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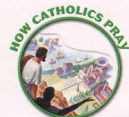
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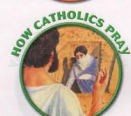
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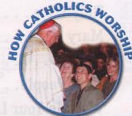


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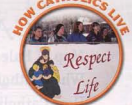


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# The Meaning of the Kingdom

## UNIT 2

**J**esus taught us about our relation with God and proclaimed the Kingdom of God. We are called to spread the Gospel by living the values of the Kingdom of God.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3



Jesus compared the Kingdom of God to a net cast into the sea and to a farmer who sows seed in his field. Both images illustrate how Jesus gathers his followers into the Kingdom.

85

### Catch-Up Catechesis

#### Topics

To help the young people who need Catch-Up Catechesis, this unit covers the following topics

- Ch. 5** The Kingdom of God
- Ch. 6** Christian Service Vocation
- Ch. 7** The Great Commandment
- Ch. 8** The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes

#### Our Catholic Teachings

You may also wish to review the following pages in the Our Catholic Teachings section of the back of the book: The Lord's Prayer, p. 429; The Sacraments at the Service of Communion, pp. 413, 414

# The Meaning of the Kingdom

## UNIT 2

### Summarizing the Unit

- Introduce the group to the unit by inviting a volunteer to read aloud the unit title and the summary paragraph below it.
- **Say** "Unit 2 begins our study of Jesus' preaching about the Kingdom of God. We will come to understand its meaning for the individual and the Church."



### Discussing the Scripture

- Invite a volunteer to read the Scripture verse aloud. Invite the young people to share their understanding of the verse.
- **Say** "These words from the Bible are from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount."

### Discussing the Photographs

- Invite the group to look carefully at each photograph. Have a volunteer read aloud the caption that connects the photographs to the Scripture verse.
- **Ask** "Are all the fish caught in a net kept to eat? Why?" (*No. Some are not edible, and some may not sell in the marketplace.*)
- "Does all the seed that a farmer sows grow? Why?" (*No. Some seed may fall on barren soil, and some seed may not receive enough moisture.*)
- "Will all people enter the Kingdom of Heaven?" (*Answers will vary but should include that those who follow Christ will enjoy everlasting happiness.*)

### Faith Words

#### Chapter 5

parable  
Kingdom of God

#### Chapter 6

disciple      consecrate  
Penance

#### Chapter 7

Pharisees      grace  
sanctification

#### Chapter 8

Beatitudes      Abba

## Introducing the Song

- Begin by reading through the words of the song with the group. Discuss the meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Listen to the recording found on the BLEST ARE WE Music CD.
- Have the young people sing along with the recording. When you feel they are ready, have them sing along with the instrumental track.
- The verses can be sung or spoken. You might invite the students to create verses or intercessions of their own.

## Using the BLEST ARE WE Song Book

The BLEST ARE WE Song Book contains hymns and Psalms that can be used in a parish celebration of the Liturgy as well as in the religious education of children. (Recordings and instrumental tracks are also available.) Each chapter contains song suggestions.

## Choosing Additional Songs

Each At-a-Glance Planner has several music suggestions that directly correlate to the specific chapter themes. These or any suggested songs/hymns can be used in place of or in addition to the unit or program song. Suggestions for movement and additional music can be found at [blestarewe.com](http://blestarewe.com).

## Special Notes

Collaborate with your parish director of music ministries to find appropriate times during parish celebrations to use the program or unit songs. This will help link the music learned in the religion program to the liturgical life of the parish community. If possible, have someone play the chosen song on a piano or another instrument during the session. Guitar chords and keyboard accompaniment can be found in the BLEST ARE WE Accompaniment Book.

# We Are the Hope

Paul A. Tate

**REFRAIN**

We are the hope! We are the fu - ture! Cho - sen by God, com -  
pelled by the Word! Called to walk in the foot-steps of Je - sus!

**VERSES**

*Cantor* *All*

Build - ing the king - dom, we are the hope!

*Cantor* *All*

1. For all the proph - ets who go un - heard,  
2. For all the chil - dren who have no voice, we are the hope, —  
3. For ev - 'ry race - and for ev - 'ry kind,

*Cantor* *All*

1. and all who seek - to o - bey your Word,  
2. and all the un - born who have no choice, we are the hope! —  
3. till ev - 'ry per - son is col - or - blind,

*Cantor* *All*

1. For all who suf - fer the pain of war, fear,  
2. For all the peo - ple who live in  
3. To those im - pris - oned by sin and greed, we are the hope, —

*Cantor* *All* *To refrain*

1. and all who no - build, re - new, re - store,  
2. and all who doubt, that our God is near, we are the hope!  
3. and all who judge - by be - lief or creed,

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## When to use the unit song:

- before or after the opening prayer
- during the prayer celebration
- at the end of the session
- during special celebrations

## When to use the instrumental tracks:

- as the young people enter the room
- during the opening prayer
- as background music during independent work time
- during the prayer celebration (especially during a meditation prayer service)
- during the Feasts and Seasons lessons



# The Kingdom of God

Chapter

5

## Background for the Catechist

The coming of the Kingdom of God is a central theme of the New Testament. John the Baptist urges people to repent from sin in order to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom, and Jesus teaches that he has come to bring about the beginning of the Kingdom of God. The fullness of God's Kingdom will not come until the Second Coming of Christ, when God will destroy the power of evil and resurrect the faithful to life everlasting.

