

CONTENTS

Program Song • “Blest Are We”	9
Grade Level Song • “With You by My Side”	10
Let Us Pray	11
JESUS AND HIS TIMES	17

UNIT 1	The Mystery of the Incarnation	27
Unit Song • “Come, Emmanuel”		28

CHAPTER

PAGE

CATECHISM PILLARS

1 The Birth of Our Savior 29

God the Father loved us so much that he sent us his Son, Jesus, to save us from sin.

Scripture Story • The Birth of Jesus 32

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer of Praise 38

2 God with Us 41

The Sacrament of Baptism gives us a new identity as members of the Body of Christ.

Worship • Celebrating Baptism 44

Prayer Celebration • A Renewal of Baptismal Promises . . . 50

3 Jesus! Son of God, Son of Man 53

The gift of conscience helps us realize our goal of striving to be Christlike.

Scripture Story • The Boy Jesus in the Temple 56

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer of Reflection 62

4 The Prayer of Jesus 65

Prayer transforms us. It helps us “put on” the mind of Christ.

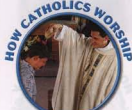
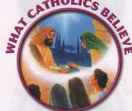
Scripture Story • The Temptation of Jesus 68

Prayer Celebration • In God’s Presence 74

Faith in Action


- Catechists 77
- Parish Retreats 78
- Altar Servers 79
- Music Ministry 80

Unit Wrap-up and Unit Review 81



UNIT 2

The Meaning of the Kingdom 85

 Unit Song • “We Are the Hope” 86

CATECHISM PILLARS CHAPTER

PAGE



5 The Kingdom of God 87

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

Scripture • Parables of the Kingdom 90

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for the Kingdom 96

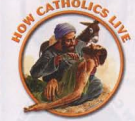


6 Servants of the Kingdom 99

God calls every member of the Church to Christian service, according to their vocation.

Worship • A Marriage Blessing 102

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer of Thanks 108



7 Justice in the Kingdom on Earth 111

God gives us the grace to be signs of the coming of his Kingdom by working for peace and justice.

Scripture • Loving Your Neighbor 114

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for Love and Mercy 120



8 A Prayer for the Kingdom 123

Praying the Lord's Prayer can help us reflect on God's glory and recognize his Kingdom among us.

Scripture • The Sermon on the Mount 126

Prayer Celebration • The Lord's Prayer 132

Faith in Action • The Cursillo Movement 135

• The Holy Name Society 136

• Godparents 137

• Extraordinary Ministers
of Holy Communion 138

Unit Wrap-up and Unit Review 139

UNIT 3

The Christian Life143

Unit Song • "In Remembrance of You"144

CHAPTER

PAGE

CATECHISM PILLARS

9 Living in Christ's Service. 145

As disciples of Jesus we are called to serve others with humility.

Scripture • Giving Alms 148

Prayer Celebration • The Prayer of Saint Francis 154

10 Jesus, Our Eucharist 157

Throughout the universal Church, the Eucharist is the center of Catholic life.

Worship • Eucharistic Prayer 160

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer of Adoration 166

11 Living in Christ's Love 169

What makes the morality of true disciples come alive is our ability to imitate the love of Jesus Christ.

Scripture • The Conditions of Discipleship 172

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for Discipleship 178

12 A Prayer for Christ's Healing 181

Through prayer, Christ's healing presence works to transform us.

Scripture • The Raising of Lazarus 184

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for Healing 190

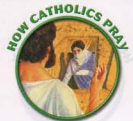
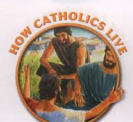
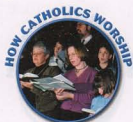
Faith in Action • Lectors 193

• Parish Pastoral Council 194

• Ministry to the Infirm 195

• The Rosary Society 196

Unit Wrap-up and Unit Review 197



UNIT 4

The Paschal Mystery 201

Unit Song • "Hold Us in Your Mercy" 202

CATECHISM PILLARS

CHAPTER

PAGE



13 Jesus' Persecution. 203

The Passion and Death of Jesus reveal the extent of God's great and unconditional love for us.

Scripture • Jesus Prepares for His Sacrifice in Jerusalem . . 206

Prayer Celebration • The Way of the Cross 212



14 Jesus' Passion 215

Participation in the Easter Triduum liturgies can lead to sincere contrition and spiritual renewal.

Worship • Remembering the Passion of Our Lord 218

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for Mercy 224



15 The Resurrection and the Call to Discipleship 227

A Catholic moral life is only possible in partnership with Christ.

Scripture • The Empty Tomb 230

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for Discipleship 236



16 Pentecost 239

God continues to make himself known to us, and God the Holy Spirit continues to empower us.

Scripture • The Coming of the Holy Spirit 242

Prayer Celebration • The Golden Sequence 248

- Faith in Action*
- World Missions 251
 - Eucharistic Adoration Society 252
 - Defending the Faith 253
 - RCIA Catechists 254

Unit Wrap-up and Unit Review 255



The Good News 259

Unit Song • "Send Us Your Spirit" 260

CHAPTER

PAGE CATECHISM PILLARS

17 The Early Church: People of Pentecost . 261

The Church continues the mission of Christ through the efforts of all her members.

