



# Contents

## Especially for Families

The three units in this book each begin with a Family Feature. These special pages aim to nurture the spirituality of the entire family, especially the adults in the student's life.

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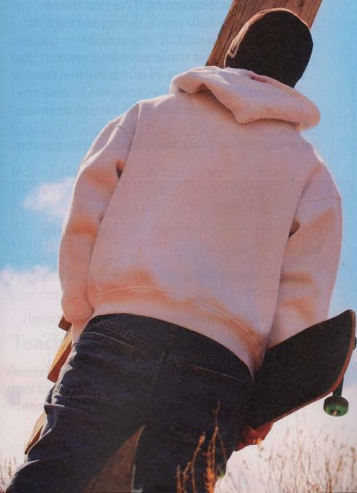
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UNIT

2

# Jesus Christ the Truth



## Family Feature

### "The Little Way" Leads to Big Results

SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX had none of the power that comes from controlling wealth or armies. Yet this humble young French saint has influenced Catholicism as few others have. After she died of tuberculosis at the age of 24 in the late 1890s, her meditations were published. She's most famous for outlining a spiritual path she called the "Little Way." It's the practice of doing small things with great love, finding spiritual sustenance and patience to make it through the day.

- As Thérèse once explained to novices at the convent, "You know well enough that Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty, but at the love with which we do them."
- Dorothy Day, a cofounder of the Catholic Worker Movement, was deeply devoted to Saint Thérèse. "No act, however apparently

insignificant, is without meaning when done within the awareness of God's loving presence," she wrote. "Whatever our situation in life—a mother with children at home or a mother working, a store clerk, a scholar, a nursing home assistant, a suburbanite, an assembly line worker—all of us, in the ordinary and required activity of daily life, have available to us in the Little Way a means to holiness, to love as God loves us."

- Mother Teresa had more in common with Thérèse than her name. Like Dorothy Day, she dedicated herself to loving care of the world's poor. She wrote, "We can do no great things; only small things with great love." She also said, "Sometimes it is harder for us to smile at those who live with us, the immediate members of our families, than it is to smile at those who are not so close to us. Let us never forget: love begins at home."



Left to right: Saint Thérèse, Dorothy Day, Mother Teresa.

Visit [www.christourlife.org/family](http://www.christourlife.org/family) for more family resources.

### Love Anyway

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway.

*—From a prayer on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta, adapted from Dr. Kent Keith's "Paradoxical Commandments"*





# Parables: Stories Jesus Told

## *Jesus the Storyteller*

### Living in the Light

What is it like to walk in the dark without being able to see well? What might happen?

Jesus calls himself the Light of the World. He shows us the right path in life and helps us see where we are going. Jesus, the Son of God, is the source of all truth. All his life was a teaching. His teachings are the truth that light our way to the Father. They give us knowledge of how to be a better person in the light of God's commandments. Jesus revealed the love of God and God's plan for us. He proclaimed the message of salvation.

If we follow Jesus' teachings, we will know the happiness of his friendship. Walking with Jesus is the sure way of following God's will and eventually entering the kingdom. Walking with him, we live well on earth and arrive safely at the kingdom. What God has revealed, especially through Jesus, is the foundation of our faith.

### Teachings of Twenty Centuries

Jesus commissioned his apostles to teach the Good News to all nations. Through their

ministry of **evangelization**, the apostles handed on Jesus' message through the words they taught and the good example they gave to others. They shared Jesus' mission in stories, customs, prayers, and creeds, or professions of faith that we find based in the New Testament.

Bishops, the successors of the apostles, also have the right and duty to teach everything Jesus has revealed. The teaching authority of the Church is called the **Magisterium**. It is at work primarily in the pope and in the bishops teaching together and in union with the pope. The Magisterium is present in liturgy and in the practice of the faith—whenever doctrines contained in Scripture and Tradition are taught. A doctrine is a belief the Church holds and teaches. A doctrine that is officially defined by the Church as a truth revealed by God, an article of faith for Catholics, is a dogma. Some doctrines are more important than others. It is Church doctrine that Jesus is God and that Mary was sinless.

