

LET'S DIVE INTO **CONNECT!**

BRINGING FAITH TO LIFE

Welcome to <i>Connect! Bringing Faith to Life</i>	ii
Program Components	iii
Overview of Components	iv
Teacher Guides Year 2	
Part 1 and Part 2 Contents	5-6
Chapter 1	7
Chapter 2	36
Chapter 3	63



Welcome to ***Connect! Bringing Faith to Life***

This three-year program invites sixth, seventh, and eighth graders to explore the Catholic faith and make important connections to their lives.

Each year of the program engages the students in an exploration of all four pillars of faith (The Creed, Liturgy and Sacraments, Christian Morality and Justice, and Prayer) as well as the Bible. The lessons based on the different pillars of faith make up most of the program and cover the fifty chapters in the *Connect!* student book.

The Bible-focused lessons found in each year invite the students to study key themes and passages, using a Bible as the primary student text. The students will not simply read about the Bible. They will read the Bible itself.

The third year of *Connect!* adds seven weeks of focused study about Church history. The students access the content for this study in a separate student book created just for this topic. The Church History student book offers an overview of the life of the Church from its early formation to today.

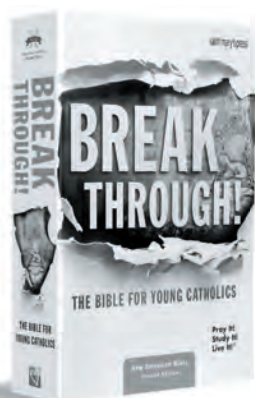
Program Components



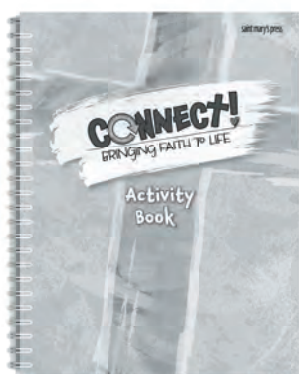
Connect! Student Book



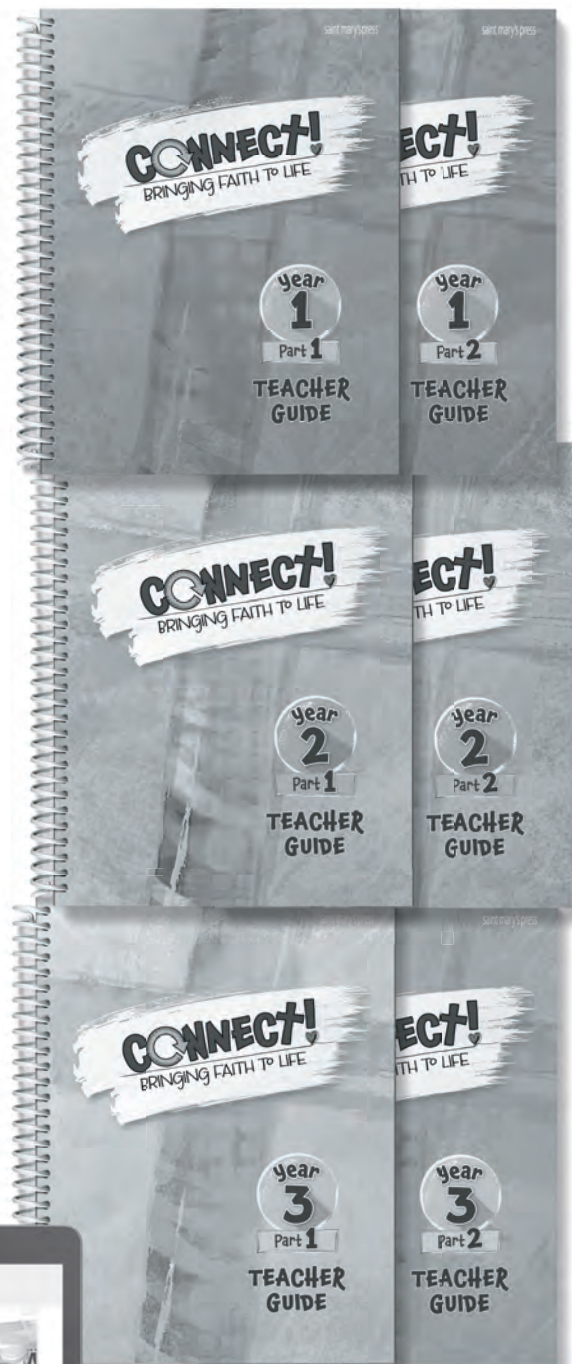
Church History Student Book



Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics, NABRE



Activity Book



Teacher Guides



Online Resources



eLearning Lessons

Overview of Components

Connect! Student Book

Connect with God
offers a short prayer
for students to pray
alone or together as
a group.