Scripture • A Letter from Paul to the Corinthians 264

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for Faithful Discipleship . . 270



18 The Church Today: Confirmed Believers 273

Confirmation increases and deepens baptismal grace.

Worship • The Rite of Confirmation 276

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer to the Holy Spirit 282

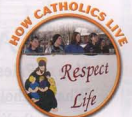


19 Spreading the Gospel 285

True Christian love is the basis of morality and begins in the family.

Scripture • The Way of Love 288

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer of Praise 294



20 A Prayer for the Guidance of the Holy Spirit 297

At the heart of all prayer resides the Holy Spirit, who sustains and inspires us.

Scripture • Vision of Heavenly Worship 300

Prayer Celebration • A Prayer for the Church 306



Faith in Action • Pastors 309
• Youth Ministries 310
• Bereavement Ministry 311
• Ministers of Hospitality 312

Unit Wrap-up and Unit Review 313

FEASTS AND SEASONS 317

Liturgical Year Calendar	318
The Liturgical Year	319
Advent	322
Christmas	330
Lent	336
Holy Week	346
Easter	352
Ordinary Time	360
Holy Days	362
Mary	368
Saints	376
Holy People	386
What Is Your Liturgical Year IQ?	394

OUR CATHOLIC HERITAGE 395

Map of Palestine in New Testament Times	396
What Catholics Believe	397
How Catholics Worship	407
How Catholics Live	415
How Catholics Pray	427

DOCTRINE REVIEW 431

FAVORITE LESSONS AND CELEBRATIONS 435

END-OF-YEAR PRAYER 437

GLOSSARY 439

INDEX 442

The Meaning of the Kingdom

UNIT 2

Jesus 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

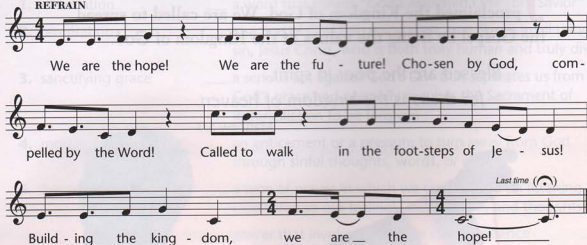


Jesus compared the Kingdom of God to a net cast into the sea and to a farmer who sows seed in his field. Both images illustrate how Jesus gathers his followers into the Kingdom.

We Are the Hope

Paul A. Tate

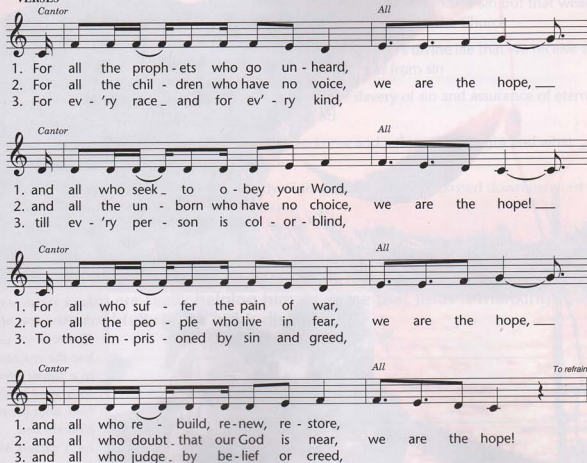
REFRAIN



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

Last time (♩)

VERSES



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,
2. For all the peo - ple who live in fear, we are the hope, _____
3. To those im - pris - oned by sin and greed,

Cantor *All* *To refrain*

1. and all who re - 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,

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

Simeon of Syria (390–459) was the first stylite, an extremely religious person who lived on top of tall, narrow pillars. His preaching from pillars, as high as sixty-six feet, converted many to follow Christ.

Quotable Scripture

"This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

—Mark 1:15

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

blestarewe.com



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

Saint of the Week



**Saint Damien
Molokai (1840–1889)**

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

Fest Day: April 15



**A
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.

5 The Kingdom of God



"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:39

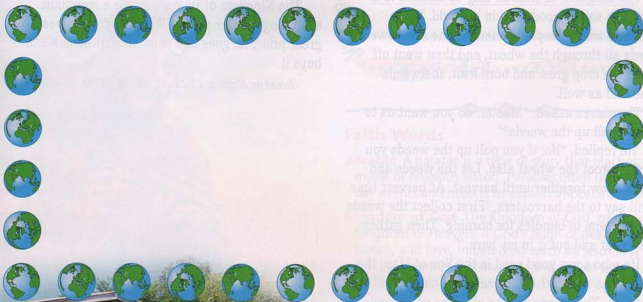
Share

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.



What does Jesus teach us about God's 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.