For 2,000 years the Church has preserved the doctrines Jesus taught and has gained new insights. Truth does not change, but the Holy Spirit continually leads the Church to a deeper understanding. On our journey of life, we can look to the Church for truths to guide us—the truths that Jesus taught.

## Stories That Teach

Jesus was a master teacher. He used stories about the stuff of his everyday life: sowers and seeds, fishermen and nets, shepherds, thieves, and yeast. He spoke of ordinary happenings: looking for a lost object, getting paid for work, and asking a friend for help. The stories Jesus told about God and his kingdom are called parables. In a parable, a comparison is made between something familiar and the truth Jesus wants to bring to our attention.

A parable usually has an unexpected twist that shows the Kingdom of God in images we use in everyday life. It encourages us to see things differently.

After hearing a parable, we make a judgment about the events in the story and then apply it to ourselves. Often we find that our way of thinking and acting is being challenged by God. The discovery challenges us to change our lives for the better.

## How a Short Story Works

Read the Parable of the Rich Fool and then answer the questions on a sheet of paper.

"There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest. He asked himself, 'What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest?' And he said, 'This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods and I shall say to myself, "Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!"' But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?' Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God."

Luke 12:16-21



*The Rich Fool, Jesus Mafa Collection, France.*

1. **A story has a main character and other characters.** Who are the characters in this parable?
2. **A story has a setting.** Where does this story take place?
3. **A story has a plot, the action.** What happens in this story?
4. **The action centers around a struggle.** What problem does the main character face?
5. **A story's main character might have a flaw.** What is the rich man's flaw?
6. **Conversation in a story tells us what a character is like.** How do you know what the rich man is like?
7. **Some stories have surprise endings.** What happened to the rich man that he did not expect?
8. **Stories mirror real life.** Are there people like the rich man? Have you ever been like the rich man? Do you know of anyone who had an experience like the rich man's?
9. **Stories draw us into them and make us think.** How do you think the rich man felt when God spoke? Why was he a fool? What do you think happened after he died?
10. **Stories have a theme, a message.** What meaning do you find in this parable? What questions does the story make you ask yourself?

A parable has layers, like an onion. To reveal its meanings, ask questions like those above.

## Probing the Parables

Read each parable and match it with a truth.

- The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9–14), *image at right*
- The Lost Sheep (Luke 15:4–7)
- The Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1–16)
- The persistent friend (Luke 11:5–8)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. God loves sinners and is glad when they return to a good life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Sinners who truly repent even at the last minute will have the fullness of joy in heaven.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Beware of being proud of your goodness and judging others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Keep praying to God, and your prayers will be answered.



## Kingdom Parables

Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God, which is already here but not yet fully. In this kingdom, God and God's people live together in peace, justice, and love. The parables listed

in the table below give insights into the kingdom. Read them and fill in the blanks in each statement. Notice which Gospel contains all of these kingdom parables.

THE PARABLE	A TRUTH IT TEACHES
<b>The Mustard Seed</b> Matthew 13:31–32	1. From a small beginning the kingdom _____.
<b>The Yeast</b> Matthew 13:33	
<b>The Net</b> Matthew 13:47–50	2. On earth _____ and _____
<b>The Weeds</b> Matthew 13:24–30	live together until _____.
<b>The Pearl of Great Price</b> Matthew 13:45–46	3. The person who finds the kingdom feels _____.
<b>The Hidden Treasure</b> Matthew 13:44	To possess it, he or she is willing to _____.
<b>The Wedding Feast</b> Matthew 22:2–14	4. The kingdom is open to _____.
	We are free to _____.



### A Moment with Jesus

Pause for a moment and silently reflect on the kingdom parables and the truths that they teach about the Kingdom of God. Jesus used common images such as a wedding feast, weeds, or a small seed. Take some time to reflect on how you would describe the Kingdom of God. What common image would you use?

In your own words, ask Jesus to help you recognize the signs of the kingdom around you. Then thank him for the gift of his word in the Gospels.

### Life or Death?

In Palestine, farmers probably scattered seed all over the land and then plowed it under. In the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3–9, 18–23), Jesus told what happened to the seed sown by a farmer. Some seed fell on the edge of the path and was eaten by birds. Some fell on rocky ground. It grew, but then withered away for lack of roots. Some fell among thorns and was choked by them. But some seed fell on rich soil and produced a wonderful crop.