## Preparing for God's Kingdom

The parables of Jesus tell us how to prepare for the coming of God's Kingdom. As members of the Church, we are to be signs of this Kingdom here on earth. We are to turn away from sin and believe in the Gospel. We are to love God and our neighbors in daily life. As a pilgrim Church, we are to join with other Christians in working toward God's Kingdom of justice and peace.

Jesus' parables especially call us to minister to the poor by performing the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. We are to join in the work of Christ and help make the Kingdom of God a reality here on earth.

## Faith Focus

The parables of Jesus teach us about the Kingdom of God and how to prepare for its coming.

## Time for Reflection

How am I using my talents to do the work of God's Kingdom?

Respond

## A Catechist's Prayer



Heavenly Father, empower me to open my heart to your word, so that I may receive it as good soil receives a sower's seeds. Help me respond to the needs of the poor, never tiring in my efforts to bring about justice and peace in today's world. May your Holy Spirit guide me and help me build your Kingdom. I ask this through Christ, your Son. Amen.

# At-a-Glance Planner

## Special Preparations

15 minutes

### Share

**Objective** To offer ways to work toward a just and peaceful society



- If you plan to use the Get Connected Optional Activity or Enriching the Prayer, have a world map available to display to the class. Also, bookmark Matthew 22:37–40 in your Bible in preparation for Enriching the Prayer.

20 minutes

### Hear & Believe

**Objective** To explore the meaning of the Kingdom of God as presented in parables found in Matthew's Gospel



- If you are going to share the Scripture Background, plan to point out forms of interactive learning that young people see in their school classes from day to day.
- For Enriching the Chapter, bookmark Matthew 22:1–14 in your Bible and be prepared to read it to the group.

20 minutes

### Hear & Believe

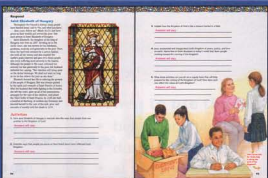
**Objective** To describe the role of members of the Church in doing the work of God's Kingdom



10 minutes

### Respond

**Objective** To give examples of actions that can reflect the values of God's Kingdom

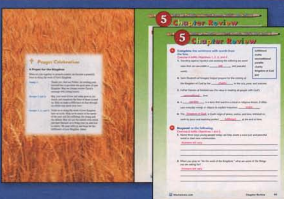


- Prepare for the Special Needs Activity, if applicable.

10 minutes

### Prayer & Review

**Objective** To pray for the fulfillment of God's Kingdom and for guidance in spreading justice and love



- Prepare a chart or handout listing the spiritual works of mercy to use for Enriching the Prayer.

## Teaching Steps

## Materials

- Pray the Scripture verse.
- Read the text and discuss personal experiences.
- Complete the writing activity.

### Additional Activity

- Empathize with people in need.

- ☐ materials for the prayer corner as listed on page 87

- Discuss the illustration.
- Read and discuss the Scripture story about the parables of the Kingdom of God.
- Complete the activity.
- Review the Faith Words: *parable, Kingdom of God*.

### Additional Activity

- Pantomime the parables about the Kingdom of God.

- ☐ Bibles (at least one for every two people)

- Discuss the illustration.
- Read and discuss "Blessed Damien of Molokai."
- Discuss "A Closer Look."
- Explore the doctrine in "Our Church Teaches."
- Discuss the We Believe statement.
- Complete the activities.

### Additional Activity

- Suggest ways to create a better world.

- Discuss the photograph.
- Read and discuss the story about Saint Elizabeth of Hungary.
- Do the activities.

### Additional Activity

- Write success stories.

- Prepare for prayer.
- Pray "A Prayer for the Kingdom."
- Distribute the Family Time pages for the next chapter.
- Complete the Chapter Review.

### Catholic Social Teaching

- Plan a time to teach the Faith in Action page for this chapter.

- ☐ materials for the prayer corner as listed on page 87



# Resources

## Multimedia Resources

### Books



- **The Kid's Guide to Service Projects**  
Barbara A. Lewis (Free Spirit Publishing, Inc., 1995)  
This book provides more than 500 service ideas for young people.
- **Second Chance**  
Judy Baer (Bethany House, 1991)  
When high school quarterback Todd Winston is paralyzed in a serious accident, he is forced to rethink his understanding of God and his Christian faith.

### DVDs/Videos



- **Amie**  
(17 min.) (St. Anthony Messenger Press-Franciscan Communications)  
Amie, a young photojournalist, helps bring the plight of the inner city poor into the headlines.
- **Close Encounters with the Beatitudes**  
(12 min.) (Oblate Media & Communication)  
Jimmy is not sure what the Beatitudes mean until he receives a visit from an angel who shows him how his friends are working toward God's Kingdom. He makes a commitment to live the Beatitudes.

### Audio/Music



- "We Are the Hope"  
(Unit 2 song, page 86)  
(BLEST ARE WE Music CD, track 3)
- "Bring Forth the Kingdom"  
Marty Haugen (GIA)
- "We Are Called"  
(BLEST ARE WE Music CD, track 8)
- "Now Is the Time"  
Tom Kendzia (OCP)

## Activity Masters

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Create a Just World

Many people around the world experience suffering caused by injustice. Fortunately, many people are working to eliminate injustice and create a just world. The left-hand column of the chart lists examples of injustice. The right-hand column lists the results of justice, or what happens when injustice is eliminated. Complete the center column by listing ways that an individual can help eliminate each injustice, either through his or her own efforts, by supporting an organization such as Habitat for Humanity, or by volunteering as a member of an organization.

