

Contents

Introducing the Living in Christ Series.....	5
--	---

Units of Study

Unit 1: What Is Revelation?.....	14
---	-----------

Overview.....	14
---------------	----

Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:

Article 11 - What is Revelation?	
Article 12 - Sharing in God's Life	
Article 13 - Salvation History	
Article 14 - How Do We Know God Really Exists?	
Article 16 - God's Revelation through Sacred Scripture: The Old Testament	
Article 17 - God's Revelation through Sacred Scripture: The New Testament	
Article 18 - God's Revelation through Tradition	
Article 19 - Passing On God's Revelation	
Article 20 - The Lives of the Saints	
Article 21 - Discovering God in Our Daily Lives	
Article 22 - Discovering God in the Faith of Others	
Article 23 - Discovering God in the Natural World	
Article -24 Discovering God through the Human Intellect	

Learning Experiences.....	18
---------------------------	----

Handouts.....	32
---------------	----

Unit 2: Who Is God?.....	56
---------------------------------	-----------

Overview.....	56
---------------	----

Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:

Article 1 - God Is One: Catholics Are Monotheistic	
Article 2 - God Is Three-in-One: Catholics Are Trinitarian	
Article 3 - The First Person of the Trinity: God the Father	
Article 4 - The Second Person of the Trinity: God the Son	
Article 5 - The Third Person of the Trinity: God the Holy Spirit	
Article 6 - The Early Church Faces Challenges to Apostolic Faith	
Article 7 - Early Christological Heresies	
Article 8 - The Ecumenical Councils of the Early Church	
Article 9 - The Nicene Creed	
Article 10 - The Trinity: Model for Human Relationships	

Learning Experiences.....	60
---------------------------	----

Handouts.....	81
---------------	----

Unit 3: Who Is Jesus?	98
Overview	98
Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:	
Article 25 - What Is the Incarnation?	
Article 27 - Jesus: The Word Made Flesh	
Article 28 - The Union of God with Humanity	
Article 29 - Jesus: A Human Mind, A Human Heart	
Article 30 - Jesus: A Faithful Jew	
Article 31 - Jesus' Life in First-Century Palestine	
Article 32 - Jesus: Union of the Human and the Divine	
Learning Experiences	102
Handouts	115
Unit 4: Jesus' Relationships with Mary and the Disciples.	134
Overview	134
Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:	
Article 26 - Mary's Role in the Incarnation	
Article 66 - Do Catholics Pray to Mary?	
Article 67 - Mary: First Disciple and Model of Faith	
Learning Experiences	138
Handouts	150
Unit 5: Jesus Teaches What It Means to Love God and Others.	166
Overview	166
Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:	
Article 49 - God Desires Our Happiness	
Article 50 - Baptism: Becoming God's Adopted Children	
Article 51 - Our Ultimate Destiny: Eternal Life	
Article 52 - Bringing Our Needs to God in Prayer	
Article 53 - The Sermon on the Mount	
Article 54 - The Parables of Jesus	
Article 55 - Jesus and the Rich Man (Mark 10:17–22)	
Article 56 - The Greatest Commandments (Matthew 22:34–40)	
Article 57 - The Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31–46)	
Article 62 - What is Prayer?	
Article 63 - The Lord's Prayer	
Article 64 - Jesus Teaches us About Prayer	
Article 65 - The Cornerstones of Prayer	
Learning Experiences	171
Handouts	189
Unit 6: Jesus Models What It Means to Love God and Others	208
Overview	208
Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:	
Article 40 - What Does It Mean to Be Fully Human?	
Article 41 - The Gifts of Intellect and Free Will	