The parable shows what happens to the Word of God. Some people do not listen to it at all. Some accept the Word at first but are too weak to live by it. Some accept the Word, and then other people or things of the world kill

it in their hearts. In some people, however, God's Word lives. They spread his kingdom wherever they are. To which group do you belong?



### Rich Soil for the Parables

Will the parables take root in your heart? Write how a member of the kingdom would respond to these situations. Then write what might make it difficult to respond that way.

1. Your friends start teasing a classmate who is unpopular.

Christian response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible difficulties: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. A classmate you would like to be friends with has dared you to shoplift a CD. You realize you could be caught and arrested if you do not succeed.

Christian response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible difficulties: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. You and several others are at a friend's home. Your friend's parents are not there. The friend suggests drinking some liquor. There is a lot of it, and the parents will not miss it.

Christian response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible difficulties: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Remember

**How do we come to know the teachings of Jesus?**

We come to know the teachings of Jesus through Scripture, Tradition, and the teaching of the Church.

**What is a parable of Jesus?**

A parable of Jesus is a story that teaches about God and the Kingdom of God through everyday experiences.

**What did Jesus say about listening to God's Word?**

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it." (Luke 11:28)

## Respond

Suppose the world were to end tonight. What would you wish to have changed about yourself to be better prepared to meet Jesus? Write it in your reflection notebook. Then list some steps you can take to make this change happen.

## Reach Out

1. The message of Jesus calls us to a way of life that is very different from the way of the world. Find a newspaper story or magazine article about someone whose response to a need was Christlike. Talk about it with someone at home. Then write a paragraph about what you learned from the person's actions.
2. All the saints met opposition as they tried to live the teachings of Jesus. Sometimes they had to overcome their personal feelings. Sometimes they met criticism, ridicule, and even persecution. Research the life of a saint. Suggestions: Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Saint John Baptist de La Salle, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Saint Julie Billiart, Saint Thomas More, Saint John of the Cross, Saint Isaac Jogues.

Find at least one situation in which that person followed Jesus' way even when facing opposition. Share the story with a family member.

3. The more peace, justice, and love are brought into the world, the more the kingdom is present. What can you do to further the kingdom in your family, your neighborhood, and your world? Gather with one or more family members and brainstorm for ideas. Then select one idea and create a plan for how you will carry it out.
4. Be open to God's Word today. Pay attention to a homily, read a section of the Gospel, or read an article in a Catholic periodical. Share what you learn with someone in your family.
5. Design a poster that is based on one of the parables. Ask a family member to help you create it. Then display it where it can be seen and talked about.

## Words to Know

evangelization  
Magisterium



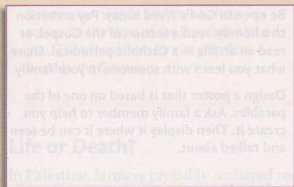
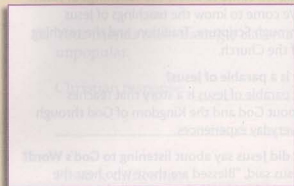
# CHAPTER 10 Review Activities

**Parables in Art** Choose a parable about God. Write its title and message. Then draw a picture to represent it. Do the same for the Kingdom of God and for the members of the kingdom.



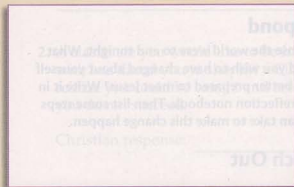
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

God: \_\_\_\_\_



Title: \_\_\_\_\_

The Kingdom of God: \_\_\_\_\_



Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Members of the Kingdom: \_\_\_\_\_

**True or False** Write T if the statement is true or F if it is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Scripture was written before Tradition began.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Magisterium is the teaching authority of the Church.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Church can change dogmas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The Holy Spirit leads us to new understandings of Christ's teachings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Parables are stories meant only for the people in Jesus' time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The Kingdom of God is already here.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The parables urge us to listen to God's Word and to serve the kingdom.



