

The Church Year

Preparation for the Session

Turn to Page 181,
the Family + Faith page.

In this chapter you will cover the following objectives:

- Identify liturgy as the public prayer of the Church
- Recognize that the Church year celebrates the life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus
- Review the sequence of the seasons of the Church year
- Describe Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday as the holiest days of the Church year
- Recognize that Easter is the greatest feast of the Church Year

Read the **Consider This** feature. What thoughts or reactions do you have to the opening question?

Parents, Consider This: *Reflect, for a moment, on the last time you truly rejoiced at a family celebration. Think about those who took part in it. Whether it was a birthday party or a wedding reception, the celebration most likely included festive decorations, music, and enthusiastic participation. Our Church family cycles through yearly celebrations as well. We call the cycle the liturgical year because our celebrations take place at Mass (liturgy). These celebrations are similar to family celebrations in that we mark significant moments in our family story, moments that celebrate and remember the life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.*

Read these other sections on the Family + Faith Page.

- *Your Child Learned.* This highlights some of the content of Sacred Scripture and Tradition in the chapter.
- *Children At This Age.* This will help you to understand how your child processes and learns at this developmental level.



Let's Sing: This song connects the session topics and can be downloaded from aliveinchrist.osv.com.

- A Circle of Colors

INVITE: Encountering God in His Word

Turn to Page 175,
The Church Year

After gathering the supplies that you will need, 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 Invite your child to make the Sign of the Cross. Read aloud the Psalm verse from the book. Help your child to respond.

Explain that we praise God in our prayer and in our worship throughout the year.

Say: Let's listen to hear what Jesus did as a young boy.



Guide your child through the Preparing for God’s Word Ritual you learned in the Introduction Session or play Track 1 of the *Songs of Scripture* CD.

- Proclaim God’s Word 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.

Now, look at the *What Do You Wonder?* box.

Say: Jesus went with his parents to the Jewish celebration of Passover. We also celebrate the Church year with many celebrations.

Invite your child to respond to the questions. Ask what else they might wonder about God’s life and love and how he shares them with us.

DISCOVER: Learning God’s Truth

Turn to Page 176,
Celebrate the Seasons

Explain that just like the year has four seasons: spring, summer, fall, and winter, the Church year also has seasons. We celebrate the seasons by celebrating the events of Jesus’ life throughout the year.

Have your child place a finger on the word **liturgy** in the Catholic Faith Words box. Ask her/him to read the definition.

Ask your child to think about the word worship. Read aloud the definition and discuss what adore and praise mean. (**Praise: to honor God simply because he is God; Adore: to acknowledge God as the Creator of all things and recognize his greatness.**)

Say: Let’s see how we celebrate Jesus’ life.

Tell your child to read about Advent.

Ask what color the Church uses for Advent. (**violet**)

Tell your child that Advent is a time for everyone to grow closer to Jesus.

Ask him/her what they know about the meaning of the Advent wreath shown in the picture. (**The evergreen circle reminds us that God’s love never ends. The candles remind us of the four Sundays of Advent. The third is pink (joyous) to mark that we are getting closer to Christmas.**)

Read the caption. Discuss what is happening with your child.

Turn to Page 177,
Christmas

Read about Christmas.

Ask: How long is the Christmas season? (**three weeks**) Does that surprise you? Do you keep your decorations out for the three weeks of the season?

Say: We celebrate Christmas because Jesus came so all people could know his Father's love.

★ **Complete** the gold-star activity. (Jesus' presence in the world)
Then read the caption for the peace lily.

Share one of your favorite signs of the Christmas season (lights, Nativity Set, etc.) with your child and explain why. Ask your child about hers/his.

Read aloud the paragraph about Ordinary Time.

Ask: What is the color for Ordinary Time? (green) Why? (it's the color for growth) How do we grow during Ordinary Time? (We grow in faith by listening to the stories of Jesus about discipleship.)

Activity

Work on the Share Your Faith activity with your child. Ask your child to think about what season of the Church we are in right now. Have them write about some of the ways your family celebrates this season.

Turn to Page 178,
Celebrating Jesus

Read aloud the "Lent" section.

Explain to your child that the forty days of Lent symbolize the forty days Jesus spent in the desert focusing on his relationship with his Father.

On a separate sheet of paper, have your child name as many things she/he can that begin with the prefix "tri." (triangle, tripod, tricycle)

Discuss that "tri" means three, so the word *Triduum* means "three days." They are the most important three days in our liturgical year. They are the days we remember Jesus' suffering, Death and Resurrection.

Activity

Use a sheet of art paper and fold it into threes. Write Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday in each of the three parts. Ask your child to draw a picture of what happened on those days below each heading.

Turn to Page 179,
Easter

Read aloud the first paragraph on Easter.

Ask your child to read the second paragraph about Pentecost.

Call attention to the meaning of the Catholic Faith Word, **Resurrection**. Read it aloud. Tell your child that this is a very important event and that Easter celebrates this greatest feast of the year.

Activity

Read aloud the directions for the Connect Your Faith activity and ask your child to complete the activity.

Parents, Consider This: Birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays are all occasions when we think, "Where did the year go?" Some years present more challenges, some more joys. If we mark them well, we take the time to think about the changes that have given us opportunities for growth. Living the cycle of Jesus' life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension allows us to journey with him through his dying and rising. The six seasons of the Church year celebrate the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. We celebrate the mystery of our own lives, united to his in the daily cycle of dying and rising. With all the dying to ego, to expectations, and to selfishness that has to happen in family life, what a blessing it is that each new year we begin the journey again!

LIVE: Living Our Faith

Turn to Page 180,
Our Catholic Life

Read aloud the question and the first paragraph.



Complete the gold-star activity. (robes, Mass, white, altar, flags, hangings, decorate, season)

Turn to Page 183,
People of Faith

Read the paragraph about Pope Saint Victor.

- Share your reactions to the information.
- Name any other languages you have heard at Mass.

Activity

Have your child complete the Live Your Faith activity.

Turn to Page 185,
Family + Faith Page and
conclude with the Let's Pray
prayer on this page.

Parents, Consider This: It's important to form our children in the common language of prayer. We encourage you to pray the Prayer to the Holy Spirit during your night prayer this week.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they will be created.

And you will renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit you have taught the hearts of your faithful. In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right and always rejoice in your consolation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



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