Article 42 - To Love and Be Loved	
Article 43 - The Call to Be Stewards of Creation	
Article 45 - The Inherent Dignity of All People	
Article 46 - In the Image and Likeness of God	
Article 47 - Women and Men: Partners in God's Plan	
Article 48 - Respect for Human Life	
Learning Experiences	213
Handouts	229
Unit 7: Jesus, the Savior	246
Overview	246
Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:	
Article 15 - Evil and Suffering and a Good and Powerful God	
Article 33 - Jesus: Lord and Redeemer	
Article 34 - Pentecost and the "New Age" of the Church	
Article 35 - Jesus Fulfills His Mission in the Church	
Article 36 - Communion with Christ Through the Sacraments	
Article 37 - Jesus' Presence in the Eucharist	
Article 38 - Jesus Teaches Through the Church	
Article 39 - Jesus' Ministry Through the Community of Faith	
Article 44 - Created, Redeemed, and Bound for Glory	
Article 71 - Our Destiny: Union with God	
Article 72 - The Church: Visible and Spiritual	
Article 73 - The Christian Understanding of Death	
Article 74 - Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory	
Learning Experiences	251
Handouts	265
Unit 8: Faith and Discipleship: A Personal Response to God	278
Overview	278
Student Book Articles Addressed in this Unit:	
Article 58 - Faith and Religion	
Article 59 - Faith: A Gift from God	
Article 60 - Examples of Faith	
Article 61 - Faith: Our Response to Revelation	
Article 68 - Discipleship: Resisting Evil, Seeking Forgiveness	
Article 69 - Discipleship: Concern for the Common Good	
Article 70 - Discipleship: The Call to Evangelization	
Learning Experiences	282
Handouts	296
Appendix 1: Frequently Used Handouts	309
Appendix 2: Semester-Long Faith and Discipleship Portfolio Project	311
Appendix 3: Student Book/Teacher Guide Correlation	317
Acknowledgments	323

Unit 2

Who Is God?

Overview

This unit builds on the first unit about Revelation by exploring God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with an emphasis on God is love.

Key Understandings and Questions

Upon completing this unit, the students will have a deeper understanding of the following key concepts:

- God is love.
- Catholics are monotheistic and believe in only one God.
- Catholics are Trinitarian and believe there are three Persons in one God.
- The Trinity is a model of love for human communities.

Upon completing the unit, the students will have answered the following questions:

- Who is God?
- How is God one, yet a Trinity?
- How are the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit the same but different?
- What difference does a Trinitarian God make in my life?

Student Book Articles

This unit draws on articles from the *Jesus Christ* student book and incorporates them into the unit instruction. Whenever the teaching steps for the unit require the students to refer to or read an article from the student book, the following symbol appears in the margin: . The articles covered in the unit are from "Section 1: The Trinity," and are as follows. If you believe the students would do the reading more successfully with additional structure, see the handout "Student Notes for Unit 2" (Document #: TX001184) at smp.org/LivingInChrist.

- "God Is One: Catholics Are Monotheistic" (article 1, pp. 11–12)
- "God Is Three-in-One: Catholics Are Trinitarian" (article 2, pp. 13–16)
- "The First Person of the Trinity: God the Father" (article 3, pp. 17–19)
- "The Second Person of the Trinity: God the Son" (article 4, pp. 20–22)
- "The Third Person of the Trinity: God the Holy Spirit" (article 5, pp. 22–24)
- "The Early Church Faces Challenges to Apostolic Faith" (article 6, pp. 27–28)

- “Early Christological Heresies” (article 7, pp. 29–32)
- “The Ecumenical Councils of the Early Church” (article 8, pp. 32–34)
- “The Nicene Creed” (article 9, pp. 34–36)
- “The Trinity: Model for Human Relationships” (article 10, pp. 36–38)

How Will You Know the Students Understand?

The following resources will help you assess the students’ understanding of the key concepts covered in this unit:

- handout “Final Performance Task Options for Unit 2” (Document #: TX001199)
- handout “Rubric for Final Performance Tasks for Unit 2” (Document #: TX001200)
- handout “Unit 2 Test” (Document #: TX001272)

The Suggested Path to Understanding

This unit in the teacher guide provides you with one learning path to take with the students, to enable them to begin their study of Jesus by deepening their understanding of God and the Trinity. It is not necessary to use all the learning experiences provided in the unit; however, if you substitute other material from this course or your own material for some of the material offered here, be sure that you have covered all relevant facets of understanding and that you have not missed any skills or knowledge required for later units.

Interpret

Step 1: Preassess the students’ understanding of God by asking if God is more like one thing than another.

Understand

Step 2: Follow the metaphor learning experience by presenting to the students the handouts “Final Performance Task Options for Unit 2” (Document #: TX001199) and “Rubric for Final Performance Tasks for Unit 2” (Document #: TX001200).