# Miracles: Signs Jesus Worked

## *Jesus the Miracle Worker*

### Beyond Explanation

- The pastor of a poor parish can't pay his electric bill. He prays to the Sacred Heart. The next day's mail brings a check from an anonymous donor for the exact amount of the bill.
- As Ruth picked up the newspaper, she realized she locked herself out of the house. She said a prayer asking God to help her find a solution. Just then her sister drove up to return the spare key she used when watering the plants while Ruth was on vacation.
- According to the Gospels, Jesus worked fantastic cures:

The crowds were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the deformed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind able to see, and they glorified the God of Israel.

Matthew 15:31

Do you believe in miracles? Why or why not?

### Miracles Make Sense

The universe is filled with marvelous events and mysteries. Natural wonders, such as a spectacular sunset or a newborn baby, make us aware of God's presence. In miracles, God's presence is seen in our world even more

dramatically. A **miracle** is a phenomenon that seems to have no natural cause and can be explained only as a direct intervention of God. The Gospels contain many examples of miracles performed by Jesus as signs of God's love and concern for the people.

The Synoptic Gospels call miracles acts of power, but John's Gospel calls them signs. Jesus' extraordinary acts were signs that the kingdom he proclaimed is among us. Miracles were one way that Jesus taught truths about himself, the kingdom, and its members.

### Acts That Teach

Jesus' miracles reveal that he is the Holy One. He is goodness, mercy, and life. The miracles show him to be Lord over nature, sin, sickness, Satan, and death.

Some people believed that suffering and death were the result of personal sin. Read John 9:1–3. How did Jesus react to this belief?

Pain, weakness, suffering, and death are the result of original sin. Except Jesus and Mary, each person throughout history bears its weight and suffers its effects. People longed for the Messiah who would free them from bondage to sin. The disciples of John the Baptist asked Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

(Matthew 11:3) He replied, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.” (Matthew 11:4–5) Jesus’ healing of physical evils is a sign of his victory over all evil. Jesus is truly the Savior of the world.

The miracles teach lessons just as the parables do. When Jesus healed on the Sabbath and touched unclean people, he showed that God’s law of love surpasses all human laws. When he worked miracles for outcasts, sinners, and Gentiles, he showed that God’s kingdom is open to all. When he worked wonders for people in need, he showed God’s compassion and love. The miracles also teach the importance of faith. Jesus often praised the faith of the people who came to him for help. Where there was no faith, he worked no miracles.

## Miracle Stories

Many people became disciples of Jesus because they saw his miracles. They watched him heal the sick and bring the dead back to life. They saw him break Satan’s hold over people. They

Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, *The Marriage at Cana*, 1819.



realized that in Jesus, God was with them. The following Gospel stories about miracles are rewritten as eyewitness accounts. As you read them, be open to their teachings. After each one, list the truths that it reveals to you.

## Wine Overflowing

as told by Mary (John 2:1–12)

I remember the first miracle Jesus worked. My son, some of his new friends, and I were at a wedding in Cana. Everyone was having a good time, but the wine was getting low. If it ran out, the newlywed couple and their families would be deeply embarrassed. Thinking my son could help somehow, I merely said to him, “They have no wine.” Jesus answered, “Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.” I wasn’t sure what he meant, but I knew I could depend on him. I told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

Sure enough, Jesus ordered the servants to fill six stone jars with water. These jars, used for ritual washings, each held about 20 to 30 gallons. When they were filled to the brim with water, Jesus told the servants to take some to the headwaiter. I watched the headwaiter sip the wine. He went to the bridegroom and said, “Everyone serves good wine first and keeps the cheaper wine until people have had plenty to drink, but you have kept the best wine until now.” Jesus’ new friends were also astounded. They remembered that providing in abundance for people is a sign that God was present to his people in a special way. Many of his friends came to believe in him that day.

Truths: Jesus has power over \_\_\_\_\_

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## Rising from Paralysis and Sin

as told by a friend (Mark 2:1–12)

When we heard that Jesus the healer was home again in Capernaum, four of us decided to take our paralyzed friend to him. With great hope we carried our friend on his mat to the house where Jesus was preaching. To our dismay, people packed the house and crowded around the door. We couldn't even get near Jesus. Then we had a brilliant idea. We hoisted our friend up the side steps to the roof. We broke through the thatched roof right above Jesus and carefully lowered the mat holding our friend through the opening. You should have seen the look on the people's faces! The crowd made room for our friend.

