculum.com for more information, including worksheets, questions, family resources, and more activities.

FAITH AT HOME		LIVE	REMEMBER		CELEBRATE	
Page 41	20 minutes Page 40	Pages 38-39	30 minutes Pages 36-37	10 minutes Pages 32-33	Pages 34-35	
 Faith at Home To introduce the different parts of the Faith at Home page	 To encourage children to express how they will listen to and share God's word	 Faith Focus <i>What happens during the Liturgy of the Word?</i> To describe the parts of the Liturgy of the Word	 Faith Focus <i>Why do we listen to God's word?</i> To explain why it is important to listen to God's word	 Ritual Focus: Signing To experience a celebration of the word, including the signing before the proclamation of the Gospel	To explore the meaning of the ritual action To explain that God is present in the word	
		 Identify the two parts of the Mass. Examine each part of the Liturgy of the Word .  Read about and discuss the readings and the terms ambo , lectionary , Book of the Gospels .	 Discuss why Jesus told stories. Proclaim the Gospel story, Matthew 13:1-23 . Complete the activity.	 Celebrate the opening prayer.  Reflect on the celebration. Complete the activity.  Read about and discuss the Sign of the Cross.  Describe the Bible as God's word.  Read about and discuss the Bible.	 Children reflect on the experience of the celebration and the meaning of signing.	
	 Respond Children draw ways to share God's word.	 Faith at Home Suggested activities for the home	 Share Partners act out scenes from the Gospel story.  Faith at Home Suggested activities for the home		 OTHER MATERIALS Bible, prayer table, candle, large glass bowl filled with water	
	 PROGRAM RESOURCES Songs of Celebration CD, track 10		 OTHER MATERIALS Lictionary and/or Book of the Gospels		 PROGRAM RESOURCES Songs of Celebration CD, track 10 And With Your Spirit CD, track 13	
PROGRAM RESOURCES Family Guide, pp. 22-23						

CELEBRATE

Objective

To experience a celebration of the word, including signing before the proclamation of the Gospel

Preparation

Familiarize yourself with the ritual focus for Signing on pages 32–33. You will need:

- a Bible
- a table covered with a white cloth
- a candle and a large glass bowl filled with water on the prayer table
- Use the *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 10, to rehearse the suggested song, “Open My Eyes, Lord,” or one of the optional music suggestions on page 33.

Select a child to carry the Bible in procession.

We Gather

Invite children to assemble with their books. Gather children into the prayer space with a procession.

- Direct children to follow you and the child carrying the Bible, as you lead the procession.

As you process, lead children in singing using the *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 10.

- When all are assembled, light the prayer candle.
- Begin prayer, and lead children in the Sign of the Cross.

Follow the order of prayer on pages 32–33.


CELEBRATE

Chapter 4 We Listen

We Gather

Procession

As you sing, walk forward slowly. Follow the person carrying the Bible.

 Sing together.

Open my ears, Lord.

Help me to hear your voice.

Open my ears, Lord.

Help me to hear.

Leader: Let us pray.

Make the Sign of the Cross together.

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Published by CCM Publications



We Listen

Leader:

Father, send the Holy Spirit to open our ears and hearts that we may hear and live your word. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Leader:

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Ritual Focus: Signing

Leader: Loving Father, we want to live by your word.

May your word be in our minds.

Trace the Sign of the Cross on your forehead.



Liturgical Background

Reverence

Reverence is a form of respect given to someone or something that we care deeply about. We reverence the word of God because we believe that God is present in it. During Mass, the Church shows reverence for the word of God by carrying it in procession, incensing it, and bowing before it.

We also show reverence when we:

- listen attentively to the word proclaimed
- apply the word to our own lives
- act on the word



Leader: May your word be on our lips.

Trace the sign of the Cross on your lips.

May your word be in our hearts.

Trace the sign of the Cross on your heart.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: Read Matthew 13:1-23.

The Gospel of the Lord.


All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sit silently.

We Go Forth

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for your word. Help us remember and share it. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

 Sing the opening song together.



