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## Scripture

### Understanding Scripture T35

*A complete minicourse  
on the Bible for the teacher*

### Core Chapters 3

*Planning pages and step-by-step suggestions  
for teaching all twenty chapters of  
BLEST ARE WE FAITH & WORD Grade 2*

### Feasts and Seasons 313

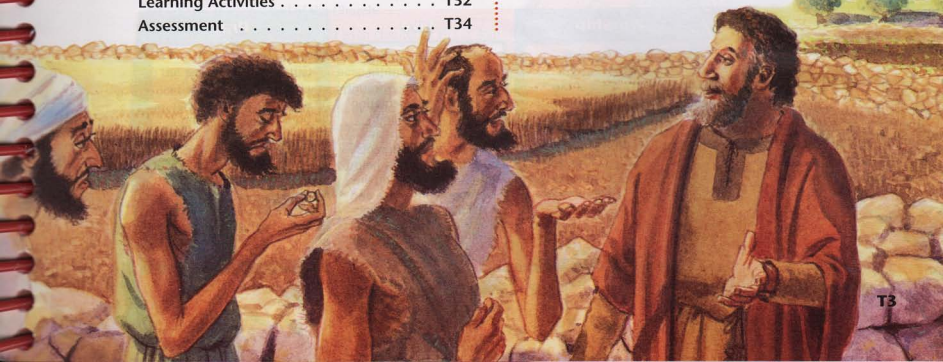
*Eleven lesson plans on  
the liturgical year and major  
feast day celebrations*

### Our Catholic Heritage 389

*A brief survey of Catholic doctrine,  
organized according to the four pillars  
of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

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# We Can Choose What Is Good

Chapter

5

## Background for the Teacher

This chapter introduces the children to the parable of "The Prodigal Son." According to the dictionary, a *prodigal* person spends time and money foolishly and lavishly.

In reading the story, we can reflect on the father in the parable. He welcomes home his son, who has neglected his religion and led a wayward life. The father loves his son so much that he has already forgiven him in his heart and plans an elaborate party to celebrate his return.

## God's Mercy

Chapter 5 titles this parable "The Forgiving Father." It could also be called "The Merciful Father." As the father's mercy breaks through all barriers of guilt and fear, so mercy between God and us endures.

God anxiously awaits our return when we wander away from his goodness. God, our loving Father, welcomes us home to the comfort of his unconditional, unquestioning love. Our God of mercy is always there to greet us whenever we choose to return home.

## Faith Focus

God gives us free will. When we sin, God is always ready to forgive us.

## Time for Reflection

Think about a forgiving choice you made this past week. How did you feel afterward?

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## A Teacher's Prayer



O God, I offer you everything that happens today. Send your Spirit to help me make good choices. Help me to develop my conscience so that I may always pursue good. Thank you for your mercy and love. I offer this prayer to you in Jesus' name. Amen.



# Take Home PAGES

Pre-chapter home activities for families

## Beginning at Home

Many of the children will have spent some time with their families working with the Take Home Family Time pages at home. You can help the children connect with what was done at home by discussing the saint featured or using A Prayer for the Week at an appropriate time.



Getting ready for Chapter 5

## Take Home

**We Can Choose What Is Good**

Saint Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican priest and great theologian, proclaimed that humans always tended toward the good. But how do we figure out what the good is? It may feel good to finish the last of a box of candy. But others in our family do not see it as good. We work to form a good conscience to help us identify what is good and then try to confirm our behavior to our conscience. Being Catholic helps us understand that God gives us free will, and yet he is always ready to forgive us when we choose to sin.

**Pick-up sticks** Did you ever play pick-up sticks? If so, you know that the sticks fall and you have to pick them up moving only the stick you are taking away. Play pick-up sticks with your child. Discuss how the game is like making moral choices, because you need to choose carefully in order to succeed.

**WEEKLY PLANNER**

**On Sunday**  
Read the Pentateuch at Mass, reflect on the choices you made during the week. Thank God for his guidance.

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

**Saint of the Week**  
Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur (1863-1963)  
Peter lived as a hermit in the Canary Islands. At age 31, he went to the New World to serve the people of Guatemala. He took vows as a Third Order Franciscan and opened hospitals, schools, and churches in Guatemala City.  
**Patron Saint of Guatemala City**  
**Feast Day:** April 18

**A Prayer for the Week**  
Lord, thank you for giving us the freedom to choose. Help us to use this gift to make right choices. Help us to be caring like Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur. Amen.