Jesus said to him, "Child, your sins are forgiven." We knew that the religious leaders sitting there were probably horrified since only God can forgive sins. Jesus seemed to read their minds. He asked, "Which is easier to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? So that you may know I have authority to forgive sins,"—then he said to our friend, "Rise, pick up your mat, and go home." With that, our friend, who hadn't even been able to move his little finger, stood and picked up his mat. He passed through the crowd of people and out the door a free man.

Truths: Jesus has power over \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Stilling a Storm

as told by Peter (Mark 4:35–41)

One evening after a hard day of teaching, Jesus said, "Let's cross the lake." Leaving the crowd

on the shore, we got in our boat and sailed off. Jesus was so exhausted that before long he was sound asleep on a cushion. Suddenly a violent storm blew up. Huge waves crashed over us, filling our boat with water. We woke Jesus, shouting, "Teacher, don't you care that we are perishing?" First, he commanded the wind to stop. Then he said to the sea, "Quiet. Be still." At his word the wind ceased and everything became very calm. With disappointment written on his face, he asked us why we were terrified. He asked, "Don't you have faith yet?" All we could do was marvel at what we had seen and wonder who he was. Never in all our years of sailing have we met someone whom the wind and sea obeyed.

Truths: Jesus has power over \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Laura James, *Jesus Calms the Storm*, 1995. >

## A Burst of Miracles

Learn more about Jesus by reading the miracle stories listed below. Summarize the stories using a chart with three columns labeled “Power Over . . .,” “How Jesus Showed Compassion,” and “Who Showed Faith?”

- Luke 5:1–11 Great catch of fish
- Mark 10:46–52 Blind Bartimaeus
- Luke 7:1–10 Centurion’s slave
- Mark 9:14–29 Possessed boy
- Luke 7:11–17 Widow’s son

## A Man for Others

Compassion is sympathy for people who are suffering and a desire to reduce or relieve their pain—even to suffer in their place. It is being one with them in their suffering. Jesus showed limitless compassion for people who were poor, sick, sinners—for anyone who was suffering. His desire to help people often moved him to work miracles. Jesus has the same compassion for us today. He wants us to turn to him with faith when we are suffering. Sometimes he helps us through one another.

As followers and friends of Christ, we respond to others as he did. We reach out with compassion to people who are suffering, and we work the “miracle” of kindness. Our miracles will not be as spectacular as those of Jesus. However, with the help of his grace, we can perform miracles of love such as:

- healing someone with kind words;
- encouraging sinners by showing them forgiveness;
- going out of our way to help someone;
- doing a hidden act that brightens someone’s day;
- helping a friend overcome temptation and make the right decision;
- bringing an outsider into the circle of friendship;

- persuading our family to sponsor a child in another country who is poor.

What miracles can you work today?

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How would these miracles be wonders?

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What would these miracles be signs of?

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### A Moment with Jesus

The practice of compassion is needed in our world. Reflect for a moment on how Jesus showed compassion for people who suffered. Then silently think about the people you see every day—family, friends, strangers. Who might need a compassionate word or deed? Decide how you will respond to that person. Then thank Jesus for the opportunity to make his compassion known in the world.



## Remember

**What do Jesus' miracles show him having power over?**

Miracles show Jesus having power over nature, sin, sickness, Satan, and death.

**What can we do if we have faith?**

Jesus said, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Matthew 17:20

## Word to Know

miracle

## Respond

Jesus often praised the faith of the person who had asked for his help. How strong is your faith? Choose three of the questions below and answer them in your reflection notebook.

- Which actions of yours show that you believe in God?
- What do you do to strengthen your faith?
- When have you turned to Jesus for help?
- How have you given witness to your faith when it was tested by what others said and did?
- How do you thank God for the gift of faith?
- How have you tried to share your faith with others?

## Reach Out

1. Jesus and Mary were welcome guests at the wedding feast of Cana. Would they have been welcome at the last party you attended? Why or why not? Do you think they would have been happy to be there, or might they have been uncomfortable? With a group of friends or with your family, set some ground rules for parties. How can you create a party environment in which Jesus and Mary would feel comfortable?
2. Reflect on these questions about miracles:
  - Why do you think that faith is important for a miracle?
  - What miracles can you pray for today?