33

Ritual Background



Signing The gesture of the signing of forehead, lips, and heart evolved in the ninth through the eleventh centuries, as the Church placed a stronger emphasis on honoring the Gospel. At that time the Signing of the Cross was also done at the close of the Gospel. Its meaning was connected to the scriptural verse about the evil one coming to steal away the word of God from those who did not understand it (Matthew 13:19) and the power of the cross to overcome evil.

Other meanings of the signing are:

- a readiness to respond to God's word with courage as expressed in the Letter to the Romans, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).
- an expression of the assembly's desire to take in the word of God and make it their own.

Ritual Focus: Signing

- Sign yourself reverently and slowly, as you pray the words.
- Allow children time to sign themselves.

We Listen

For the proclamation of the Gospel, you may use a Bible or the adapted reading in the *Child's Book on Pages 36–37*.

We Go Forth

Lead the closing prayer. As children process back to their seats, have them sing *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 10, "Open My Eyes, Lord," or one of the optional music suggestions.

Optional Music Suggestions:

"Abre mis ojos" (Open My Eyes) © Jesse Manibusan.
Published by OCP
"Jesus, Breed of Life," (refrain) © 2000-Dvorak/
Schnabel, WLP

CELEBRATE

Objective

To explore the meaning of the ritual action of signing before the Gospel

To explain that God is present in the word

Liturgical Catechesis

The purpose of this section is to help children reflect on their experiences of the signs, rituals, prayers, and gestures of the celebration and to lead them to express their own meaning of the experiences. Allow children to share their experiences without commenting on them.

God's Word

- On the board or on chart paper, write the following questions: What did you see? What did you hear? What did you do?
- Guide children to review the celebration by going over what happened in the prayer.
- Invite children to share their responses to the questions.
- Ask what it was like for them to sign themselves before the Gospel reading.

Reflect

- Invite children to write their responses in the book. Tell children they do not have to complete all three choices.
- Have volunteers share their responses.

The Sign of the Cross

- Read aloud the text.
- Invite children to repeat the signing and the prayer from the opening celebration.

CELEBRATE

God's Word

Sign of the Cross

Each of us is signed with the Sign of the Cross at our Baptism. The Sign of the Cross marks us as we begin our Christian journey. We sign ourselves with the Sign of the Cross, we remember our Baptism. In Baptism we are called to be disciples who follow God's word.



Reflect

Signing Think and write about the celebration.

When God's word is in my mind

When God's word is on my lips

When God's word is in my heart

Additional Activity

Lamb of God

Use the song "Under My Roof" (track 13) on the *And With Your Spirit* music CD to explore what we mean when we say, "Lord I am not worthy that you should come under my roof" during the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God) at Mass.

If time allows, expand the lesson:

- Before the session: Cut out the front panel of small, single-serving milk cartons, one for each child. Paint each one brown.
- Read the story of the Centurion's servant (Matthew 8:5 or Luke 7:1) and connect it to the words of the song. Play the song while they work.

- Provide each child with a milk carton, pieces of hay or dried grass clippings, craft glue, a square of brown felt, and modeling clay.

- Have children attach pieces of hay onto the "roof," covering both sides.
- Have them glue the felt to the "floor" of the house.
- Ask children to make a small person out of clay and place it on the mat.



The Bible

We know that the **Bible** is God's own word. Another name used for the Bible is *Scriptures*. The word *Scriptures* means "writings." God inspired humans to write stories of his love and friendship. At Mass we listen to and remember these stories.

The good news of the Bible is the same good news that Jesus taught.

God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are with us when we pray for God's word to be in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts. They help us hear the good news and share it with others.



The Bible

The Bible has two parts. The parts of the Bible are the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament tells stories of the friendship between God and his people before the birth of Jesus. The New Testament tells the stories of Jesus and the people in the early Church.