Family Time Grade 2 83

Getting ready for Chapter 5

## Take Home

**Scripture Background**

**In the Time of Jesus**

**Inheritance** Israelite tradition held that the eldest son would inherit the property and holdings of the father. The primary aim was to preserve the territory within each clan. Further legislation also established the right of the firstborn to inherit twice as much as his brothers. In the Parable of the Forgiving Father, the younger son has already taken his share. So when the elder son is told that all that the father has is his, it literally means everything.

You can read this parable in Luke 15:11-32.

**OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION** in Art

**Return of the Prodigal Son**  
The Rembrandt painting titled Return of the Prodigal Son depicts the story Jesus told of the young man who left his family and squandered his fortune. Thinking he would be better off as a servant on his father's farm than living as he was—poor, hungry, and alone—he returned home. As this painting shows, his father welcomed him back as a son, not as a servant. Herold Knoeven based his book The Return of the Prodigal Son on Rembrandt's painting.

84 blestarewe.com

**Sunday Connection**  
Visit Our Web Site Teachers 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

**Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur** To serve the people of Guatemala, became a tertiary, a lay member of the Franciscan order. Built a hospital and school for the poor and shelters for the homeless. Known as "Saint Francis of the Americas."

## Praying A Prayer for the Week

A Prayer for the Week gives thanks to God for the gift of choice. Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur chose to serve God as a Third Order Franciscan. Pray aloud this prayer about choices.

## 5 We Can Choose What Is Good



Love the LORD, your God, and obey his word.

Based on Deuteronomy 30:20

### Share

We make many choices every day. Some choices are easy, but some are hard. Some are right, but others are wrong.

Draw a happy face for each good choice below.

Draw a sad face for each bad choice.



sad

1. Tom does not share with his friends.



happy

2. Juanita tells her dad the truth.



happy

3. Wes obeys his mom and turns off the TV.



sad

4. Mary takes a dollar that is not hers.

How do we know what is right and wrong?

Believe 85

### Additional Activity

#### Making Choices

- Solicit responses from the children about daily choices they make, such as choosing breakfast food or doing homework.
- Print their responses on the board.
- Discuss what makes some choices more difficult than others.

## Day 1

### Share Objective

To explore the ability to make choices

## 1 Introduction



### Praying with Scripture

- On the board, print the words of the Scripture verse from the top of the children's page.
- Gather the children in a circle in the prayer corner. Light the candle there. Invite a volunteer to read aloud the Scripture verse.
- Sing the unit song on page 82 or another song you have chosen.

## 2 Development

### Personal Experience

- Read aloud the first paragraph.
- **Ask** "What are some easy choices you make each day?" (*Answers will vary.*)  
"What are some hard choices you make?" (*Answers will vary.*)

### Doing the Activity

- Read aloud the directions for the activity.
- After the children complete it, discuss their responses.
- **Ask** "What choice does Tom make? Juanita? Wes? Mary?" (*Answers should reflect the action each child chose to do.*)

## 3 Conclusion

- Explain to the children that God wants us to make good choices.
- Close by praying together the Scripture verse at the top of page 85.



**Looking Ahead** Have the children reflect on the question in the arrow and explain that they will learn the answer in the next day's lesson.



## Day 2

## Hear &amp; Believe

## Objective

To explain the concepts of *free will* and *conscience*

## 1 Introduction

## Sharing Experiences

**Ask** "When someone you love is hurt or sad, how do you feel?" (Possible answers: *sad too; eager to help or to make the person feel better.*)

## 2 Development

## + Discussing the Scripture Story

## The Illustrations

- Invite the children to look at the illustrations on pages 86 and 87.
- **Ask** "How do you think the young man in the top picture feels?" (*sad*)  
"How can you tell that the people in the larger picture are happy?" (*They are hugging and smiling.*)

## The Scripture

- Point out that Jesus often told stories to help us understand God's love for us.
- **Say** "Listen as we read one of Jesus' stories. Then, think of a question to ask about the story."
- Have volunteers read aloud the Scripture story. Afterward, invite volunteers to ask their questions. Then ask summary questions:
- **Ask** "What is a wrong choice the son made after he left home?" (*He wasted money; he hurt his father.*)