Examples of Injustice	Ways of Helping	Results of Justice
racial injustice		racial harmony
poverty		a more equal distribution of resources
war		peace
disease		health care services

To the Teacher: Use this activity to reinforce the Share section.

BLEST ARE WE Form & Words

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Stories That Teach

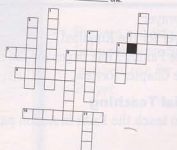
Reread the parables about the Kingdom of God in Chapter 3 of your book, or read the parables directly from Matthew 13:24-50 in the Bible. Then complete the puzzle.

#### Across

- The enemy who sows weeds is the \_\_\_\_\_.
- He who sows good seed is the \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Kingdom of Heaven is like a \_\_\_\_\_ sowing seed.
- The harvesters at the end of the age are \_\_\_\_\_.
- The good seeds sown are the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Kingdom.

#### Down

- \_\_\_\_\_ are stories Jesus told to illustrate God's call to share in his love.
- The man's enemy sowed weeds through the \_\_\_\_\_.
- The weeds were to be bound in bundles for \_\_\_\_\_.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ is at the end of the age.
- Unlike the weeds, the wheat was to be gathered in the \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Kingdom of Heaven is like a tiny \_\_\_\_\_ seed.
- Weeds are the children of the \_\_\_\_\_.

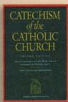


To the Teacher: This activity helps reinforce the Hear & Believe section.

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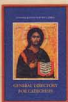
BLEST ARE WE Form & Words

## Catechism Connection



The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) describes the Kingdom of God as a reality that will only be fully realized at the Second Coming of Christ. The Church, however, is a sign of this future Kingdom. Church members have a responsibility to help make God's Kingdom a reality. We do this whenever we use our talents and abilities to serve others, especially the poor. CCC references: 71, 72, 306–308, 319, 320, 323, 350, 353, 806, 846

## GDC and NDC Connections



The *General Directory for Catechesis* (GDC) highlights the importance of proclaiming the Kingdom of God. Chapter 5 presents four parables about the Kingdom of God

and explains that all Christ's followers are called to do the work of the Kingdom by reaching out to others with compassion and mercy. GDC references: 86, 101, 102

The *National Directory for Catechesis* recognizes that in order for us to catechize effectively, we must understand the people being catechized and their language, signs and symbols. NDC reference: Chapter 5, Sections 21B and 38A; Chapter 6, Section 25F

## Visit [blestarewe.com](http://blestarewe.com)

Visit our Parish Catechesis section for:

- interactive and printable activities
- Liturgical Calendar
- Lesson Planning Resources



## The Prayer Corner

Gather the following materials for your prayer corner.

- Bible and Bible stand
- crucifix
- large candle, taper and snuffer
- prayer cloth (color of liturgical season)
- objects used in Baptism, namely, bowl of water, a white garment, oil, and a candle
- BLEST ARE WE Music CD and songbook
- CD player

Arrange the items on the prayer table, placing the candle near the enthroned Bible. Make sure to begin and end each lesson with prayer.

## Faith in Action

### The Cursillo Movement

To reinforce Catholic identity and present opportunities for evangelization and putting into practice the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, invite the young people to turn to page 135 and complete the Faith in Action lesson for this chapter.

## 5 Get Connected with Family and Friends

# Home Connection

Pre-chapter activities for families

Getting ready for Chapter 5

## Get CONNECTED

with family and friends

### The Kingdom of God

In the Lord's Prayer, we pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." God's Kingdom is his Reign of peace, justice, and love. Jesus began the Kingdom here on earth by coming into the world. We prepare for the coming of the Kingdom of God when we treat others with love, compassion, and mercy as Jesus taught us to do.

#### Activity

An American woman once wrote to Mother Teresa to ask if she could come to Calcutta, India, to join the Missionaries of Charity and serve the poor and suffering. In response, Mother Teresa said that the woman should stay in the United States and serve the poor and suffering there.

By being kind and loving to those around us, we prepare for the coming of God's Kingdom. Look around your home, school, or community, find your own Calcutta, and get to work.



Do one of the following.

1. Have the members of your family decide on an activity to do together to serve the community in which you live.
2. As a family, pray for the fulfillment of God's Kingdom and for God to show each member of your family how they are being called to serve.

- Trivia**
- Church History
  - Social Studies
  - Arts & Culture
  - People & Places

### Quotable Scripture

This is the hour of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel! —Mark 1:15

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Getting ready for Chapter 5

## Get CONNECTED

with family and friends

### Scripture Background

#### In the Time of Jesus

**The Kingdom Parables** The parables about the Kingdom of Heaven (Kingdom of God) in Matthew's Gospel teach us that faith is interactive. We must be open to faith; we must respond rather than be passive. We must put faith into action in our daily lives. Although God brings about his Kingdom, he invites our own cooperation to prepare the way for the coming of the Kingdom. Failing to live by the values of God's Kingdom is failing to understand the meaning of Jesus' parables and the nature of the Kingdom.

Read Jesus' parables about the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew 13.

## WEEKLY PLANNER

### On Sunday

During the Prayer of the Faithful, pray for people throughout the world who are victims of war, poverty, or famine.