35

Teaching Tip



- **Signs of God's presence** Bear in mind that sometimes in today's world, children and adults are so busy and easily distracted that they may miss God's word and presence in daily life. Make it a point periodically during the sessions with the children to:
 - allow some quiet time to reflect
 - pray the prayer, "Let us remember the presence of God"

- point out experiences and events, such as the first sign of spring or the birth of a baby, as signs of God's presence in life today.

The Bible

- Ask children to look at page 35 and find the highlighted word. **Bible**
- Invite volunteers to share the meaning of the word.
- Ask if anyone can tell the group what is meant by "God's word." **Affirm correct responses. Guide responses when needed.**
- Read aloud the text.
- Emphasize that when we sign ourselves before the reading of the Gospel, we ask God to be with us.
- Invite four children to each read aloud a sentence of the text.
- Do a quick review by asking what the difference is between the Old and New Testaments. Possible responses: The Old Testament is about the time before Jesus; the New Testament is about Jesus; Jesus' stories are in the New Testament but not in the Old Testament.



The Bible

REMEMBER

Objective

To explain why it is important to listen to God's word

Faith Focus

Why do we listen to God's word?

List children's responses on the board or on chart paper.

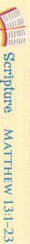
Hear Gods Word

Invite children to look at the Scripture illustration.

Remind children that it is the Gospel story from the celebration. Ask children to discuss why Jesus told so many stories.

- Summarize the first paragraph. Refer back to children's discussion.

- Write the words *Gospel* and *Good News* on the board or on chart paper, and discuss their definitions.



Scripture MATTHEW 13:1-23

The Sower

- Gather children into a story circle or in the prayer space. Remind them that they will be hearing the story from the Gospel of Matthew again.

- Ask what they remember from hearing the Gospel during the celebration.
- Reread the story aloud.
- Or, tell the story using Edho Pantomime 4 on page CE10 of this edition.

REMEMBER

Hear Gods Word

Faith focus

Why do we listen to God's word?

Jesus was a storyteller. He told stories about God's love. Sometimes his stories taught a lesson. Jesus wanted people to listen and to understand. Jesus wanted people to share the good news. His stories are in the Gospels. *Gospel* means "good news."

One day Jesus told a story about a sower. A sower is a person who puts seeds on the ground so they can grow.



MATTHEW 13:1-23

The Sower

A sower went out to sow. As he sowed seed, some fell on the edge of the path and the birds ate them. Some fell on rocky ground. There was no soil there and the seed could not take root. The sun came up and burned it. Some seed fell among thorns. The thorns choked the seed and it could not grow. But some seed fell on good soil. These seeds grew and made much fruit.

36



Scripture Background

Parables This story marks the beginning of a whole section of parables in the Gospel according to Matthew. A parable is a literary form that uses a fictional story to

make a point. In the parable of the sower, Jesus is proclaiming the reign of God and the rich harvest that will be accomplished by the actions of those who hear and understand the word.

There are two possible reasons Jesus spoke in parables:

- Most of the people Jesus taught could not read or write. Using stories was a way to help them remember.
- Many of the parables have surprising endings. Jesus used them to challenge the people to look at beliefs they took for granted.



The people did not understand the story, so Jesus explained it. He said that the seed on the path is like a person who hears God's word but does not understand it. The seed on the rocky ground is like the person who hears God's word but then forgets it. The seed that falls among the thorns is like the person who hears God's word but pays attention to other things and does not follow it. The seed that falls on good soil is like the person who hears God's word, understands it, and follows it.

MARK 4:13-20

2 What lesson did Jesus teach the people in his story?

2 How do you follow God's word?

Share

Act it out With a partner, choose one of the people Jesus was talking about in the story. Make up that scene from the Gospel story. Act out your part of the story for the rest of the group.

37

Cultural Background

Agriculture Jesus used many agricultural images in his teachings because the majority of the people he taught were members of a peasant society. Agricultural production was the only real source of income. About 90 percent of the people were peasants. The other ten percent would be considered the elite or upper class. This division led to a society in which:

- many of the peasants were exploited through taxation and land rent
- the upper class controlled the economic and religious lives of the peasants
- the good news of Jesus' teachings was a freeing experience for many and an unwelcome challenge for others

Earth at Home
Read two Scripture stories with your child. Talk about, pray, and listen to God's word and follow it. Share one of your favorite Scripture stories, and talk about how it means to each of you.