"Why did the son make the choice to return home?" (Accept any of the following reasons: *He was hungry, had nowhere to live, felt sorry about his wrong choices and/or hurting his father, and wanted to ask his father for forgiveness.*)

"How did the father show that he loved his son and forgave him for his bad choices?" (*He hugged him and gave him a party.*)

## Hear &amp; Believe

## + Scripture The Forgiving Father

Once there was a man who had two sons. The younger son said, "I know you plan to give me money when I am older. May I have it now?" So his father gave him the money.

The son moved far away. Soon, he had spent every cent! He was hungry and had no place to live.

The son was sorry for the wrong choices he had made. He had wasted the money and hurt his father. The son made up his mind to go home. He would ask his father to forgive him.

While the son was still far from home, his father saw him. He ran to greet his son. "I'm sorry," the son said, but his father had already forgiven him. The man hugged his son. Then he gave his son a big "welcome home" party.

Based on Luke 15:11-24



## + Scripture Background

## Money in the New Testament

- Jesus mentions money in this parable and in several other teachings. During Jesus' time, coins minted in many places passed through Palestine. In Luke 15:8, Jesus tells a story about a woman who loses a *drachma*—a Greek coin. In Matthew 10:29, Jesus asks, "Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin?" In Mark 12:15, Jesus talks about the *denarius*—a Roman coin—to pay the Roman tax.
- Because of commandments against making religious images on coins, Jews chose plant and flower images for their own coins. Jews also could not use coins with images on them to pay their Temple taxes, so money-changers set up shop inside the Temple courtyards.

## Knowing Right from Wrong

God lets us choose what to do. We call this **free will**. The boy in the story knew he had done wrong. His **conscience** told him so. Our conscience tells us what is right or wrong.

### Faith Words

**conscience**  
Our conscience is our ability to know right from wrong.

**Activity** Put the Scripture story in order. Write the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the boxes.

- 2 The son moved far away from home.
- 1 The father gave money to his son.
- 6 They had a "welcome home" party.
- 5 The father forgave his son.
- 3 The son was sorry for his wrong choices.
- 4 The son returned home.



What can you do if you make a wrong choice?

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## Additional Activity

### Making Up Stories About Choices

- Have the children work in pairs. Invite each pair to create a story in which a child listens to his or her conscience and makes a right choice.
- If needed, offer examples, such as spending allowance money, being honest, waiting in line, or sharing snacks.
- Invite the children to share their stories.

## Understanding the Scripture

- Print the word *conscience* on the board. Pronounce the word for the children. Tell them to listen carefully to learn the meaning of this word. Have a volunteer read aloud "Knowing Right from Wrong."
- **Say** "Each of us has a conscience. When we make choices, we need to become quiet inside and listen to what our conscience tells us is right to do."
- **Ask** "What do we call our ability to decide what we will do?" (*free will*)  
"Who gave us this ability?" (*God*)

### Faith Words

- Invite volunteers to explain the meaning of the Faith Word in their own words.
- You may wish to have the children complete the definition(s) of the Faith Words from each chapter of this unit in the Write-in Glossary that begins on page 422. Other boldfaced words in the chapters are also found in the glossary.

## Doing the Activity

- Read aloud the activity directions. Encourage the children to look back at the story to help them correctly order the events.
- When they have finished, invite them to explain how they ordered the events. If necessary, point out the parts of the story where they can find each event.

## 3 Conclusion

- Tell the children that our conscience is a gift from God.
- Lead the children in a prayer thanking God for the ability to know right from wrong.



**Looking Ahead** Have the children reflect on the question in the arrow and explain that they will learn the answer in the next day's lesson.



## Day 3

## Hear &amp; Believe

## Objective

To recognize the nature of sin and God's readiness to forgive

## 1 Introduction

## Sharing Experiences

- Say** "Think about a time when you did something wrong."
- Ask** "How did you feel after you realized that what you did was wrong?" *(Possible answers: sorry, sad, wanting to make up for the action, fearful about not being forgiven or about other people being angry.)*
- Explain to the children that God always forgives us when we are sorry and want to be forgiven.