3. Plan and present a trilogy of miracle plays. Invite another class, your family, or members of your parish. You might record your plays to show to people who cannot attend.
4. Find out about miracles that have occurred in recent times. Look for stories about miracles in magazines, newspapers, or online. Prepare a report to share with your class.
5. Friends tend to imitate each other. They often like the same music, clothes, books, movies, or sports. Sometimes they even think alike. In what ways are you like your friend Jesus? How can you be more like him? Think about those questions and write your thoughts in your reflection notebook. Begin by listing qualities or virtues of Jesus. Do you have any of those qualities? Select one quality that you would like to improve. Plan actions you will take to accomplish that.
6. Think of ways to imitate the compassion of Jesus and bring healing to others. Here are some things you might consider doing.
  - Send a card or note to someone who is ill or living alone.
  - Offer to read to an elderly person, or write letters for him or her.
  - Do something to give someone who cares for you extra rest, especially when he or she seems very tired or is not feeling well.
  - Plan to visit a nursing home. Call to find out times and rules for visiting. Ask an adult to be your advisor and to help you decide what you will do on your visit.
  - Be considerate and quiet around the house when someone is ill or has a headache.
  - Send a donation to an organization that helps people who are suffering from a war.



**What Do You Think?** Use what you learned to answer these questions.

- Before a person is canonized (declared a saint), usually two miracles worked through the person's prayers must occur. Why are miracles a good test for sainthood?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- When two people witness an extraordinary event, one might respond "It's a miracle," and the other, "It's just a coincidence." What makes the difference in their responses?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How are miracles like parables?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Miracle Mix** Unscramble the letters of the words under the lines to complete the sentences.

- A \_\_\_\_\_ is an act of power, a wonder through which God gives us a sign.  
crlieam
- The miracles of Jesus were a sign of the presence of the \_\_\_\_\_.  
gdimkon
- Pain, suffering, and death are the result of \_\_\_\_\_.  
ilogarin ins
- Jesus' miracles show his power over all \_\_\_\_\_.  
live
- Miracles are closely linked with \_\_\_\_\_.  
tifha
- Jesus' first miracle was in response to \_\_\_\_\_.  
ayrM
- When Jesus healed the paralyzed man, he also \_\_\_\_\_ him his sins.  
voefgar
- Jesus' calming the storm showed his power over \_\_\_\_\_.  
etanur
- Jesus healed the centurion's \_\_\_\_\_ who was ill and about to die.  
vleas
- Jesus raised to life the son of a \_\_\_\_\_.  
wwoid
- Jesus worked miracles because he had \_\_\_\_\_.  
mssoopcna
- We are like Jesus when we are \_\_\_\_\_.  
dikn



# Jesus Christ the Truth

## Looking Back

In Unit 2, you have looked at some of the values and demands of Christian living. You have learned that Jesus calls you to live in his truth. He has called you to serve the kingdom. Your attitudes, thoughts, and actions should show that you know what it means to serve the kingdom. Jesus asks you to base your decisions on God's law and on his example. He challenges you to respect life, to respect people and property, to live honestly, and to cherish the gift of sex.

Ask yourself these questions. Write your answers in your reflection notebook.

1. How has this unit helped me understand what Jesus asks of those who follow him?
2. What do I need to remember when I am tempted or when others make it difficult for me to do the right thing?
3. What practical steps can I take to live the life of a disciple?

Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ.

Ephesians 4:15



## Personal Inventory

How well do you let the principles Jesus taught guide your judgments and direct your actions? Circle a (always), s (sometimes), or n (never).

1. Do you think of what Jesus would want you to do or say in situations?  
a s n
2. Do you go to people you respect for advice?  
a s n
3. Do you see that little things in life (at home, at school) are opportunities to show respect for others and for property?  
a s n
4. Do you go out of your way to serve others?  
a s n



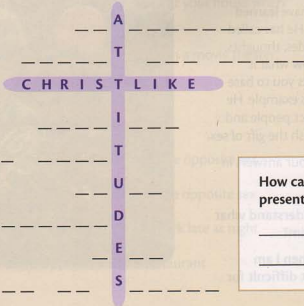
## Parable Truths

Which parable do the type of people listed need to hear? Write the letter of the parable on the line.

