

The Communion of Saints

Preparation for the Session

Turn to Page 265,
the Family + Faith page.
Vivos en Cristo, Page 531

In this chapter you will cover the following objectives:

- Identify the Communion of Saints as including all holy persons, living and dead
- Define Purgatory as a state of final cleansing after death and before entering into Heaven
- Explore the Spiritual Works of Mercy, the actions by which we address the needs of heart, mind, and soul
- Discover intercessory prayer and personal reflection as means to growing in holiness

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

Parents, Consider This: *Although a few of us might find it difficult to ask for help, wouldn't it be nice to know that you had a whole community of people who were there to help when you needed it? Living with that kind of support would lessen some of the anxiety we walk around with daily. Actually, you were given the gift of that community at Baptism—the Communion of Saints. All of the faithful, both living and dead, are included in the Communion of Saints. Christians believe that death does not mean an end to their relationship with those who have died, but a change, because not even death can separate people from the love of Christ.*

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: These songs connect the session topics and can be downloaded from aliveinchrist.osv.com.

- For All the Saints
- Around Your Throne

INVITE: Encountering God in His Word

Turn to Page 257,
The Communion of Saints
Vivos en Cristo, Page 515

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.

Say: It is sometimes hard to imagine that God created us all to be Saints. Sometimes we think that the Saints did not have struggles and challenges, but they were human beings just like us. In God's Word today, we will

hear an invitation to be God’s beloved children, so that his grace can help us to live holy lives.



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: These words of Saint Paul, originally addressed to the Church at Rome, also comprise an invitation issued to us at our Baptism. After presenting a lighted candle the priest says, “...walk always as children of the light... When the Lord comes, may they go out to meet him with all the saints in the Heavenly kingdom” (Rite of Baptism, 64). God calls all of us to be Saints.

Invite your child to respond to the questions. Ask what else they might wonder about Saints—both living and dead.

DISCOVER: Learning God’s Truth

Turn to Page 258,
The Church Community
Vivos en Cristo, Page 517

Read aloud the first two paragraphs as an introduction to the Scripture passage.

Ask your child to tell you the group that she/he felt most oneness with. Share with your child the group where you experienced the greatest sense of oneness.



Ask your child to find Acts 2:42-47 in your family Bible and then proclaim the Scripture.

Turn to Page 259,
All the Faithful
Vivos en Cristo, Page 519

Invite your child to silently read the text and to look for ways in which believers are united.



Complete the gold-star activity.

Review the definitions of the words, **Communion of Saints**, **Heaven**, **Purgatory**, and **Hell**, presented in the Catholic Faith Words box on page 258.

Ask your child to explain which believers are honored on All Saints' Day. (all those who are with God in Heaven)

Ask which believers are prayed for on All Souls' Day. (those in Purgatory)

Share with your child someone in your family who has died that you consider a "Saint." Talk about the virtues and attitudes this person had that helped you to know God.

Activity

Have your child complete the Share Your Faith activity.

Parents, Consider This: *Life is all about choices. There are moments when we look back at decisions we have made and wonder how different things would be if we had not made a particular choice. Knowing the importance of those choices, how is it that we do not spend much time thinking about the ultimate choice we have been given—the choice of where we will spend eternity? If your child lives with the security and joy of knowing that God created her/him for an eternity of communion with him, this life will have meaning and purpose. Guiding him/her to make the choices that will help him/her accept this gift from God is your true purpose.*

Turn to Page 260,
Charity and Prayer
Vivos en Cristo, Page 521

Encourage your child to think about what charity and prayer have to do with the Communion of Saints as you cover the next two pages.

Read aloud the text in this section, alternating paragraphs with your child.

On a separate sheet of blank paper, ask your child to draw a triangle in the middle. At each point of the triangle, have her/him write the name of one of the three persons of the Holy Trinity. In the middle of the triangle, direct your child to draw a heart. Remind her/him that all love begins in the heart of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Look up the Spiritual Works of Mercy on page 318 of the Our Catholic Tradition reference section and discuss how these actions are the way we share God's loving presence in the world.

Look at the definitions for the Catholic Faith Words, **Corporal Works of Mercy** and **Spiritual Works of Mercy**, in the Catholic Faith Words box on page 261.

Turn to Page 261,
Intercessory Prayer
Vivos en Cristo, Page 523

Have your child silently read the information under "Intercessory Prayer."

Brainstorm people or causes that we include in intercessory prayers. (people who are sick, Church and government leaders, family and friends, unity in the Church)

Have your child underline the different ways to pray that are mentioned in the reading.

Ask: What way to pray feels most comfortable for you?

Share your favorite way to pray. Emphasize your need to pray to your child. He/she might not see you do so and assume that you do not pray.

Read aloud the two paragraphs under “Personal Prayer.”

Ask your child to explain reflection in their own words.

Activity

Have your child work on the Connect Your Faith activity. Give your child a blank index card. List the people you know who have died on one side of the card. Ask your child to draw a sacred image on the other side. Place the card in his/her room as a reminder to pray for these people that you love.

LIVE: Living Our Faith

Turn to Page 262,
Our Catholic Life
Vivos en Cristo, Page 525

Ask: What does the word intercede mean? (to come between two parties)

Read aloud the introductory paragraph.

Read the bold text in each block of the “Praying for Others” chart. Ask your child to read the explanatory copy for each suggestion.

★ **Complete** the gold-star activity. Ask your child to fill in the lines in the book. You complete the exercise on a piece of paper and then share your responses.

Turn to Page 263,
People of Faith
Vivos en Cristo, Page 527

Read the paragraph about Saint Mary Faustina Kowalska.

- Share your reactions to the information.
- How does your family grow in trust of Jesus?

Turn to Page 265,
Family + Faith Page and
conclude with the Let’s Pray
prayer on this page.
Vivos en Cristo, Page 531

Parents, Consider This: *It’s important to form our children in the common language of prayer. We encourage you to pray the Morning Prayer (see Page 325), during your morning prayer this week.*



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