## 2 Development

## Discussing the Scripture Story

## The Image

- Point out the stained glass image on page 88. Tell the children that it shows Jesus and a man named Saul.
- Say** "Today we will read a story about Saul. We will find out about some of the wrong choices Saul made and about why he decided to change."

## The Scripture

- Ask volunteers to take turns reading aloud "Saul Changes His Life." Afterward, discuss the story, using the questions below.
- Ask** "What wrong choices was Saul making?" *(He arrested the followers of Jesus and put them in prison.)*

"Why did Saul change his mind about what he was doing?" *(Saul heard the Risen Jesus ask him why he was hurting Jesus. Saul's conscience began to bother him. He saw that he was acting wrongly and felt very sorry.)*

"What did Jesus tell Saul to do?" *(Start over and stop acting in bad ways.)*

"What did Saul do next?" *(He stopped hurting people. He was baptized. He became a good follower of Jesus.)*

- Say** "God forgave Saul, just as God will always forgive us if that is what we want."

## Hear &amp; Believe

## † Saul Changes His Life

Saul did not like the followers of Jesus. Saul made life hard for them. He arrested Jesus' followers and put them in prison.

One day, Saul saw the Risen Jesus in a vision. "Why are you hurting me?" Jesus asked. Saul's conscience began to bother him. He saw that he was acting wrongly. He felt very sorry for harming the followers of Jesus.

"What should I do now?" Saul asked. Jesus told him to start over, to stop acting in bad ways. He told him to make good choices.

On that day Saul decided to change his life. Instead of hurting people, he helped them. Saul was baptized and became a good follower of Jesus. People now called him Paul. Paul began to tell everyone about Jesus Christ.

Based on Acts 9:1-20



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## Multiple Intelligences

## Visual/Spatial Activity

- On the board, draw two large squares side by side. Label one "The Forgiving Father" and the other "Saul Changes His Life." Draw horizontal lines dividing each square into three segments. Label them "Beginning," "Middle," and "End."
- Invite volunteers to share the events that happened in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of each story represented by these squares. Chart their answers in the appropriate part of the squares.
- Encourage the children to see the similarities between the stories as shown on the board: Someone sinned, was sorry, sought forgiveness, and was forgiven.

### Our Church Teaches

We **sin** when we choose to do hurtful things on purpose. When we sin, we hurt our friendship with God and with other people. God wants us to be sorry for our sins. God loves us very much. When we sin, he is ready to show us mercy. God is ready to forgive us.

#### We Believe

God gives everybody a conscience. God wants us to choose good and stay away from what is evil.

**Activity** Complete the sentences using these words.

conscience      sin      good

Saul's conscience  
told him he had done wrong.

A sin is a wrong  
choice that hurts our friendship with God  
and with other people.

God wants us to choose good  
and stay away from evil.

#### Faith Words

**sin**  
To sin is to  
choose to do  
hurtful things on  
purpose. Sin is  
disobeying God.

How can we  
practice making  
good choices?

89

### Additional Activity

#### Making a "Choices" Mural

- Using butcher paper, set up a blank mural with three equal sections labeled "Saul's Bad Choices," "Saul Meets Jesus," and "Saul's Good Choices."
- Arrange the class into three groups to draw each section of the mural. Supply crayons, colored markers, tempera paints, and brushes.
- Allow the children to discuss the scenes in the finished mural. Then display the mural in your classroom or in the school hallway for all to see.

### Understanding the Doctrine

- Print the word *sin* on the board.
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud "Our Church Teaches." Have the children underline the first sentence and read it aloud.
- Say "God is always ready to forgive us when we sin. God never turns away from us. God never stops loving us."

### We Believe/Faith Words

- Read aloud the We Believe statement.
- Ask volunteers to explain the meaning of the Faith Word in their own words.

### Doing the Activity

- Explain the instructions for the activity on page 89.
- Allow sufficient time for the children to complete the sentences. Then review the answers with the class.

## 3 Conclusion

- Remind the children that Christians always try to make good choices.
- Conclude by saying a prayer of thanks for God's forgiveness.

**Looking Ahead** Have the children reflect on the question in the arrow and explain that they will learn the answer in the next day's lesson.