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Envious or greedy          | a. The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31)      |
| _____ 2. Careless about using gifts | b. The Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1–16) |
| _____ 3. Selfish, uncaring          | c. The Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21–35)    |
| _____ 4. Holds grudges              | d. The Talents (Matthew 25:14–30)                |

## Change Your Attitude!

Fill in the blanks with a key word from a beatitude.



How can you live a beatitude in your present situation?

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## Help Wanted

How would you respond to the following letters? Write your answers on a sheet of paper.

Help! I was with a group of friends at the mall yesterday, and before I left I stole a calculator.

Help! My mom and I argue constantly. She never really understands and won't let me do anything.

Help! My friends and I had been sneaking beer from our parents. I decided to stop and told my parents what I had done. They have called the parents of all my friends and told them about it.

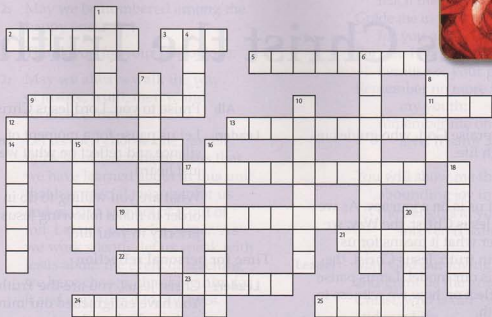
Help! I am in junior high and I have been going to many parties with Pat. I know we are getting too serious and I am really worried about this.

Now switch. Imagine yourself in one of the situations. What would you do in each situation? How do you wish you could handle such situations?



## Puzzling Possibilities

Fill in the puzzle.



### Across

2. What the young man had that Jesus said makes it difficult to get into heaven
3. Gift from God to create life
5. Communion for a dying person
9. Sexual unfaithfulness to a spouse
11. Who the kingdom is open to
13. The pardon of our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
14. Virtue by which we respect our sexual power
17. Teaching authority of the Church
19. Mercy-killing
21. Kind of sin that is an evil in an institution or a situation and that everyone in society is responsible for changing
22. Used in the Anointing of the Sick
23. Subject of a parable that tells of the growth of the kingdom



24. Site of the Beatitudes, according to Matthew

25. What Jesus is the source of as a guide for us in life

### Down

1. Subject of a parable about the kingdom's value
4. Feeling deprived or sad because of something another person has or has achieved
6. True sorrow for sin
7. Repairing or paying for property stolen or damaged
8. Place of the first miracle
10. Belief taught by the Church as true
12. Bad example
15. The evil one that Jesus overcame
16. Stories Jesus told about God and the kingdom
18. What Jesus did for people out of compassion
20. Commandment that protects marriage and the family

## Celebrating

# Jesus Christ the Truth

### Opening Song

**Leader:** Let us praise God, who guides us through life.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** Each of us is on a journey. As we follow Jesus Christ, the Way, we discover what it means for us to live in truth. Jesus Christ, the Truth, is our model. Let us pause and reflect on how we witness to his truth.

**Reader 1:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew. (Matthew 13:44-46)

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.

The gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**Leader:** Let us pause for a moment of silence and reflect on what we just heard.

What are you willing to do in order to make following Jesus a priority in your life?

### Time for personal reflection

**Leader:** Christ Jesus, you are the Truth. You have enlightened our minds and touched our hearts.

**Side 1:** Thank you for the truth and mysteries you have revealed to us.

**Side 2:** May we grow in understanding your teachings, the teachings of the Church.

**Side 1:** Thank you for your parables.

**Side 2:** May we take their lessons to heart and serve your kingdom.

**Side 1:** Thank you for your miracles.

**Side 2:** May we always look to you for healing in our lives.





**Side 1:** Thank you for the Beatitudes.

**Side 2:** May we be numbered among the happy ones.

**Side 1:** Thank you for your law of love.

**Side 2:** May we always walk the way of justice, truth, mercy, and reverence for life.

**Leader:** Let us each choose one parable, miracle, or teaching of Jesus that we have learned about in this unit that has special meaning for us and make a symbol of it out of foil. Let our action be prayer. As we work silently, let us speak with Jesus about the event or teaching we have chosen, thanking him for it and applying it to our lives.