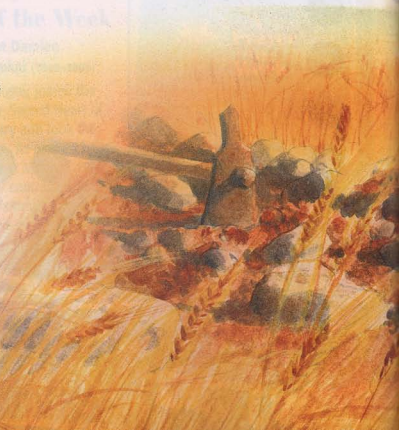
The Kingdom of Heaven is also like a net fishermen throw into the sea. Fish of every kind get caught in the net. When fishermen pull it onto the shore, they put the good fish into buckets and throw away the bad fish.

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



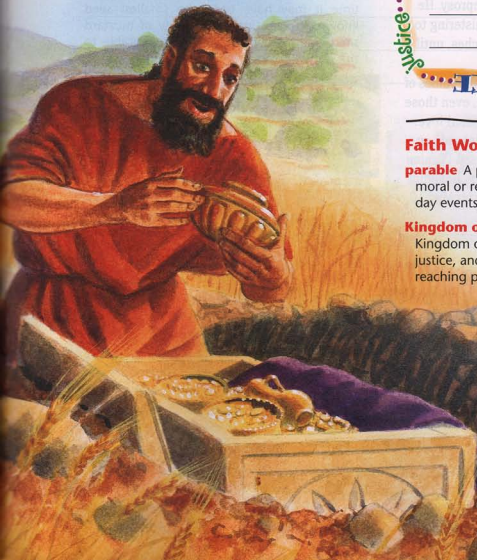
God's Plan for His Kingdom

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.

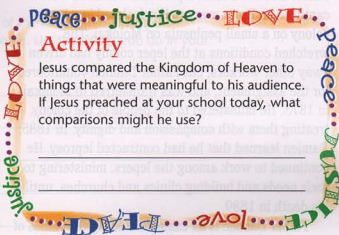
The Church, a Sign of God's Kingdom

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.



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?

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?

Hear & Believe

Saint 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. On October 11, 2009, Blessed Damien was canonized, or named a saint, by Pope Benedict XVI. The Church celebrates his feast day on May 10.



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 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.

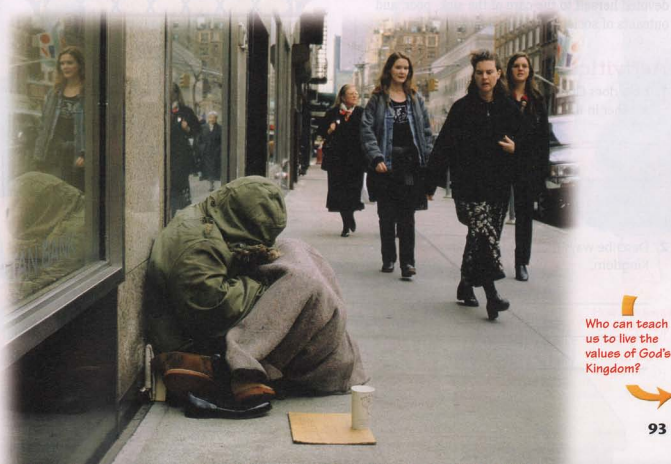
We Believe

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

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.

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.



Who can teach
us to live the
values of God's
Kingdom?



Respond Believe

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

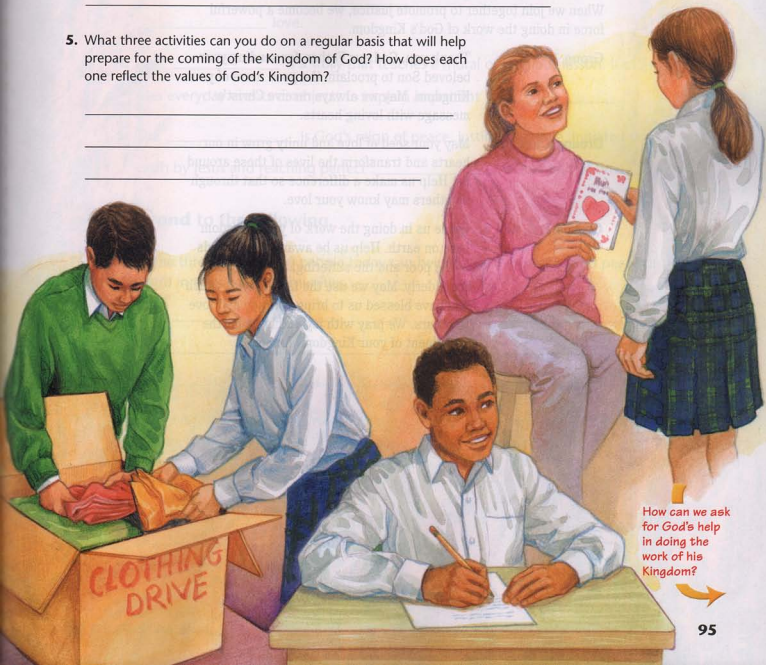
1. How does Elizabeth of Hungary's example describe ways that people treat one another in the Kingdom of God?

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

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

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.

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?



How can we ask for God's help in doing the work of his Kingdom?



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.

A

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

fulfillment
truths
unconditional
parable
charity
Kingdom of God
just

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

B

Respond to the following.

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

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



C Circle the letter of the best answer.

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

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