### Curriculum Connection

#### Social Studies

Explain to the children that many different choices have made our country what it is today. Read aloud the book *If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks* by Faith Ringgold. Tell the children that the choice made by Rosa Parks helped to influence the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1950s. Explain that this movement helped to bring equal rights to black people in this country. Tell the children that being a good citizen involves making good choices, choices that will help other people.



## Day 4

## Respond

## Objective

To practice making good choices

## 1 Introduction

## Sharing Experiences

- **Say** "Think of someone you know who makes good choices, choices that help other people."
- **Ask** "Why do you think this person decides to make good choices?" (*because the person loves God, Jesus, other people; because the good choices have good consequences; because it feels good to help other people*)

## 2 Development

## Discussing the Saint Story

## The Photograph

- Point out the photograph on page 90. Explain that this is a photograph of Saint Paula Frassinetti, a person who made good choices.
- **Ask** "What can you tell about Saint Paula by looking at the photograph?" (*Possible answers: She lived a long time ago. She was a religious sister.*)

## The Story

- Explain that the class is about to learn more about this saint who made good choices.
- Invite volunteers to read aloud the story on page 90.
- **Ask** "What good choices did Saint Paula make?" (*taking care of her brothers, being cheerful, attending Mass daily, praying while she worked, opening a school for poor girls, founding a religious order to educate poor children*)  
"What bad choices did Saint Paula choose not to make?" (*being angry and mean to her brothers, refusing to take care of them, being upset that they could attend school while she could not, ignoring her household chores*)
- **Say** "These choices would have hurt Saint Paula's brothers. She did not make these choices because she loved her brothers. She also loved God."

## Respond

## Saint Paula Frassinetti




Paula was born in Italy in 1809. When she was nine years old, her mother died. Paula had to help take care of her four brothers. She could have gotten angry and been mean to them. But she loved them. She took good care of them.

Because of her household chores Paula was unable to go to school. Her brothers shared with her what they learned in school. Paula made the choice to be cheerful. She went to Mass daily and prayed while she worked.

When Paula grew up she opened a school for poor girls. She later founded a religious order to educate poor children.

Today we honor her as Saint Paula. Her feast day is June 11.

-  What good choice did Saint Paula make?



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## Enriching the Chapter

## Continuing a Faith Booklet

- If the children began a faith booklet in Unit 1, explain that they will continue it through this unit. Ask a child to draw or write a story about Chapter 5 and to bring the drawing or story to the next session.
- If time permits, pass the booklet around so that the children can see the four drawings or stories from Chapters 1-4. Use their contributions to briefly review what the children learned in Unit 1 about community.

## Activity

We can practice choosing to do what is right every day.  
Unscramble the letters to complete the sentence for each picture.



t h g i f

Joey chooses not to

f i g h t



r h a s e

Tonya is happy to

s h a r e



t r t u h

Lily decides to tell the

t r u t h

How can we  
thank God  
for the gift  
of free will?

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## Additional Activity

### Practicing Good Choices

- Ask the children to name some good choices that they could make during the week. Suggest examples, such as *sharing with others*, *helping my parents around the house*, or *being kind to a classmate*.
- List their ideas on the board.
- Invite the children to select one of the good choices to try to do this week.

## Doing the Activity

### Making Good Choices

- Direct the children's attention to the three pictures on page 91. Ask volunteers to describe what is happening in each picture.
- Afterward, invite a volunteer to read aloud the activity directions. Provide time for the children to complete the activity and to share their unscrambled words. Then talk about making good choices.

## 3 Conclusion

- Remind the children that God wants us to make good choices.
- End with a prayer that all members of the class will make good choices.

**Looking Ahead** Have the children reflect on the question in the arrow and explain that they will learn the answer in the next day's lesson.

## Special Needs

### Child with Dyslexia

To help a child with dyslexia, pair the child with another before doing the activity. In that way, the dyslexic child will have help sorting letters and making words.

Or a partner could show the dyslexic child the three completed words on a separate sheet of paper and say aloud each one. The child would then write the correct word on the blank lines following the sentence context.



# Day 5 Prayer

## Objective

To celebrate making good choices

## Prayer Celebration

### Preparing for Prayer

- Doing good actions is a type of prayer.
- Direct the children to draw or write about making good choices. Have them describe a good action they can do to help someone.
- Invite the children to bring their descriptions to the prayer corner with their books.
- Light the candle by the Bible. Read aloud the first paragraph of "A Prayer of Action."