### On the Web

Visit our Web site for the saint of the day and the reflection question of the week.

### Saint of the Week

**Blessed Damien**  
Molokai (1850-1889)  
Joseph de Veuster joined the Fathers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary and took the name Damien. As a priest he served lepers in Molokai, Hawaii. He eventually contracted the disease and faithfully served the lepers until his death.  
**Patron Saint of HIV and AIDS patients**  
Feast Day: April 15

**Prayer for the Week**  
Lord, help us use our gifts and talents to serve others in a spirit of charity. Through our actions, may we show your love to others and do the work of your Kingdom here on earth. Amen.

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## Sunday Connection

Visit Our Web Site Catechists and parents can visit [blestarewe.com](http://blestarewe.com) for:

- resources related to the Sunday liturgy
- summary of the Sunday Scripture readings
- Reflection Question of the Week
- seasonal activities



## More About the Saint of the Week

**Blessed Damien of Molokai** Skilled in carpentry: built 8 chapels on the Big Island of Hawaii, 300 houses on Molokai, and made over 1600 coffins. In 2005, chosen as The Greatest Belgian in history by the people of Belgium. Engraved on his monument: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."



Praying

## A Prayer for the Week

Remind the young people of the "outcasts" of our world—the poor, the sick, the elderly, those on the fringes of our society. At lonely times, each one of us can feel "outcast." Ask the group to keep in their prayers all those who are feeling left out today.



## 5 The Kingdom of God



"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:39

## Share

People in many countries face poverty, sickness, and war. In the news, we often hear about people who respond quickly to the needs of others and take a stand against injustice. We hear about organizations that send money, supplies, and volunteers to assist people who are suffering. Through such volunteer efforts, people are making a difference in creating a just and peaceful world.



### Activity

In the box below, list some of the injustices that exist in our society. Then select one of the injustices you listed, and write a change that could be made to help create a more just society.



Answers will vary. For example:

## Injustice

- 1) People not given a job because of their race
- 2) Children not receiving good education because of lack of funds

### What Could Be Done

- 1) Laws against this injustice be enforced
- 2) Governments make sure all children get a good education



What does Jesus teach us about God's Kingdom?

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### Additional Activity

## Empathizing with People in Need

- Have the young people work in small groups to discuss how they would feel if they were victims of injustice.
- Then invite them to turn to pages 425–426 to read about the Church’s teaching on social justice.
- Have the groups answer the question at the end of the social justice lesson. Invite volunteers to share their responses with the entire group.

## Share Objective

To offer ways to work toward a just and peaceful society



## Praying with Scripture

Light the candle near the Bible in the prayer corner. Pray the Scripture verse at the top of page 89 and allow a moment for reflection. Conclude the prayer by singing the unit song on page 86.

## Sharing Experiences

- Invite the young people to read the Share paragraph on page 89.
- **Ask** "What motivates people to help others in need?" (*Possible responses: compassion, guilt, Christian love*)

### Doing the Activity

- Invite the young people to read the activity directions on page 89.
  - Have them work individually or in pairs to complete the activity.
  - Invite volunteers to share their responses with the entire group.
- 👉 Call attention to the Page Turner questions throughout the chapter.



## Enriching the Prayer



## The Great Commandment

The introductory Scripture verse for this chapter is the second part of the Great Commandment as presented in the Gospel of Matthew. Explain that Jesus summed up all of God's Law in the two parts of the Great Commandment. Read aloud the entire Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37–40).

# Hear & Believe Objective

To explore the meaning of the Kingdom of God as presented in parables found in Matthew's Gospel



## Discussing the Scripture

### The Illustration

- Call the young people's attention to the illustration on pages 90 and 91.
- **Ask** "Why is the man in the illustration excited?" (*He has found a great treasure.*)  
"What might the treasure symbolize for us as Catholics?" (*the Kingdom of God*)
- **Say** "The treasure of the Kingdom of God is in the Church, in our families and friends, in creation, and most importantly, within ourselves."

### The Parables

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the writing on the scroll. Next read aloud the introductory paragraph beneath the scroll.
- Then have other volunteers read aloud the Scripture passage.
- **Ask** "What does each parable tell us about the Kingdom of Heaven?" (*Possible interpretations follow. Good seed: The faithful are gathered together, and the unfaithful are sent away.*  
Note: The Kingdom of Heaven welcomes only those who are faithful. Mustard seed: The Kingdom is built on faith, which starts out small and grows. Buried treasure: You can't see the Kingdom with natural eyesight; you must use the eyes of faith to see it. Pearl: The Kingdom has greater value than any other treasure on earth.)
- If time permits, have the young people read the parables in Matthew 13:24–30, 31–32, 36–39, 44, 45–46, and 47–48 in their Bibles.

## Hear & Believe

### Scripture Parables of the Kingdom



A parable is a story that teaches a moral or religious lesson. Jesus often spoke in parables to help people understand his teachings. In order to pass on Jesus' message, I have retold some of Jesus' greatest parables. Some of these parables describe God's wonderful Kingdom. Through these stories, Jesus tells us of the value and greatness of the Kingdom of God and helps us understand that God is a loving Father who desires that all his children live with him forever.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus told parables to help people better understand his teachings.

**Parables** often use everyday events and objects, especially from nature, to explain important truths. In the following parables, found in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus describes the Kingdom of Heaven, or the **Kingdom of God**.

The Kingdom of Heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep, his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well.