- Ask children to read silently and identify how many different people Jesus describes in his story. **four**
- 2 Discuss the question: **to follow God's word**
- Review the images described in the parable.
- 2 Discuss the question. List responses on the board or on chart paper. **Accept all reasonable responses.**

Share

- Organize the group into partners.
- Explain the activity to children.
- Set a time limit.
- Circulate around the pairs to be sure they understand what to do.
- Invite volunteers to act out their parts.

Activity Master

You may wish to use Activity Master 4 on page C69 to further integrate the meaning of the Gospel story.



▲ Activity Master 4

Review

- Gospel means "good news."
- We are called to listen to God's word and follow it.

REMEMBER

Objective

To describe the parts of the Liturgy of the Word

Faith Focus

What happens during the Liturgy of the Word?

List children's responses on the board or on chart paper.

The Liturgy of the Word

Ask children to remember the responses they gave on page 34. Explain that during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass, we listen to God's word.

- Invite children to look at the photographs on pages 38 and 39 and tell what they see.
- Summarize the first paragraph on page 38. Emphasize that the Liturgy of the Word is one of two important parts of the Mass, and Jesus is present in God's word.
- Invite children to read the second paragraph to find out how many readings we listen to during the Liturgy of the Word. **three**



The Readings

- Read aloud the text.
- If you were able to obtain a lectionary or a Book of the Gospels, allow children to look at it.

REMEMBER

The Liturgy of the Word



The Readings

The reader reads the first and second readings from a book called the **lectionary**. The lectionary has all the Bible readings for every Sunday and feast day. The first reading is called the **first reading**. The second reading is called the **second reading**. The third reading is called the **third reading**. The Gospel is read from the **Book of the Gospels**, which is carried in procession during the Introductory Rites to show the importance of the four Gospels.



Faith Focus

What happens during the Liturgy of the Word?

The Mass has two very important parts. The first part is the **Liturgy of the Word**. The second part is the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**. In the Liturgy of the Word, we celebrate Jesus' presence in the word.

In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we celebrate Jesus' presence when we receive Holy Communion.

During the Liturgy of the Word, we listen to three readings from the Bible. Between the first two readings, we sing or pray a psalm. The psalm is a response, or answer, to God's word.

The first reading is usually from the Old Testament. The second reading is from the part of the New Testament that tells the story of the early followers of Jesus. The third reading is the Gospel. It tells the wonderful good news of Jesus. We greet the Gospel reading with joy. We say or sing "Alleluia!" *Alleluia* means "Praise the Lord."



Catechist Background

Scripture in liturgy

- The word of God proclaimed in the Liturgy of the Word:
- helps form us into a community
- announces to us the good news of our salvation, beginning in the Old Testament
- teaches us how to live as followers of Jesus and as children of God
- opens us up to listen to God in our everyday lives



Our Response

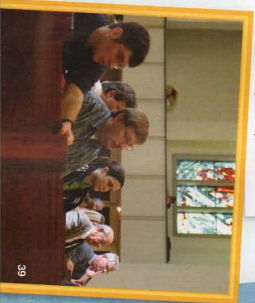
After the readings, the priest or deacon gives a homily. The homily helps us understand and follow God's word. The homily helps us understand how to live God's word. We respond to God's word when we stand and pray the Creed. We proudly profess what we believe.

Feasting on God's word makes us want to share with others who are hungry for good news. We close the Liturgy of the Word by praying together for the needs of the Church and all people around the world. These special prayers are called the Prayer of the Faithful, the Universal Prayer, or Bidding Prayers.

- 2 What do we call the part of the Mass when we listen to God's word?

Faith at Home

Talk with your child about how to listen attentively to the Word. Encourage your child to pay special attention to the readings at Mass this Sunday. Then spend some time after Mass talking about how one of the readings or the homily relates to your family life.



