

Lesson Plan, Grade 8 - Chapter 19

Catechist Background

Doctrinal Content

- The Communion of Saints is everyone who believes in and follows Jesus: Church members here on Earth, souls being purified in Purgatory, and the blessed already in Heaven. (CCC 946, 1475)
- We pray during every Mass for those who have died. We show our communion with all Church members when we support one another through prayer and sacrifice. (CCC, 1032)
- Sacramentals are holy objects, prayers, and practices that help us respond to God's grace and bring us closer to him. (CCC, 1670, 1677, 1678)
- Religious art, especially icons, helps Catholics honor the Saints and glorify God. (CCC, 2501-2503)

Catechist Background

"We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as [being] dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus."—Romans 6:9, 11

Reflect How does the knowledge that death has no power over Christ affect the way you live?

Part of the richness of Catholic life is found in the way we worship. We pray with our entire selves, including our five senses. Our worship includes (just to name a few things) the taste of the Body and Blood of Christ, the smell of incense and candle wax, the lingering feel of holy water on the forehead, the sight of liturgical colors and stained glass, and the sounds of bells and the Gregorian chant. But beyond these sensual experiences in our liturgical celebrations, there are also other dimensions of Catholic life and culture that engage our senses, like the Knights of Columbus pancake breakfasts, living nativity scenes, and walking to Mass on a frosty morning.

All these things remind us of the richness of our Catholic heritage, a treasure trove of customs and textures forged over two thousand years. They remind us that it is indeed a blessing to belong to a Church with such a deep and resonant history. We are a people with a past, and we are connected to that past through historical, liturgical, and spiritual bonds that tell us who we are. In a world of rapid change and wavering values, this is a priceless gift.

Reflect What are some Catholic practices that enhance your life, and why are they precious to you?

Catechist's Prayer

Lord of all, thank you for the friends and family members you have brought into my life. May I always remain hopeful as I await the joyful reunion with my loved ones in Heaven. Amen.

Sharing the Message

How Eighth-Graders Understand Chapter Topics

Eighth-graders are transitioning between a stage in which they are very concrete thinkers (and need to experience something with their senses in order to understand it) and the more abstract thinking characteristic of adults. Therefore, experiencing all of the sensory aspects of our faith can be especially helpful to them in terms of cultivating a meaningful spiritual experience. Equally important, particularly for youth this age, is a discussion of the underlying meaning behind the signs and symbols they see in the Church.

Teaching Tip

Display several examples of sacramentals, such as icons, candles, medals, etc. Ask the young people to discuss what they see; then, ask them to share what they know about the meaning behind each sacramental.

Sharing the Message with Eighth-Graders

Adolescents are grappling with the concept that there are deeper realities than those they simply see and hear.

- Many of them are beginning to connect the past with their present in new ways. This allows them to appreciate the value of memory as a way to keep a loved one alive.
- Help your youth begin to appreciate the tactile nature of Catholic worship. Share with them how sacramentals prepare us to receive grace, call us into an awareness of God's presence, and help instill within us a deeper appreciation of worship.

Chapter Connections

Tasks of Catechesis

Helping children grow in a faith that is "known, celebrated, lived, and expressed in prayer" (NDC, 20). This chapter focuses on the following tasks of catechesis:

- Liturgical Education
- Teaching to Pray

NCEA IFG: ACRE Edition

Liturgical Life

- Objective: To know the Paschal Mystery of Jesus: in the Church's liturgical life—feasts, seasons, symbols, and practices—and in the Sacraments as signs and instruments of grace

Prayer

- Objective: To recognize and learn how to engage in Catholic forms of personal and communal prayer and ways of deepening one's spiritual life

Catholic Faith Literacy

Prayer, rosary, sacramental, spirituality

Catholic Social Teaching

To integrate Catholic Social Teaching into your lesson, choose one of the following features: Call to Family, Community, and Participation, pages 336–337; or Solidarity of the Human Family, pages 344–345.

- Start the Live step of the process by talking about Saint André Bessette on page 300. Then move directly to the Catholic Social Teaching feature.
- Or, to expand the lesson, complete page 300, then move to the Catholic Social Teaching feature.
- Return to Chapter 19 for the prayer on page 301.

► Music Option

Use one or more of the following songs to enhance catechetical learning or for prayer.

- "Litany," Live, Page 301

Catechist Instruction, Grade 8 – Chapter 19

Invite Page 291

Objective

- Reflect on God's personal invitation through Scripture

♥ Let Us Pray

Invite the young people to gather in the prayer space and make the Sign of the Cross. Pray the leader prayer. Invite a volunteer to read aloud the Psalm verses. Prompt the group's response.