Interpret

Step 3: Begin to uncover the nature of love with the students as a precursor to talking about how God is love.

Explain

Step 4: Conduct a Scripture search for passages that tell of God’s love for us.

Perceive

Step 5: Continue the study of God’s love for us by reading a part of Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical *God Is Love (Deus Caritas Est)*.

Explain

Step 6: Invite the students to learn more about the mystery of the Trinity.

Reflect **Step 7:** Explore and define the mystery, trust, and faith relationship.

Explain **Step 8:** Continue your presentation of the Trinity by emphasizing that though Christians believe in one God, this God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Perceive **Step 9:** In an effort to draw students into the concept of the Trinity and to explain and explore the mystery of our faith of God in three Persons, use the analogy of the compound H₂O.

Explain **Step 10:** Have the students learn about the Nicene Creed in general and then have them learn more about each Person in the Trinity by examining the creed in more detail.

Apply **Step 11:** Conduct a small-group Scripture search for the Persons of the Trinity.

Explain **Step 12:** Educate the students about the evolution of the theology of the Trinity.

Interpret **Step 13:** Assess student understanding of Church teaching with "You could be a heretic if . . ." statements.

Apply **Step 14:** Discuss the truth that the Trinity is a model for human relationships and then ask the students to assess relationships featured in the news and evaluate them according to the Trinity model.

Understand **Step 15:** Now that the students are closer to the end of the unit, make sure they are all on track with their final performance tasks, if you have assigned them.

Reflect **Step 16:** Provide the students with a tool to use for reflecting about what they learned in the unit and how they learned.

Background for Teaching This Unit

Visit smp.org/LivingInChrist for additional information about these and other theological concepts covered in this unit:

- "God Is Love" (Document #: TX001179)
- "The Trinity" (Document #: TX001181)
- "Introduction to the Gospels" (Document #: TX001180)

The Web site also includes information on this and other teaching methods used in the unit:

- "Using a Concordance" (Document #: TX001182)

Scripture Passages

Scripture is an important part of the Living in Christ series and is frequently used in the learning experiences for each unit. The Scripture passages featured in this unit are as follows:

- Exodus 19:4–5 (“I bore you up on eagle wings. . . .”)
- Psalm 118:1–2 (God’s love endures forever.)
- Hosea 11:1–4 (“When Israel was a child . . .”)
- Matthew 6:9–13 (Jesus calls God “Abba.”)
- John 15:9–10 (“As the father loves me . . .”)
- Romans 5:1–8 (“For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died . . .”)
- Romans 8:38–39 (Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.)

Vocabulary

The student book and the teacher guide include the following key terms for this unit. To provide the students with a list of these terms and their definitions, download and print the handout “Vocabulary for Unit 2” (Document #: TX001201), one for each student.

<i>Abba</i>	eternity
Advocate	filial
Amen	incarnate
beatitude	Jesus
begotten	Last Judgment
catholic	Messiah
Christ	monotheism
Christology	Nicene Creed
Church Fathers	Pentecost
covenant	philosophy
creed	salvation history
<i>Deus Caritas Est</i>	sanctify
divine economy	solemnities
doctrine	Trinity
Ecumenical Council	unbegotten
encyclical	

Learning Experiences

These first several units contain some complicated theology and thus require more lecturing than later units. If the students seem to be having trouble with the material, pick and choose it more selectively for them. If the students are breezing through, then you might want to assign them some more challenging material.

Interpret

Step 1

Preassess the students' understanding of God by asking if God is more like one thing than another.

This forced-choice learning experience is designed to help the students think about their images of God by choosing metaphors for God. The choices themselves are interesting, but the reasons people make the choices they do may be even more interesting. Each option may be interpreted differently by different people. To explore the possibilities of who God is, it is important that the students share the thoughts behind their decisions.

1. Tell the students that you will read the question "Is God more like . . . ?" and then give them two options, designating a side of the room for each. They are to move to the side of the room that corresponds with their choice.

Explain that they are to make their decisions based on which option they think God is *more like*, not which option they *like more*. Use the first pair under part 2 as an example: A person who thinks God is more like Montana might think of God as open, quiet, and able to see everything, or as "on top of the world," just as Montana is at the top of the United States. A person who thinks God is more like New York City probably sees God as busy taking care of everything that is going on in the world, or as a combination of all types of people and all cultures, just as New York City is home to many different people.