The slaves asked, "Master, do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?"

He replied, "No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat also. Let the weeds and wheat grow together until harvest. At harvest time I will say to the harvesters, 'First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning. Then gather the wheat and put it in my barn.'"

He who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

The Kingdom of Heaven is also like a net fishermen throw into the sea. Fish of every kind get caught in the net. When fishermen pull it onto the shore, they put the good fish into buckets and throw away the bad fish.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a tiny mustard seed. It eventually grows into a large bush and the birds make it their home.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure buried in a field. When a person finds it, they hide it again. Out of joy they sell everything else they have and buy that field.

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.

*Based on Matthew 13:24–30, 37–39, 47–48, 31–32, 45–46*

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## Scripture Background

### The Kingdom Parables

The parables about the Kingdom of God in Matthew's Gospel teach us that faith is interactive. We must be open to faith; we must respond rather than be passive. We must put faith into action in our daily lives. Although God brings about his Kingdom, he invites our own cooperation to make the Kingdom a reality. Failing to live by the values of God's Kingdom is failing to understand the meaning of Jesus' parables and the nature of God's Kingdom.



## God's Plan for His Kingdom

The Kingdom of God, or Heaven, is God's reign of peace, justice, and love. Jesus announced the Kingdom of God. The Church is the beginning of God's Kingdom. We continue Jesus' work by following his example, and God's Kingdom grows within us like a tiny mustard seed.

Only at the end of time will the Kingdom of God be fully realized. Jesus Christ will judge how well we have served God and others. The angels, spiritual creatures who glorify and serve God, will separate the good from the bad. Those who follow Christ will enjoy everlasting happiness. The parable about the weeds among the wheat illustrates how Jesus will gather his followers into his Kingdom.

## The Church, a Sign of God's Kingdom

The Church is a sign of God's Kingdom. Christ, the head of the Church, teaches us to reach out to all people, especially those who are poor or suffering.

He showed us how to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom by treating others with love, compassion, and mercy. He admonishes us to not allow the "anxieties and riches and pleasures of life" (Luke 8:14) to lead us away from God.

As members of the Church, the Body of Christ, we are united to one another. Each member of the Church has differences, yet we join together to work for the Kingdom. We have the responsibility to use our unique talents to bring about God's Kingdom of justice and mercy. All Salvation comes from Christ through the Church. God both willed and destined all creatures for the good of humanity and God's glory.

**peace...justice...LOVE**

**Activity**

Jesus compared the Kingdom of Heaven to things that were meaningful to his audience. If Jesus preached at your school today, what comparisons might he use?

**Answers will vary.**

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### Faith Words

**parable** A parable is a type of story that teaches a moral or religious lesson. Parables often use everyday events and objects to explain important truths.

**Kingdom of God** The Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven, is God's reign of peace, justice, and love, initiated on earth by Jesus and reaching perfect fulfillment at the end of time.

What can happen when we work for the Kingdom?

### Additional Activity

## Pantomiming the Kingdom Parables

- Invite the young people—as individuals, in pairs, or in groups of three or four—to perform in pantomime one of the parables presented in this chapter.
- Explain, if necessary, that to pantomime is to present an action or a story in silence, using only facial expression, body language, and movement.
- Allow a short time for planning before the performances begin, and encourage everyone to participate.

## Understanding the Scripture

- Invite the young people to read “God’s Plan for His Kingdom.”

- **Ask** “What is the Kingdom of God?”  
(The Kingdom of God is God’s reign of peace, justice, and love.)

"When will the Kingdom of God be fully realized?" *(at the end of time)*

"What will happen to those who follow Christ?" (*They will enjoy everlasting happiness.*)

- Have the young people read “The Church, a Sign of God’s Kingdom.”

- **Ask** "What is the relationship between the Church and God's Kingdom?" (*The Church is a sign of God's Kingdom. Church members are to help Christ bring about God's Kingdom in its fullness.*)

### Doing the Activity

- Allow time for the young people to read and respond to the activity text.
- Invite volunteers to share their responses.

## Faith Words

Ask volunteers to use the Faith Words in sentences.

### Enriching the Chapter

## Another Parable

Read aloud the Parable of the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1–14). Explain that the wedding garment symbolizes repentance, which is the condition for entering the Kingdom of God and which must be continued through a life of good deeds. Encourage discussion of the meaning of “Many are invited, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14).



# Hear & Believe

## Objective

To describe the role of members of the Church in doing the work of God's Kingdom

## Discussing the Text

### The Illustration

- Invite the young people to look at the image of Blessed Damien of Molokai on page 92.
- **Ask** "What does this illustration tell you about Father Damien?" (*Answers will vary.*)

### The Story

- Have the young people read the story about Blessed Damien of Molokai.
- **Ask** "What is every baptized person called by God to do?" (*to carry the values of God's Kingdom into the world*)  
 "How did Father Damien live out his baptismal call?" (*He treated all people with God's unconditional love.*)  
 "What values did he live by?" (*peace, justice, and love*)

## Hear & Believe

### Blessed Damien of Molokai

God calls and gives each baptized person the grace to build up the Church and to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Father Damien—Joseph De Veuster, a Belgian priest—lived the values of the Kingdom—peace, justice, and love—by volunteering to serve isolated victims of leprosy in Hawaii.

Leprosy is a bacterial disease that causes open sores and severely disfigures its victims. Highly contagious, it was one of the most feared diseases in the world in the 1870s.