Have the youth move from the prayer space back to their seats. Explain that we are a part of something whole and something holy, the Communion of Saints.

Say: Let's listen to God's Word and hear how together with all the faithful living and faithful departed, we are dead to sin and living for God through Christ Jesus.

† Scripture

Guide the youth through the process of Scripture reflection.

Invite the young people to be still, close their eyes, and focus on their breathing.

Encourage them to open their minds and hearts to what God is saying to them.

- Proclaim the Scripture and have the youth sit in silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?
- Allow volunteers to share.

► You may play instrumental music to begin the reflection.

Remember, this is a spiritual discipline that takes practice. The young people will grow in their capacity to sit in silence. Throughout the year, build to four minutes

Have you ever thought...

Say: As Catholics, we are all part of the Communion of Saints and connected through our practices, prayer, sacred objects, and images.

- Invite the young people to respond to the questions.

Discover (1) Pages 294-295

Objectives

- Identify the Communion of Saints
- Explore how we show our communion with all Church members when we support one another through prayer and sacrifice

Point out the title of this lesson and the question. Challenge the young people to make connections between the two. **Possible response: *We are not alone because we are part of the Communion of Saints***

You Are Not Alone

Have the youth silently read the first paragraph.

Celebrating Life

Direct the young people to close their eyes and imagine a New Orleans funeral as you read aloud the first two paragraphs. If possible, find a procession on YouTube and show it.

- Ask: Why is celebrating in this way appropriate? **Possible response: *We hope that the person has gone to Heaven, so we are happy for him or her***
- Encourage the youth to read the rest of the text to gain an understanding of the meaning of the term Communion of Saints.

Being in Communion

Review the text with the group.

- Challenge the young people to list ways to be in "communion"; have a volunteer write the examples on the board. Possible responses: with the Saints, with our friends, with family members
- Ask: Have you ever asked a living friend or relative to pray for you? How is this similar to asking a deceased grandparent or your patron Saint to pray for you?
- Discuss the difference between All Saints Day and All Souls Day. Invite a volunteer to read aloud the Catholics Today feature on the Day of the Dead.

Activity

Arrange the youth in small groups.

- Have them work together to research three of the Saints.
- Invite volunteers to share their findings with the group.

Quick Review

We are connected to Jesus and to all the Church members who lived in the past, and those who live now. This unity of Church members on Earth, in Purgatory, and in Heaven is called the Communion of Saints.

Discover (2) Pages 296-297

Objectives

- Explore the meaning and the practice of sacramentals
- Recognize that sacramentals help us to grow in faith
- Explore the use of blessings within and outside of Mass

Teaching Activity: Reminders of His Presence

Participants will randomly choose an envelope containing an image of a sacramental object or practice. They will then complete a worksheet to describe how they think their sacramental object or practice reminds people of God's presence or helps them to respond to his grace.

Before the Lesson

Materials Needed

✦ Go to aliveinchrist.osv.com and download Sacramentals Worksheet, Catholic Faith Words

The Book of Blessings, pencils or pens, manila envelopes (1 per participant), sticky notes, a large jar, tape

Preparation

- Search online for images of the following sacramentals and print them out: Rosary, Medal, Crucifix, Paschal Candle, Picture of Mary, Crib Medal, Holy Water Font for the Home, Last Supper Painting, Palm Branch, Holy Water Bottle, Nativity Scene, Scapular, Holy Card from a Funeral, Statue of a Saint, Votive Candles in a Church, Novena Booklet, Stations of the Cross
- Number the manila envelopes in sequential order. Place one image of a sacramental inside each envelope and tape the envelopes on the wall or board.
- Number sticky notes with numbers that correspond with the manila envelopes, fold them, and place them in a large jar for use during the game.
- Preselect a few blessings from *The Book of Blessings* to read to the group during the activity.

Activity Directions

Gather the group in front of the board or wall that has the numbered envelopes taped on it.

Say: You can learn a lot about young people by taking a look inside their bedrooms. It's easy to see what takes priority in their lives just by looking at posters on their walls of the bands and sports teams that are important to them. Some people have bed sheets and comforters that have sports logos or the faces of musical artists or athletes on them. Do you know anyone that has his or her room decorated like that? We often surround ourselves with reminders of those we admire or mementos of times that we want to remember.

Post the Catholic Faith Word *sacramental* on the wall or board and ask a volunteer to read the definition aloud to the group.