Stress that each student will have a different interpretation of the choices and that all should be ready to articulate why they made the choice they did.

2. Keep the students moving quickly as they make their choices. For each question allow a few students on each side of the room to explain briefly why they chose as they did. Following the sharing from each side, ask if anyone would like to switch sides after hearing ideas from other students about who God is to them. Then move on to the next choice. Use this list of metaphors:

- Is God more like . . .
 - Montana or New York City?
 - a spark plug or a battery?
 - a trapeze artist or a circus clown?
 - a candle or a lightbulb?
 - a bridge or a tower?
 - the beach or the mountains?
 - a hotel or a hospital?
 - a magnifying glass or a telescope?
 - first-and-ten or goal-to-go?
 - a picture or a puzzle?
 - a camera operator or the star of the show?
 - a golf ball or a Nerf ball?
 - a chair or a table?
 - a stone or a soap bubble?
 - a lake or a river?

(This learning experience is from *Teaching Manual for "Understanding Catholic Christianity,"* p. 58.)

Understand

Step 2

Follow the metaphor learning experience by presenting to the students the handouts "Final Performance Task Options for Unit 2" (Document #: TX001199) and "Rubric for Final Performance Tasks for Unit 2" (Document #: TX001200).

This unit provides you with three ways to assess that the students have a deep understanding of the most important concepts in the unit: creating a Trinity brochure, writing a children's book about the Trinity, or developing a peer minister evaluation to assess the school community's unity. Refer to "Using Final Performance Tasks to Assess Understanding" (Document #: TX001011) and "Using Rubrics to Assess Work" (Document #: TX001012) at smp.org/LivingInChrist for background information.

1. Prepare by downloading and printing the handouts "Final Performance Task Options for Unit 2" (Document #: TX001199) and "Rubric for Final Performance Tasks for Unit 2" (Document #: TX001200), one for each student.

Teacher Note

If you have done these performance tasks, or very similar ones, with the students before, place examples of this work in the classroom. During this introduction explain how each is a good example of what you are looking for, for different reasons. This allows the students to concretely understand what you are looking for and to understand that there is not only one way to succeed.

2. Distribute the handouts. Give the students a choice as to which performance task they select and add more options if you so choose. Review the directions, expectations, and rubric in class, allowing the students to ask questions. You may want to say something to this effect:
 - You may work with no more than two other people on the first two options. If you want to work on your own, you can choose any of the three options.
3. Explain the types of tools and knowledge the students will gain throughout the unit so they can successfully complete the final performance task.
4. Answer questions to clarify the end point toward which the unit is headed. Remind the students as the unit progresses that each activity builds the knowledge and skills they will need to show you that they understand how God reveals himself and how Jesus is God's Perfect Revelation.

Interpret

Step 3

Begin to uncover the nature of love with the students as a precursor to talking about how God is love.

In this learning experience, the students discuss in small groups the ways love is communicated between people. They then report back to the class, sharing their small-group ideas with the large group.

1. For homework or for an introductory journal assignment, ask the students to imagine that they are the authors of an online or magazine article titled "Five Ways to Know Someone Really Loves You" or "I Would Definitely Know Someone Loved Me If . . ."
2. Begin the class by leading a discussion about love, asking the students to brainstorm definitions and descriptions of love. Record the students' responses on the board.
3. In conversation with the students, consider similarities and differences in the definitions by identifying the common elements. Ask the class to decide on a common definition. Write the definition on the board. Erase the rest of the comments.
4. On the board write: "How is love communicated?" Divide the class into small groups of four or five and direct the small groups to discuss how we know someone loves us or another person—how love is communicated.

5. Ask the students to summarize the results of their small-group conversations for the class.
6. In the large group, initiate an informal discussion by summarizing the small-groups' input. Use the collective definition of *love* and the small-group ideas as a bridge to introducing God's enduring love for us. Note that the love we know from other people can help us to recognize God's love. Ask the students to provide examples of ways this can be true and ask for specific times or events when God communicates love to us.

Explain**Step 4**

Conduct a Scripture search for passages that tell of God's love for us.