Molokai is one of the Hawaiian Islands. In Father Damien's time, lepers of the Islands were captured and sent away to live isolated in a leper colony on a small peninsula on Molokai. The wretched conditions at the leper colony had driven away other workers, but Father Damien volunteered for the assignment, and was transferred to Molokai in 1873. He ministered to the people of the colony, treating them with compassion and dignity. In 1885, Damien learned that he had contracted leprosy. He continued to work among the lepers, ministering to their needs and building clinics and churches, until his death in 1889.

Father Damien is an example of living the values of God's Kingdom. He treated every person, even those who were outcasts, with God's unconditional love. The Church declared Father Damien "Blessed" on June 4, 1995.



## A Closer Look

### The Mustard Seed

The mustard seed is a very small seed. In Jesus' time it may have been the smallest seed known. In Palestine, one variety of mustard seed could grow into a tree comparable to the dogwood in size. The idea of the small, insignificant mustard seed growing into a large tree was a familiar image that Jesus could use to explain the growth of God's Kingdom.



## Our Church Teaches

Out of love, God created the universe. He keeps it in existence through his Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. God created all creatures to share in his truth, goodness, and love. As a sign of his love, God made an everlasting Covenant with Noah and all his descendants. Then he called Abraham and made the Covenant with him and his descendants. As a sign of the Covenant, God revealed his Law through Moses. God fulfilled the

promises of his Covenant by sending Jesus Christ, who saved us from sin. Always faithful to the Covenant, God continues to guide and protect us as we do the work of preparing for the coming of the Kingdom.

**We Believe**  
 United in Christ, the members of the Church use their varied talents to serve others, particularly the poor and the suffering.

We do the work of the Kingdom through the Church, especially when we care for the poor and the suffering. By using our abilities to serve the needs of others, we grow in faith and live the joy of God's Kingdom.



## Scripture Background

### A Closer Look

Draw the group's attention to the "A Closer Look" feature. Explain that a mustard seed grows into a plant that resembles a bush more than a tree. Jesus used the mustard seed as a metaphor for smallness, and his story suggests that the message of God's Kingdom—even when spread in tiny ways by seemingly insignificant individuals—carries amazing potential.



## Multiple Intelligences

### Interpersonal Activity

Invite the young people to form groups of three or four. Have each group reread "A Closer Look." Then have the groups brainstorm examples that Jesus could use today to describe the growth of God's Kingdom. Have the groups read their examples to the entire group. If there is space, add the most creative ideas to the bulletin board.

## Activities

1. In Father Damien's time, lepers were excluded from society. What kinds of people in our society are cut off from the community? Are there individuals or groups in your school who are treated as outcasts? Write a short paragraph describing how you think Jesus or Father Damien would treat these individuals or groups.

Answers will vary.

2. We carry out the work of preparing for the coming of the Kingdom by living the Kingdom values of peace, love, and justice to all people. List the things you do in your life that reflect the values of God's Kingdom.

Answers will vary.



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## Additional Activity

### Suggesting Ways to Work Toward a Better World

- Invite the young people to make three columns on a blank sheet of paper.
- In the first column, ask the young people to describe the place or situation in which God's love is needed most in the world today.
- In the second column, have them write about their own personal gifts and abilities.
- In the third column, ask them to describe how they can use their gifts and abilities to create a better world.
- Explain that God invites us to spread the values of his Kingdom on earth.

## Understanding the Doctrine

- Have the young people read "Our Church Teaches."
- Say "God wants us to use our individual talents and skills to help bring peace, justice, and love to today's world."
- Encourage a group discussion in which the young people share ways in which they can use their talents to do the work of his Kingdom.

## We Believe

- Use the following question to reinforce the We Believe statement.
- Ask "Why does Jesus call us to serve others, especially the poor and the suffering?" (because in doing so we witness to God's Kingdom, where God loves everyone and all people are treated justly)

## Doing the Activities

- Have the young people read and complete the first activity independently.
- Read aloud the directions, and invite the young people to complete the second activity. You might allow time for each person to share his or her responses with a partner.



## Try This

### Health

Throughout history, leprosy has been one of the most feared bacterial diseases in the world. Today, even though medicine has made great advances, bacterial diseases continue to threaten human health. Have the youth (alone or in groups) research information on bacterial diseases other than leprosy, such as cholera, diphtheria, and tuberculosis. They should include information on organizations that provide assistance to those suffering from these diseases.

# Respond

## Objective

To give examples of actions that can reflect the values of God's Kingdom

## Discussing the Text

### The Art

- Invite the young people to look at the stained-glass art on page 94.
- **Ask** "Who is portrayed in this stained-glass art?" (*Saint Elizabeth of Hungary*)

### The Story

- Invite the young people to read "Saint Elizabeth of Hungary" on page 94.
- **Ask** "What would you do with your wealth, your gold and silver, if you were a king or a queen?" (*Answers will vary.*)
- Point out that our society and we ourselves can be very selfish. We like to have the best and the newest of everything. We often forget that others would be grateful to have even a small part of what we have.
- **Ask** "If you were a king or a queen, how would you help the poor?" (*Answers will vary.*)
- Point out that we do not have to be a king or queen to help the poor. Continue with a discussion of ways young people their age can help the poor today. Make a plan to put one of these ideas into action.

## Doing the Activities

- Read aloud the question in the first activity, and invite the young people to write a response.
- Invite the young people to read the instruction. Have them write their answers to the second activity in their books.