39

Sacrament Background

Jewish roots The Liturgy of the Word has its origins in Jewish synagogue worship, which is centered on the word of God in prayers and Scriptures, especially the Torah, the first five books of the Bible. For the Jewish people, the synagogue is both the building itself, and the community of people who assemble to pray, to read the Scriptures, and to hear teachings based on the Scriptures.

During his public life, Jesus went to the synagogue (Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:21; Luke 4:16–28) to pray, to teach, and to hear the Scriptures proclaimed. After the Resurrection, the early Church continued to gather to hear the word and break bread together.

Our Response

Explain that during the Liturgy of the Word, we not only listen, but also respond to God's word.

- Summarize the page by writing the terms *homily*, the *Creed*, *Prayer of the Faithful*, *Universal Prayer*, and *Bidding Prayers* on the board or on chart paper.
 - Invite volunteers to read the sentence from the text that describes each term.
 - Discuss each of these parts with children.
- 2 Invite volunteers to answer the question, **the Liturgy of the Word**

Review

- The Liturgy of the Word is one of the two important parts of the Mass.
- After we listen to God's word, we pray for the needs of the Church and people around the world.

Objective

To encourage children to express how they will listen to and share God's word

Share God's Word**Respond**

Explain the activity to children. Tell them to include the following in their drawings:

- Who is with them.
- Where they are.
- What is happening.

Closing Blessing

Gather children into a prayer circle with their books.

- Begin with the Sign of the Cross.
- Read about the People of Faith story about Jean Donovan.

- Play the prayer.

End with the *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 10, "Open My Eyes, Lord," or one of the optional music suggestions on page 33.

Share God's Word**Respond**

Draw a picture Show how you will share God's word at home or at school.

**Closing Blessing**

Gather and begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: We praise and thank you, Lord, for the gift of your word.

All: Alleluia.

Leader: Help us to go forth and listen for your word in all we do. Show us how to speak your good news to others.

All: Amen.

Sing together:

Open my ears, Lord.

Help me to hear your voice.

Open my ears, Lord.

Help me to hear.

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People of Faith: A Read Aloud Story

Jean Donovan Jean Donovan was

a young Catholic American woman who listened to God's word. She showed that God's word was in her heart. She loved people and she loved life. As a college student, Jean began visiting the sick and elderly. She even cooked meals for them.

The more she worked with the poor, the more she knew that she did not need a lot of things to make her happy. She could be happy by serving others. Later, Jean became a missionary in Central America and gave up her life for her faith.



C. 1953-1980

Faith at Home

Faith Focus

- The Bible is God's word written in human words.
- We listen to the word of God during the Liturgy of the Word.
- When we listen to God's word, we want to share it with others.

Ritual Focus

Signing

The celebration focused

The children prayed by signing themselves with the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart. They prayed that God's word would be with them. At appropriate times during the week, pray the signing prayer on pages 32–33 with your child.

Family Prayer

Jesus, bless us as we listen for your word this week. Open our eyes, our hearts, and minds that we will become more faithful followers and have the courage to spread your word to all those we meet. Amen.

Act

Do Together Read Matthew

question, "How can we bring the word of God to someone in need this week?" Check your parish bulletin for the names of those who might appreciate a get-well card or a card of encouragement. Have family members include their favorite verses.




Faith at Home

Review the five parts of the Faith at Home page with children.

Encourage children:

- to ask family members to review the Faith Focus statements

to share the Digital Revolution

- to share the **Ritual Focus: Signing** with family members
- to do at least one of the  **Act** activities with family members
- to pray the **Family Prayer** with their family at times when the family is together
- to encourage their family members to go to www.osvcurriculum.com with them and do the activities for this chapter sometime during the week

Looking Ahead

For Chapter 5, you will need:

- a Bible
- a prayer table
- a candle
- a large glass bowl filled with water
- the *Songs of Celebration* and the *And With Your Spirit* CD
- copies of Activity Master 5 on p. CE11 for each child
- copies of Scripture Marathon 5 on p. CE12 for participants