The students may work individually, in pairs, or in small groups.

1. Be sure all the students have their Bibles, as well as some paper and pens or pencils. Explain to the students that they will search for Scripture passages that tell of God's love for us. They are to use both the Old and New Testaments, and they should take notes on the information they find as they look at the various passages. If you have access to an online or print concordance, the students can use that, especially if their knowledge of the Scriptures is minimal.
2. Write the following Scripture citations on the board, especially if you sense the students need some help getting started. Invite the students to add to the list.
 - Exodus 19:4–5 ("I bore you up on eagle wings . . .")
 - Psalm 118:1–2 (God's love endures forever.)
 - Hosea 11:1–4 ("When Israel was a child . . .")
 - Matthew 6:9–13 (Jesus calls God "Abba.")
 - John 15:9–10 ("As the father loves me . . .")
 - Romans 5:1–8 ("For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died . . .")
 - Romans 8:38–39 (Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.)
3. Direct the students to answer the following questions for three passages that they find:
 - What does this passage reveal about God's love for us?
 - Why is this passage significant?
 - What can we learn from this particular passage?

Teacher Note

See the article "Using a Concordance" (Document #: TX001182) at smp.org/LivingInChrist for background on using a concordance.

4. Lead a summary discussion of the passages the students find. Tell them to keep their notes for use in later assignments.

Perceive

Step 5

Continue the study of God's love for us by reading a part of Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical *God Is Love (Deus Caritas Est)*.

This learning experience may take more than one class session. Prepare comments for your class presentation to help the students understand the Pope's points.

1. Prepare copies of "Excerpts from the Encyclical 'Deus Caritas Est' ('God Is Love')" (Document #: TX001183) as well as commentaries on the encyclical, all of which can be found at smp.org/LivingInChrist.
2. Share the following background material about the encyclical and ask the students to take notes:
 - *Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love)* is Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical.
 - An **encyclical** is a letter written by the Pope and sent to the whole Church and, at times, beyond the Church to the whole world; commonly focused on Church teaching regarding a particular issue or currently important matter.
3. Read the introduction (paragraph 1) with the students. Make sure the context for the encyclical is clear. Ask:
 - How does Pope Benedict set the stage for what he wants to say? How do you know this?

Highlight major points, clarifying any dense language you may encounter:

 - Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea but rather is the encounter with an event or a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.
 - In acknowledging the centrality of love, Christian faith has retained the core of Israel's faith, while at the same time giving it new depth and breadth.
 - Jesus united into a single precept this commandment of love for God and the commandment of love for neighbor found in the Book of Leviticus: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (19:18; cf. Mk 12:29–31).

- In a world where the name of God is sometimes associated with vengeance or even a duty of hatred and violence, this message is both timely and significant.
4. Highlight major themes of the encyclical explained in the introduction:
- Overall: "Speak of the love which God lavishes upon us and which we in turn must share with others."
 - First part: "To clarify some essential facts concerning the love which God mysteriously and gratuitously offers to man, together with the intrinsic link between that Love and the reality of human love . . ."
 - Second part: This part . . . treats the ecclesial exercise of the commandment of love of neighbor."
5. Summarize "Part 1: The Unity of Love in Creation and in Salvation History," paragraphs 2–11, in terms the students will grasp:
- God's love is fundamental. The encyclical deals with love as addressed in the Scriptures and Church Tradition. The word *love* is used in different ways. (*The students can identify many.*) (2)
 - This paragraph defines the Greek *eros*, *philia*, and *agape*. New Testament authors preferred *philia* (friendship) for the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. The new Christian understanding of *love* is expressed by *agape*. (3)
 - *Eros* is sacred, even before Christ. Old Testament writers recognized the misuse of *eros* as dehumanizing. The discipline of *eros* points toward ultimate good. (4)
 - There is a relationship between love and God. Love is more than a response to instinct. The whole person, body and soul, is called to love; *eros* abused separates them, but then *eros* healthy integrates the human experience and leads us beyond focus on self. (5)
 - In the Old Testament, there is a book called the Song of Songs. The book contrasts searching, selfish love with concern and care for the other. This move away from self-focus leads to the discovery of God. The path of Jesus leads from the cross to the Resurrection. (6)
 - Though there are different understandings of love, there is an underlying unity among common human experiences of love, messages of love portrayed by the Scriptures and Church Tradition. *Eros* can be non-Christian, worldly, ascending, possessive love. *Agape* is Christian love, descending, giving, and shaped by faith. The two can never be completely separated. (7)
 - Love is a single reality with different dimensions at different times. Biblical faith accepts the whole person. (8)