## Respond

### Saint Elizabeth of Hungary

Throughout the Church's history, many people have heeded Jesus' call to "Go, sell what you have, . . . then come, follow me" (Mark 10:21) and have given up their wealth and served the poor. One such person is Saint Elizabeth of Hungary.

Saint Elizabeth, the daughter of the king of Hungary, was born in 1207. Growing up in the castle court, she was known for her kindness, goodness, modesty, and generosity to the poor. Once, when the land was ravished by a severe famine, she took all her money and also emptied the castle's grain reserves and gave it to those people who were suffering most severely in the famine. Although the people in the court criticized her severely for this generosity to the poor, her husband defended her, saying, "Her charities will bring upon us the divine blessings. We shall not want so long as we let her relieve the poor as she does." Elizabeth devoted her life to relieving the poverty of the people of Hungary. She was always guided by the spirit and example of Saint Francis of Assisi. After her husband died while fighting in the Crusades, she left the court, gave up all of her possessions, arranged for the care of her children, and joined the Third Order of Saint Francis. In 1228 she built a hospital at Marburg, in modern-day Germany, and devoted herself to the care of the sick, poor, and outcasts of society until her death in 1231.



## Activities

1. How does Elizabeth of Hungary's example describe ways that people treat one another in the Kingdom of God?

*Answers will vary.*

2. Describe ways that people you know or have heard about have reflected God's Kingdom.

*Answers will vary.*

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## Social Justice

### Christian Leaders

Today's lesson presents us with a portrait of a Christian leader. Saint Elizabeth of Hungary shows us that a true Christian must always be a follower of Christ, no matter what the circumstances of life. Saint Elizabeth never used her wealth selfishly; instead, she used it to advance the justice of the Kingdom of God. For in God's eyes, all people—including the poor, the sick, the physically or mentally disabled, the imprisoned, and the homeless—are worthy of our care and concern. They all have dignity. Every person is capable of developing the qualities needed for entrance into the Kingdom of God. Such qualities include love, compassion for others, generosity, hard work, and the willingness to make sacrifices.



3. Explain how the Kingdom of God is like a treasure buried in a field.

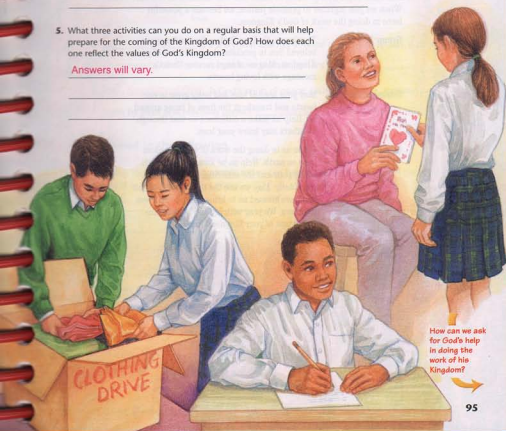
Answers will vary.

4. Jesus announced and inaugurated God's Kingdom of peace, justice, and love on earth. Name two or three situations in today's world that show people working toward the coming of the Kingdom.

Answers will vary.

5. What three activities can you do on a regular basis that will help prepare for the coming of the Kingdom of God? How does each one reflect the values of God's Kingdom?

Answers will vary.



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### Additional Activity

#### Campaigning for Saint Elizabeth of Hungary

- Remind the young people that kings and queens are not elected but receive their offices through inheritance. However, if the people had been allowed to vote, they certainly would have voted for Elizabeth. What would her election campaign have looked like?
- Gather the young people into small groups. Give each group a piece of poster paper. Distribute crayons or markers as needed.
- Ask each group to make a campaign poster in favor of Elizabeth for queen. Remind the groups to list the reasons people should vote for Elizabeth, and to express these reasons in short slogans or "sound bites."

### Doing the Activities (continued)

- Have the young people read and complete the third activity. Remind them to review the text on pages 90 and 91 if they need help with this activity.
- Read aloud the directions, and invite the young people to complete the fourth activity.
- Have the young people read and answer the question in the fifth activity. You might arrange them into small groups to complete it.



### Cultural Awareness

#### Tolerance Toward All

In Jesus' day, people who were shunned or neglected by society included women (especially widows), orphaned children, Samaritans, Gentiles, sinners, the sick (especially lepers), and those referred to in Scripture as "the blind, deaf, dumb, and lame." Jesus accepted such people as his friends and taught us to practice tolerance toward those who are different from ourselves.

# Prayer

## Objective

To pray for the fulfillment of God's Kingdom and for guidance in spreading justice and love

## Prayer Celebration

### Preparing for Prayer

Focus the young people's attention on the enthroned Bible and the candle. Invite them to recall that they are in the presence of God as his faithful people, preparing to raise their minds and hearts in prayer.

### A Prayer for the Kingdom

- Arrange the young people into three groups before beginning the prayer celebration on page 96.
- Read aloud the introductory sentence. Then ask the young people to reflect on how they can work for justice with others in their families, at school, and in the parish. After allowing time for reflection, you may wish to encourage the sharing of ideas.
- Invite those in Group 1 to form a circle, join hands, and begin the prayer service. Have Group 2 join Group 1 and continue the service together. Have Group 3 join the others so that all finish the prayer in unison.
- Close the celebration by singing the song suggested on page 86D or another song you have chosen for today's celebration.