#### Prayer activity with background music

**Leader:** Let us pray a short prayer based on our symbol.

#### Time for reflection

**Leader:** Let us pray.

**All:** Make known to me your ways, LORD; teach me your paths.

Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior.

For you I wait all the long day, because of your goodness, LORD.

Remember no more the sins of my youth;

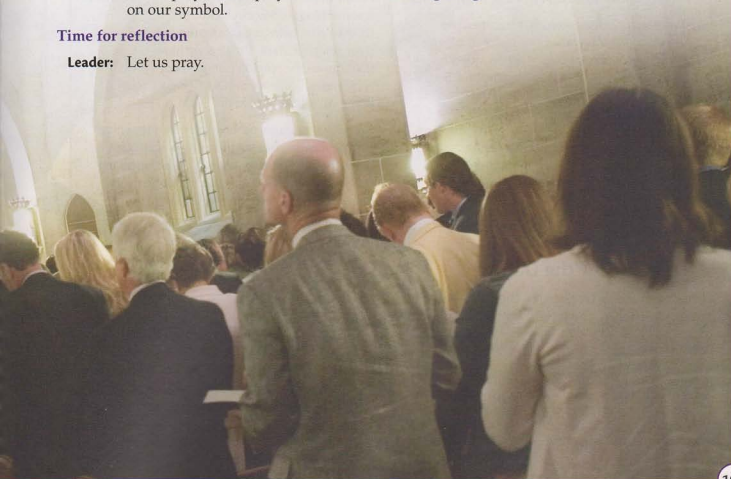
remember me only in light of your love. (Psalm 25:4–5,7)

You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever. (Psalm 16:11)

**Leader:** May God our loving Father bless us and grant us the grace to follow Jesus Christ, who is our Way, our Truth, and our Life.

**All:** Amen.

#### Closing Song



## A Junior High Student Puts Faith into Action

How does a young person live the message of Jesus today? For Margaret Blazunas, the 14-year-old shown here with her pastor, Father John White, S.J., following Jesus' way of love is not only fulfilling but fun.

Maggie has been volunteering at McGregor Home, a retirement community, since she was in the fifth grade. She helps the residents with crafts, takes out their curlers in the beauty shop, scoops out ice cream at the ice-cream parlor, and reads letters from their children. Maggie says that she benefits from doing these works of mercy and enjoys listening to the stories the people tell. Her life is also enriched by new friends, such as Mrs. Cooley, one of the residents.

After Maggie volunteered last summer, the director of volunteers wrote a letter to Maggie's principal. In it she expressed appreciation for the 67 hours of service that Maggie gave. She commented, "Maggie is always willing to try something new. Our residents enjoyed her enthusiastic manner. She was a joy to have here." Maggie has also worked after school at St. Patrick's Hunger Center, preparing and serving meals for people who are homeless in Cleveland, Ohio.



As the president of Student Council at Gesu School, Maggie leads the student body in service activities. The students in her school assist with doughnut Sundays at the parish and promote Red Ribbon week (a "students against drugs" program) in the school.

Why does this busy teenager make time to

help others: Maggie traces her spirit of faith-in-action to her father, who is a member of the Knights of Columbus, an organization at the service of the Church. Maggie's personal convictions motivate her. She believes serving is really important. She does not see it as something she has to do in order to get service points for Confirmation. To Maggie, reaching out to others is something God wants her to do. Maggie believes that being a Catholic requires more than going to Mass. She says we have to take our faith out of the religion class and act on what we hear in the Gospels. For her, "Being a Catholic is doing what Jesus would do."

Maggie encourages other students to try volunteering now so that volunteering will become a habit they will have as adults. Besides, speaking from experience, Maggie says that when you help people in need, you feel great.

## A Treasure for the Daring

Jesus promises a treasure to those who live by his truth. To discover what it is, fill in the blanks by unscrambling the letters below them. To check your answer, search John 14.

Whoever \_\_\_\_\_ me will keep my \_\_\_\_\_ and my \_\_\_\_\_ will love him,  
seovl rdwo reahFt

and we will \_\_\_\_\_ to him and \_\_\_\_\_ our \_\_\_\_\_ with him.  
meco keam gliednlw