- Biblical faith presents a new image of love because of the scriptural image of God and the image of human beings. God is one, creator of all, and loving with a personal love. The prophets (Hosea and Ezekiel) describe God's love for Israel and show Israel what it means and how to be human and happy. (9)
 - God's *eros* (desire) is also *agape* (giving). God's love is passionate and forgiving. God reconciles love and justice. In the relationship of love between God and us, God remains God and we remain human yet become one with God. (10)
 - The Bible also presents an image of humanity. Alone, humans are incomplete, seeking wholeness in communion with another. *Eros* is rooted in human nature. *Eros* directs man and woman to become one, to represent a complete humanity. Marriage is an icon of God's relationship with us. "God's way of loving becomes the measure of human love." (11)
6. Divide the class into small groups of four or five. Distribute copies of *Deus Caritas Est* to each group. Assign two or three groups to each of these two sections from the encyclical: "Jesus Christ—The Incarnate Love of God" (paragraphs 12–15) and "Love of God and Love of Neighbor" (paragraphs 16–18). Provide the following instructions:
- Read your assigned paragraphs.
 - Identify the key ideas (what we will remember) from your section.
 - Prepare a brief report to make to the class.
7. Ask one member of each group to make the report to the class. A second member of the group should record key ideas on the board. If the students do not highlight these points, add them:
- *Paragraph 12.* Jesus does not just tell parables about pursuing those who are lost; he also describes himself and his activity. "His death on the Cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. This is love in its most radical form."
 - *Paragraph 13.* *Logos*, the Word, eternal wisdom becomes food for us in the Eucharist as love. "More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving."
 - *Paragraph 14.* "Union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own. Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus also towards unity with all Christians." Love of God and love of neighbor are united. "'Worship' itself, Eucharistic communion, includes the reality both of being loved and of loving others in turn." The Eucharist must translate into love in the everyday.

- **Paragraph 15.** Jesus expands the definition of *neighbor* from “the community of one’s country” to include “anyone who needs me and whom I can help.” When assessing the worth of a human life, love is the *key criterion* for evaluating success or failure. Love of God and love of neighbor have become one.
 - **Paragraph 16.** Love of God and love of neighbor cannot be separated. “One is so closely connected to the other that to say that we love God becomes a lie if we are closed to our neighbor or hate him altogether. Saint John’s words should rather be interpreted to mean that love of neighbor is a path that leads to the encounter with God, and that closing our eyes to our neighbor also blinds us to God.”
 - **Paragraph 17.** Although God is invisible, he is not inaccessible. “God has made himself visible: in Jesus we are able to see the Father (cf. Jn 14:9).” God has been present throughout the Church’s history. We find him in men and women who reflect his presence, in the Bible, and in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. God loved us first. The more we align our will to God’s will, the more we will love. Our will and God’s will be more often the same.
 - **Paragraph 18.** When we encounter God intimately, and our wills are closer to being the same, we can begin to feel more like God feels, for example, about a human being. “Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others much more than their outward necessities; I can give them the look of love which they crave.” Religious practice without love of neighbor is dry. Love can move beyond a commandment and be freely bestowed by God and by its nature must be shared with other people. Love unites us to God and makes us one.
8. Read together, highlight, and discuss paragraph 39 and the conclusion (paragraphs 40–42). Ask:
- How does Pope Benedict present persons whose lives are examples of love?
9. Conclude with the prayer to Mary that closes the encyclical.



Article

1

Explain**Step 6**

Invite the students to learn more about the mystery of the Trinity.

Introduce the Trinity using student book article 1, “God Is One: Catholics Are Monotheistic,” and supplementary information provided here. You may want to read some of the background material about the Trinity at smp.org/LivinginChrist.