Say: When we take the First Commandment seriously and put God first in our lives, we want to surround ourselves with reminders (objects, images, and actions) of his presence in our lives.

Have the group line up to choose a sticky note from the jar. As they choose their numbers, direct them to take the corresponding envelope off of the board or wall and move to their seats. Instruct them to take out what is in their envelopes and complete the worksheet. When all of the participants have completed their worksheet, move around the room and ask volunteers to share what they've written about their sacramental.

When the participants who've chosen *Stations of the Cross* and *Paschal Candle* share what they've written about their sacramental, take the opportunity to post the Catholic Faith Word for each and read the definition aloud to the group.

After each participant has shared, remind the youth that these objects and practices help people to deepen their relationship with God and the Communion of Saints.

Say: Another practice in our Catholic faith is the practice of blessing. Blessings are very special sacramentals that include praising God for his great works and gifts. You are familiar with the blessing we say before meals. Say it with me. How about the blessing you give someone when they sneeze? Here are some examples of other blessings we can use in our home.

Share a few blessings from *The Book of Blessings* with the group.

Discover (3) Pages 298-299

Objectives

- Explain how Church art, if used properly, helps Catholics worship God
- Differentiate between idolatry and honoring the person portrayed in an image

Ask: How can art help you to pray?

- Invite the young people to share their thoughts.

Images and Imagination

Point out that Catholic churches and many Christian homes are full of images of Jesus, Mary, and other Saints. Ask the youth why they think we surround ourselves with these images.

Not Idolatry

Summarize the text:

- During the Middle Ages, many beautiful pieces of religious art were destroyed because they were being treated as idols.
- Later, a Church council ruled that images, if used properly, could help us worship God.
- When we honor an image, we are really honoring the person that the image portrays.
- Clarify that we honor people, but we worship God. We pray with the Saints, but we pray to God.

Two Images, One Artist

Have the young people read the text on page 298 to find out about the art created by Michelangelo.

- Point out that his artwork has helped many people recognize the impact of the Crucifixion and God's greatness.

Artistic License

Have the youth read this section.

- Invite a volunteer to explain the practical reason for stained-glass windows. They show stories from the Bible to help people who can't read learn stories of their faith.

† Go to the Source

Have the young people read Exodus 20:2–5 to find out what the First Commandment says about idolatry. However, be sure to point out that it is okay to use statues and other religious images to help us in our worship of God.

In Summary

Arrange the youth in small groups to review the summary points.

- Encourage the groups to discuss what new things they learned about sacred objects and images from this chapter.

Extend the Lesson

Use **Activity Master 19: Sacramentals in My Life** to extend the lesson; it is not included in the timed estimate for this section of the Lesson Plan.

Live Pages 300-301

Objectives

- Discover ways to "keep in touch" with someone who has died
- Explore the faith life of Saint André Bessette
- Offer the Reflection on the Saints prayer

Our Catholic Life

Have the young people silently read this section.

- As a group, discuss ways that symbols and memories keep us connected to someone who has died.

People of Faith

Explain to youth that Saint André Bessette had a special devotion to Saint Joseph. Because of his love for Saint Joseph, he worked tirelessly to have a church built in his honor.

- Read aloud the People of Faith paragraph.
- Share with the group the additional information in the People of Faith Background box.
- Invite the young people to think of a Saint that they have a special connection to. Encourage volunteers to share the name of their Saint and what connects them.

Here are some additional details about Saint André Bessette to assist you in presenting this section:

- Because of his lack of education, Saint André Bessette served as doorkeeper and receptionist at Notre Dame College in Côte-des- Neiges, Quebec.
- He did his humble duties without complaining, joking about his job as a doorkeeper by saying that when he came to the College, he was shown the door, and he stayed for 40 years.

Activity

Ask a volunteer to read aloud the activity instructions. • Invite the youth to share their prayer or poem with a partner.

Reflection on the Saints

♥ You will be the leader for this prayer celebration.

- Set the prayer table with a white cloth. If possible, place on it images of some of the Saints named in the litany.
- Begin the prayer with these words: Jesus, be with us as we stand together with the Communion of Saints and offer praise to our Father.
- Follow the order of prayer on the prayer page.

► Conclude by singing with the young people or playing the song "Litany," downloaded from **aliveinchrist.osv.com**.

Chapter Review

If you are using eAssessments, remind the young people that they will need to be completed by the due date. Feedback is important at this age. For the tool to be used effectively provide feedback to the young people about their work.