## Prayer Celebration

### A Prayer for the Kingdom

When we join together to promote justice, we become a powerful force in doing the work of God's Kingdom.

#### Group 1:

Thank you, God our Father, for sending your beloved Son to proclaim the good news of your Kingdom. May we always receive Christ's message with loving hearts.

#### Groups 1 and 2:

May your seed of love and unity grow in our hearts and transform the lives of those around us. Help us make a difference so that through us others may know your love.

#### Groups 1, 2, and 3:

Guide us in doing the work of your Kingdom here on earth. Help us be aware of the needs of the poor and the suffering, the young and the elderly. May we use the talents with which you have blessed us to bring your joy and love to others. We pray with joy and hope for the fulfillment of your Kingdom. Amen.

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## Looking Ahead to Chapter 6



### Get Connected

Tear out the Get Connected pages for the next chapter. Remind the young people to work on these at home with their family and friends.

## 5

## Chapter Review

**A Complete the sentences with words from the box.**

Exercise A fulfills Objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4.

1. Standing against injustice and assisting the suffering are some ways that we can create a just and peaceful world.
2. Saint Elizabeth of Hungary helped prepare for the coming of the Kingdom of God by her charity to the sick, poor, and outcasts.
3. Father Damien of Molokai saw the value in treating all people with God's unconditional love.
4. A parable is a story that teaches a moral or religious lesson. It often uses everyday events or objects to explain important truths.
5. The Kingdom of God is God's reign of peace, justice, and love, initiated on earth by Jesus and reaching perfect fulfillment at the end of time.

fulfillment  
truths  
unconditional  
parable  
charity  
Kingdom of God  
just

**B Respond to the following.**

Exercise B fulfills Objectives 1 and 5.

1. Name three ways young people today can help create a more just and peaceful world in their own communities.

Answers will vary.

2. When you pray to "do the work of the Kingdom," what are some of the things you are asking for?

Answers will vary.

## Chapter Review

## Reviewing the Chapter

- The Chapter Review will help the young people recall the important content of the chapter.
- Be sure to review the concept that the Kingdom of God is God's reign of peace, justice, and love. The Church is a sign of the Kingdom of God, and the members of the Church work together for the Kingdom of God.

## Completing the Exercises

- Invite the young people to complete the Chapter Review. Allow them to look back at the pages of the chapter to find answers they cannot recall.
- The Answer Locator gives the page number where each answer may be found.
- Be sure to discuss the answers with your group and go over concepts that were generally misunderstood or forgotten. Then have the young people correct any mistakes they made.

## Special Note for Exercise B

Respond: Have the young people read the directions, and then point out that the exercise has two parts. Tell them to write their answers in complete sentences on the lines provided. You may want to give the young people some time to brainstorm in small groups before they begin to write their responses.

## Answer Locator

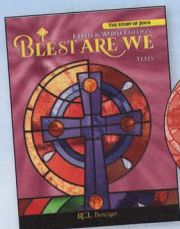
A			
1	p. 89	4	p. 91
2	p. 94	5	p. 91
3	p. 92		
B			
1	p. 89	2	p. 91



# Chapter Review

## Special Note for Exercise D

**Essay Writing:** Read the directions, and then tell the young people to write their answers in complete sentences on the lines provided. You may wish to brainstorm with the group briefly before they begin to write. If you think there are too few write-on lines, suggest that the young people write their responses on a separate sheet of paper.



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# Chapter Review

## C Circle the letter of the best answer.

Exercise C fulfills Objectives 2 and 3.

- In the Parable of the Weeds and the Wheat, the good seed represents \_\_\_\_\_.
  - the Bible
  - the children of the Kingdom
  - Jesus' Resurrection
  - forgiveness
- Jesus used the image of the \_\_\_\_\_ to explain the growth of God's Kingdom.
  - loaves and fishes
  - unforgiving servant
  - lost sheep
  - mustard seed
- In his parables, Jesus uses a buried treasure and a priceless pearl to represent \_\_\_\_\_.
  - the faith of his followers
  - the wisdom of the Bible
  - the Kingdom of Heaven
  - the glory of the angels
- Father Damien of Molokai ministered to people who were \_\_\_\_\_.
  - homeless because of a tidal wave
  - victims of leprosy
  - orphans because of war
  - in prison for stealing food
- We do the work of the Kingdom through the Church especially when we \_\_\_\_\_.
  - attend Mass every Sunday
  - care for the poor and suffering
  - go to school
  - read the Bible

## D Explain how the Church does the work of the Kingdom and how you participate in that work.

Exercise D fulfills Objectives 3 and 4.

Answers may vary but should include the following: The Church does the work

of the Kingdom when individual members join together to care for the poor and  
suffering, as well as when individuals use their unique talents to bring justice and  
mercy to others.

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Chapter Review

## Self-Evaluation

This session was

- ☐ one of the best.
- ☐ pretty good.
- ☐ in need of improvement.

What worked out best was \_\_\_\_\_.

For next time I would change \_\_\_\_\_.

I will be sure to prepare for \_\_\_\_\_.

## Answer Locator

C			
1	p. 90	4	p. 92
2	p. 91	5	p. 92
3	p. 90		
D			
	p. 92		

## Faith in Action

### The Cursillo Movement

Invite the young people to turn to *Faith in Action* on page 135. Discuss the ministry and then have the young people complete the related activities.