1. Prepare for your presentation on the Trinity by reviewing the PowerPoint "Introducing the Trinity: Central Mystery of Faith" (Document #: TX001185) at smp.org/LivingInChrist.
2. Ask for several volunteers to read aloud article 1, "God Is One: Catholics Are Monotheistic," from the student book, taking turns with each new paragraph. Stop the readers at several points along the way and ask if anyone has questions. Then present the following material, which summarizes the complicated concepts in the student book:

- The belief in and worship of only one God is called monotheism.
- When God began a **covenant** relationship with Abraham, he was revealing an essential truth: there is only one God, the Lord of all the earth. Over time Abraham and Sarah's descendants, who would become known as the Jews, understood and embraced this monotheistic faith.
- Like the Jews, Christians are monotheistic.

You may want to note that many early Jewish believers in Jesus did not find worshipping at the Jewish temple to be inconsistent with their faith in Jesus Christ.

- We share our belief in this one God—and our commitment to monotheism—with Judaism and Islam.
- Catholic Christians praying "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" may lead some people to think that Catholics have three gods, not one.
- Catholics have always affirmed the truth that God is one. Indeed, we profess this each week at Sunday liturgy when we say the **Nicene Creed**: "I believe in one God."
- The mystery of the Holy Trinity is a unique defining trait of Christian faith. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* states, it is the Church's "most fundamental and essential teaching" (234) and the central mystery of our faith, which only God can fully reveal to us.
- Every prayer we pray and every Sacrament we celebrate is done in the name of this Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Many Catholics express their belief in the Trinity daily (and don't even realize it!).

Solicit any immediate questions and let the students know that they will explore the Trinity further.

Reflect

Step 7

Explore and define the mystery, trust, and faith relationship.

Do the "Determine the Mystery, Trust, and Faith Relationship" exercise or the "Trust Walk" exercise, or both.

Determine the Mystery, Trust, and Faith Relationship

The doctrine of the Trinity is a complex subject, and it is called a mystery for a reason. Remind the students that we come to faith with not only our minds that grapple with complicated teachings but also our hearts, in trust.

1. Write the word *mystery* on the board. Invite the students to brainstorm the meaning of this word. Conclude by creating a class definition. Lead the students to a definition close to "something not understood or beyond understanding" (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 822).
2. Write the word *trust* on the board. Invite the students to brainstorm the meaning of this word. Conclude by creating a class definition. Lead the students to a definition close to "one in which confidence is placed" (p. 1344).
3. Write the word *faith* on the board. Invite the students to brainstorm the meaning of this word. Ask the students if they know the origin of the word. Before coming to a class definition, tell the students the word comes from the Latin word *fides*, which means "trust" or "belief." As you lead the students to a definition, consider something close to "belief and trust in and loyalty to God" (p. 450).
4. Ask the students to write a journal entry that answers this question:
 - What is the mystery, trust, and faith relationship?
5. Close by telling the students they should keep these concepts in mind while they are studying the Trinity, because the Trinity is a mystery we can learn about but never completely understand.

Trust Walk

In an effort to acknowledge how difficult it can be to overcome our fears and surrender to trust and faith, lead the students on a trust walk.

1. If you have the ability to set up a safe, fun, and lightly challenging obstacle course in a large space, this trust walk can be really fun. In your gym, set up a bench (to walk on or over), a chair or a table (to crawl under), and so on. Be creative. Prepare bandanas as blindfolds or cut up an old towel or T-shirt in long strips to make blindfolds.

2. If you do not have a large space, you can do a modified trust walk in your classroom with a little rearrangement of furniture. Have the students form pairs. Be sure to give firm instructions on safety. Partners should take turns leading each other around the obstacle course. Consider changing the obstacle course slightly when the partners switch roles so the newly blindfolded students don't know what to expect.
3. When all the students have been through the trust walk, have them journal about their experience. Use these questions:
 - How did it feel to be blindfolded and led around an obstacle course?
 - Did you have any fear?
 - How did you overcome your fears?
 - What was the mystery of this experience?
 - How much trust and faith did you have in your guide? Why?
 - How long do you think it would take you to completely surrender to your partner and let him or her guide you along without hesitation?
4. Ask the students to share their reflections in small groups. If time allows continue to process with the whole class. Conclude with a statement about how encountering mysteries of our faith, such as the Trinity, can be similar to a trust walk, requiring a letting-go or surrendering to the unknown and allowing trust and faith to be our guides.