Chapter 19 Lesson Plan

Objectives	Process	Materials
Invite, 15 minutes		
The Communion of Saints Page 291	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psalm 27:13–14 Pray the opening prayer. Romans 6:3–9, 11 Guide the youth through the process of Scripture reflection. • Discuss Have You Ever Thought questions. 	
Discover, 45 minutes		
You Are Not Alone Pages 294–295 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the Communion of Saints • Explore how we show our communion with all Church members when we support one another through prayer and sacrifice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about how we are connected to Jesus and to all Church members, past and present. • Activity List and discuss patron Saints. 	<input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens <input type="checkbox"/> board or chart paper
Holiness Is All Around You Pages 296–297 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the meaning and the practice of sacramentals • Recognize that sacramentals help us to grow in faith • Explore the use of blessings within and outside of Mass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Activity Participants will write about sacramental objects and practices that help us deepen our relationship with God and the Communion of Saints. 	Sacramental Objects Handout, Catholic Faith Words <input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens, Manila Envelopes, tape
Images and Imagination Pages 298–299 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how Church art, if used properly, helps Catholics worship God • Differentiate between idolatry and honoring the person portrayed in an image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how religious art helps us glorify God Read and discuss Exodus 20:2–5. • Activity Master Sacramentals in My Life 	<input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens Activity Master 19
Live, 15 minutes		
Our Catholic Life Page 300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the statement in the Our Catholic Life section. • People of Faith Learn about André Bessette. • Activity Youth will write a poem thanking God for someone special in their life who has died. 	<input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens
Reflection on the Saints Page 301	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the prayer table. • Follow the order of prayer. 	“Litany”

CATHOLIC FAITH WORDS

Communion of Saints, sacramentals, Stations of the Cross, Paschal Candle, icons

ASSESSMENT

Chapter Review, Page 302

[aliveinchrist.osv.com](https://www.aliveinchrist.osv.com) Customize and Download Assessments, Interactive Reviews, eAssessments

Name _____

Date _____

Sacramentals in My Life

Fill out the information about two sacramentals that you use or that are in your home.

A sacramental that I use or that is present in my home: _____

I/We received it when: _____

I use it when [or] it helps me to: _____

A question about this sacramental that I would like to research is: _____

It is important to me because: _____

A sacramental that I use or that is present in my home: _____

I/We received it when: _____

I use it when [or] it helps me to: _____

A question about this sacramental that I would like to research is: _____

It is important to me because: _____

Name _____

Date _____

Match each description in Column A with the correct term in Column B.

Column A

Column B

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| ___ 1. Scenes of Jesus' suffering, Death, and burial | a. icons |
| ___ 2. The unity of Church members on Earth, in Purgatory, and in Heaven | b. Paschal Candle |
| ___ 3. A symbol of Jesus' Resurrection | c. Communion of Saints |
| ___ 4. Religious pictures done in a specific style | d. Stations of the Cross |

Circle the letter of the choice that best completes each sentence.

5. The intercessors who pray with us and for us are the ____.
- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| a. sacramentals | c. iconoclasts |
| b. symbols | d. Saints |
6. Which of the following is NOT a sacramental?
- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| a. holy water | c. blessed oil |
| b. the Eucharist | d. a rosary |
7. A blessing with holy water is meant to remind us of ____.
- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| a. Baptism | c. friends who have died |
| b. Purgatory | d. the Ten Commandments |
8. During the Middle Ages, the stained glass windows in churches were meant to ____.
- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| a. tell new stories about Jesus | c. connect living and dead Church members |
| b. teach people who could not read | d. showcase Michelangelo's talents |

Write a response on the lines below.

9. What is the difference between a Sacrament and a sacramental? _____

10. How would you answer a non-Catholic friend who said that you worship idols because you pray to statues? _____

Write the name of the object or what you think the object is.

How do you think people use it?

How do you think this object or practice reminds people of God's presence in their lives or helps them to respond to his grace?

What are some things in your home or family practices that remind you of God's presence?

Catholic Faith Words

sacramentals sacred blessings, objects, and actions that remind us of God, are made sacred through the prayers of the Church, and that help us respond to the grace received in the Sacraments.

Catholic Faith Words

Stations of the Cross images of fourteen scenes that help us think and pray about Jesus' suffering, Death, and burial.

Catholic Faith Words

Paschal Candle a large, white candle that is lit from the Easter fire, and is used during the Easter season and at Baptisms and funerals as a symbol of the Resurrection.