

Christ Present Among Us

Preparation for the Session

This session has parts that will take place at different times. You will gather with your child for Part 1: Invite. Your child will then work independently on Part 2: Discover, and you will read that section of the chapter on your own as well. Finally, you will come together again later in the week for Part 3 to review and complete the In Summary & Live section.

In this chapter, your child will cover the following objectives:

- Explore the visible and spiritual aspects of the Church
- Examine how the Church is the Body of Christ
- Recognize that the Church is one because she acknowledges one Lord, confesses one faith, and is born of one Baptism
- Discover the harmony that results as members of the Church live in communion with the Holy Spirit and one another
- Compare the diversity of gifts that allow the Church to help God manifest his Kingdom

Parents, Consider This: *There is a tension in life between being a unique and independent individual and belonging to groups and communities. We need both, an individual identity and a sense of belonging. In fact, belonging to healthy, life-giving groups, such as a loving family or a vibrant faith community, can help us to better form our identity, especially in early adolescence. To prepare to work through this lesson with your child, discuss with him/her various communities in his/her life, such as family, sports teams, social groups, and so on. Reflect together on these questions: What are the benefits of this group? What are the sacrifices that we make in order to belong? How would our life be different if we didn't belong to this group? Discuss the value of belonging to groups where we feel accepted and valued. Help your child to see there is a place for everyone, including him/her in God's Church.*

Children at This Age: *Belonging to a peer group is very important in the lives of adolescents. Yet, some young people may perceive their membership as a matter of conformity rather than a matter of contributing something new and distinct. Most of us want to belong to groups and to have friends who accept us without condition and will stand by us in tough times. An important part of growing in faith is to come to see our place in the Body of Christ here on Earth in the Christian community in which we live. Help your child to discover how her/his gifts can be used as a contribution to your local faith community.*

PART 1: Invite

Turn to Page 183,
Christ Present Among Us

Make sure you have a Bible, writing tools for both of you, and some paper.

Find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



Let Us Pray Together make the Sign of the Cross. Have your child take the role of leader and read aloud the prayer. Both of you respond with the part marked “All.”

Remind your daughter/son that the Church has many members, but we are one Body in Christ.

Say: Let’s listen to God’s Word and see how our individual gifts and talents contribute to the Body of Christ.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word ritual you learned in the Introduction Session.

- Proclaim the Scripture in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?

Invite your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Say: Every individual of the Church has unique gifts and talents given by the Holy Spirit that help them to work together united as the Body of Christ to love others in his name.

Now, look at the *Have you ever thought...* box.

Invite your child to respond to the questions found in the box in the Student Book, also listed here:

- What does being part of the Body of Christ require? *(To accept being part of the Body of Christ, we must first recognize that there are many different gifts. We each are given certain gifts to build up the Body. We need to value and share the gifts we are given as well as those contributed by others.)*
- How do people’s individual gifts and talents contribute to the Church? *(The Church is strengthened when we value and share the gifts we have. We also can appreciate other’s gifts and invite them to share them for the good of the Church and those the Church serves.)*

Ask what else your son/daughter might wonder about God’s Word and what it means to us today.

Turn to Page 184,
Getting Started

Read aloud the paragraph.

Have your child read aloud the directions for completing the Gifts and Talents web on page 184. When he/she is finished, share with one another two gifts and talents you each think the Church needs to continue Jesus’ work.

Preview the Catholic Faith Words at the top of the page. Ask your child what she/he thinks the words mean. The definitions can be found in the glossary at the end of the Student Book.

Turn to Page 185

Invite your child to silently read the directions for this page, as you do. Then have him/her complete the activity in the book. You can complete it on a separate piece of paper. When you both are finished, share with one another two of the gifts or talents you each identify. Describe how you can use one of your gifts to help another person.

PART 2: Discover

Direct your child to independently complete pages 186–191. Have him/her highlight the main sentence in each paragraph while reading through the text. This includes completing all on-page activities. Ask your child to write any question he/she might have about a Catholic Faith Word in the margins of the text. You can review these when you gather again to complete the session.

Be sure to read these pages as well. Doing so will give you insight into chapter topics and will help you engage your child in later discussions.

PART 3: In Summary & Live

Turn to Page 191,
In Summary

When you return, review the “In Summary/Catholics Believe” section. Read each bullet and ask your child to rephrase it in his/her own words.

Ask: Which part of this lesson did you find most interesting?

Turn to Page 192

Direct your daughter/son to silently read Our Catholic Life.

Parents, Consider This: *Sharing the gifts God gives us, especially with our faith community, is a wonderful way to help us feel a sense of belonging and part of a community of the Body of Christ. But knowing what our own gifts are is not always easy. In the Our Catholic Life section of this chapter, your child will be reading about some of the ways to share his/her unique personal gifts, perhaps simply by being a friend or mentoring a younger child. As your child sees you serve in your Church and community—feeding the hungry, serving in liturgical ministries, worshipping, and praying for others—they will come to understand we not only profess our faith, we live it. You may easily see the gifts and talents your child has but not every adolescent is aware of their own gifts. Affirm the gifts you see in your child and in the young people with whom you come in contact. Many people, especially young people, respond to the invitation to participate in helping others when asked but they may not feel confident to offer on their own. The next time you pray together with your child, ask God to show each of you more clearly what gifts you have to share. Perhaps find a way to serve in some capacity together. It will bring you closer to one another and will surely benefit the Body of Christ.*

Ask: What is one gift you can share in our community this week? *(Share some examples that you know your child would be good at, like offering child care services or shopping for food for a food pantry, or helping an elderly neighbor.)*

Say: Everything becomes more joyful when we give to others and serve in meaningful ways. Look at the young man in the picture. It looks like he is planting a tree. He probably enjoys and is gifted in caring for creation.

Remind your daughter/son that there are gifts that she/he simply may not have taken the time or made the effort to share yet. Explain that we should pray and ask God to help us know our own gifts and talents, and continue to think of ways we can share them in our home and with others in the community.

Read aloud the People of Faith story on Saint John Bosco and how he devoted his life to helping troubled children know Christ.

Say: God revealed Saint John Bosco's calling to him through his dreams.

Ask: How has God reached out to you?

Point out the Identify activity. Work on it together. Discuss the common themes and/or the messages that can be found in the hymns you added to your list.

Conclude the session by praying the Evening prayer on Page 386.



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student & Family section of aliveinchrist.osv.com.