Article
2

Explain

Step 8

Continue your presentation of the Trinity by emphasizing that though Christians believe in one God, this God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

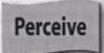
1. Continue your presentation of the Trinity using student book article 2, "God Is Three-in-One: Catholics Are Trinitarian," and supplementary information provided here. You may want to prepare by reading some of the background material about the Trinity at smp.org/LivingInChrist and by reviewing the PowerPoint "Introducing the Trinity: God Is Three-in-One" (Document #: TX001186).
2. Ask for several volunteers to read aloud article 2, "God Is Three-in-One: Catholics Are Trinitarian," from the student book, taking turns with each paragraph. Stop the readers at several points along the way and ask if anyone has questions. After the article has been read in its entirety, lead a discussion using the following questions:
 - What is the difference between being and doing?
 - What is the difference between who you are and what you do?

Then present the following material, which summarizes the complicated concepts:

- The three Divine Persons in one God are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- The three Divine Persons are united as one God: they are inseparable both in what they are and what they do.
 - "Inseparable in what they *are*" means that each Divine Person is fully God—complete, whole, and entire.
 - "Inseparable in what they *do*" means that each Divine Person has the same job description, so to speak. Each of the three Persons is engaged in the work of our salvation. Each acts to create us in love, redeem us, and make us holy.
- How is each Divine Person distinct?
 - First, each carries out the work of our salvation in the way that is most proper:
 - God the Father draws us to follow Christ.
 - God the Son became **incarnate**.
 - God the Holy Spirit gives us the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - Second, the three Persons are distinct in their relationship to one another:
 - It is proper to speak of the Father as the generator, even though all three Divine Persons are eternal, existing without beginning or end. God the Father is **unbegotten**, meaning he has always existed without beginning or end.
 - God the Son is **begotten** of God the Father—in the words of the Nicene Creed, "begotten, not made, one in being with the Father." (God the Father "fathered" Jesus.)
 - The Holy Spirit is sent out into the world, *proceeding from* the Father and the Son. (The Father and the Son send the Spirit out into the world.)
- The presence of the Trinity is clear in Sacred Scripture, especially in the New Testament.
- Everything Catholics do is done in the name of the Trinity. Most notably, every Catholic has been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- When we begin our personal and communal prayer in this way, including our celebrations of the Eucharist and other Sacraments, we recall that by the grace of our Baptism, we are to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity.



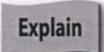
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Perceive
Step 9

In an effort to draw students into the concept of the Trinity and to explain and explore the mystery of our faith of God in three Persons, use the analogy of the compound H_2O .

See smp.org/LivinginChrist for an explanation of Saint Thomas Aquinas's argument that we can describe God if we understand that God is always greater than what we describe.

1. In preparation for this learning experience, bring in a heating element (a Bunsen burner or a hot plate), a small pot, and a small bag of ice cubes.
2. In the classroom or in another appropriate location, have the students gather around. Show them the H_2O in solid form, ice cubes. During each of the next few parts, ask the students if they agree the element is still H_2O .
3. Begin heating the ice cubes. Show the students the H_2O in liquid form.
4. Continue heating the H_2O until it is boiling and show the students the H_2O in the form of steam.
5. Conclude by explaining that H_2O shares some parallels with the mystery of the Trinity. Here we have a constant substance, H_2O , in three different forms. God is one, yet is also three Persons. How is this analogy similar and different?
6. Explain to the students that for homework they are to create their own analogies of the Trinity. Allow the students to write their analogies in paragraph form or to create them visually. Reporting these analogies the following day is a nice way to begin class and introduce the next step.


Explain
Step 10

Have the students learn about the Nicene Creed in general and then have them learn more about each Person in the Trinity by examining the creed in more detail.

The handout "The Nicene Creed and Commentary" (Document #: TX001202) presents a summary of the material in articles 3, 4, and 5 in the student book, "The First Person of the Trinity: God the Father," "The Second Person of the Trinity: God the Son," and "The Third Person of the Trinity: God the Holy Spirit," as well as some other commentary.



Articles
3, 4,
5, 9