### A Prayer of Action

- Say "God is pleased when we make good choices."
- Read together the prayer. Pause after "Help us to . . ." From left to right, ask each child to say in turn the good action they drew or wrote about.
- Pray "Amen" together. Close with a blessing and a song you have chosen.
- Say "May the Holy Spirit help you to choose good actions this week. May God bless each of you as you make good choices."

## Prayer Celebration

### A Prayer of Action

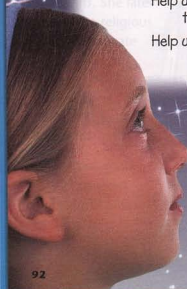
Doing good actions is a type of prayer.  
When we act in good ways, we praise God.  
We thank God for the gift of free will.  
Celebrate making good choices.  
Pray this prayer together.

Dear God,

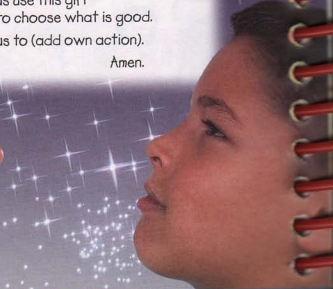
Thank you for the gift  
of free will.

Help us use this gift  
to choose what is good.

Help us to (add own action).  
Amen.



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## Looking Ahead to Chapter 6

### Take Home

Tear out the **Take Home Family Time** pages for the next chapter. Remind the children to work on these at home with their parents and other family members.

### Cultural Connections

[blestarewe.com/familytime](http://blestarewe.com/familytime)

Visit our Web site for the **Take Home Family Time** pages in Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.



## 5

## Chapter Review

## A Circle the words that best complete the sentences.

- God gives us a \_\_\_\_\_ to help us know right from wrong.  
**conscience**      free choice      sin
- When we do hurtful things on purpose, we \_\_\_\_\_.  
forgive      love      **sin**
- God lets us choose what to do.  
We call this \_\_\_\_\_.  
**conscience**      **free will**      sin
- God wants us to be \_\_\_\_\_ for our sins.  
angry      happy      **sorry**



## B Draw a line to connect the parts of each sentence.

- The son who left home knew \_\_\_\_\_ ● disobeying God.
- Before the son said, "I'm sorry," \_\_\_\_\_ ● he had done wrong.
- Sin is \_\_\_\_\_ ● his father had forgiven him.

Chapter Review 93

## Day 5

## Chapter Review

## Reviewing the Chapter

- The Chapter Review will help the children recall the important content of the chapter as well as prepare for the Chapter 5 test.
- Be sure to review the concepts of free will and conscience.

## Completing the Exercises

- Invite the children 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 class and go over concepts that were generally misunderstood or forgotten. Then have the children correct any mistakes they made.

## Answer Locator

A			
1	p. 87	3	p. 87
2	p. 89	4	p. 89
B			
1	p. 86	3	p. 89
2	p. 86		



## Day 5

## Chapter Review

## Memory Tip

To help the children appropriate the chapter's content about sin and forgiveness, you may wish to introduce the Act of Contrition on page 15. Print the words of the prayer on the board and have the class repeat them after you several times.

## Optional Testing

After the children have completed the Chapter Review, you may wish to administer the Chapter 5 Test using the reproducible pages in the test book or on the CD-ROM for Grade 2. If you use the CD-ROM version of the testing program, you may customize the test to meet the needs of your class.



## 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

## 5

## Chapter Review

**C** Write the correct words on each line.

forgive    Paula    praise    prayer    Saul

1. Choosing to do good actions is a kind of prayer.
2. When we act in good ways, we praise God.
3. God is always ready to forgive us.
4. After he was baptized, Saul became a follower of Jesus.
4. Saint Paula chose to take good care of her brothers.

**D** Write about a good choice you can make to show your love for God.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

94 Chapter Review

## Answer Locator

C			
1	p. 92	4	p. 88
2	p. 92	5	p. 90
3	p. 89		
D			
pp. 90, 91			

## Faith in Action

## Parish Council

Invite the children to turn to *Faith in Action* on page 131. Discuss the ministry and then have the children complete the related activities.