Key Words lists terms that are bolded and defined in the chapter and in the glossary.

Often people say you need to have faith. They might say, "Keep the faith" or "Have faith in God." Has anyone ever asked if you have faith in God? Have you ever considered what your response would be? Maybe your first thought was, "Yes, of course I do!" Maybe this is the first time you have ever thought about it, so you do not have a quick answer. Maybe you are just not sure what you believe. Just considering the question is one of the first steps of faith. This chapter looks into what having faith means. Afterward, you may realize you have more faith than you thought you did.

What Is Faith?

Throughout history, God has called upon people to follow his will. Faith is the way people respond to God's call. On a simple level, faith means a

CONNECT
with **GOD**

Jesus, I am like the man who cried out to you: "I do believe, help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Sometimes it seems like my faith is as small as a mustard seed. But with even that much faith, you said I could do anything. With you nothing is impossible. I place my trust in you, knowing you will not disappoint me. Amen.



faith ➔ Believing and accepting that God made himself known to us through his words and actions, especially through Jesus Christ. It is accepting God's truth with our minds and allowing it to guide our entire lives.

Chapter 6

Faith:

KEY WORDS

God the Father

Let's explore the First Divine Person of the Trinity—God

r beyond
onjure in
le por-
; both
nine
od is
male. We
ing, pow-
same time
r picture of
Despite our



God holds each one of
us in his loving embrace

PRAYING TOGETHER

Thanks to the Father

Have you ever noticed that most of our prayers at Mass are directed to God the Father? Although our prayers also address Jesus Christ, his Divine Son, they are mostly spoken to the Father. If you think about it, it makes sense. During Mass, we recall all the good things God the Father has done for us, including sending his Son, His Son, Jesus, is the greatest way for human beings to get to know the Father. We also thank God for doing this. But again, Jesus is a key part of our gratitude. We offer thanks to the Father in the same way we come to know the Father: "through Christ, our Lord."

CHECK *this* OUT

"Abba": Jesus' Name for His Father

In the Gospels, Jesus addresses God as "Abba." The language Jesus spoke was Aramaic, and *abba* is the Aramaic word for "father." This gives us an idea of the special bond Jesus has with his Father. The Father loves Jesus, much as a human father loves his children by protecting, feeding, and teaching them. Yet the Bible also sometimes portrays God's motherly characteristics. "As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you," says the Lord (Isaiah 66:15). Jesus teaches us to address God as "Father" and to share in his special close relationship with God, our loving Father.

limited understanding of God, we know and profess in faith through our Creed that God the Father is maker of "all things visible and invisible," the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

Jesus called God "Father," and we do the same. In calling God "Father," Jesus expresses his unique relationship with him. "All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him."

God the Father is most certainly a distinct person, but unlike us, he is not a human being. Though it is important to note this difference between Father and Son, remind ourselves that God's ways are not our ways.

Check This Out!
provides a more
in-depth exploration
of topics related to
the chapter.



Abba → The Aramaic word for *father*, the Father.

Good to Know provides instructive and engaging information.

Third, events in the Gospels often repeat or make perfect events that happened earlier in the Old Testament. After 6 of John's Gospel, for instance, recalls how God provided a kind of food for his people in the desert so they wouldn't die (see Exodus, chapter 16). Then Jesus reveals that he is the perfect Bread from Heaven that gives eternal life to everyone who believes in him.

Fourth, we do not have to figure out everything ourselves. Many Bibles have helpful notes and comments. Thoughtful Christians have written many commentaries on the Gospels.

good to KNOW

We now have printers and other technology that can reproduce text easily. But before the 1400s, even printing presses didn't exist. Trained people—usually monks and nuns in monasteries—made new copies of the Bible by copying the Scriptures by hand.

What Do You Think? reflects on a topic and provides a question for discussion in class or at home.

followed, the Apostles. Our bishops have the full power and responsibility to explain Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. But the Church also urges all of us to study and think about Jesus. If we ask in prayer, the Holy Spirit will guide us in our reading.

Reading the Gospels has changed lives. Missionaries have risked their own safety to bring the Good News to those who have not heard. Others have made the lives of those around their homes much better by their Gospel-inspired words and deeds.

If you want to make a difference in the world, try reading the Gospels. You will meet unforgettable, real people like Mary, the Mother of God; Joseph; Peter; James; and John. Above all, you will get to know Jesus. He will enlighten, challenge, encourage, comfort, and amaze you. He will become your hero and ideal. He will make you truly happy in this life and the next.



"Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Imagine that Christ has just given this mission to you and your friends. Even though you don't have a lot of money or friends in important places or much experience in speaking to other people, you know you want to accept the mission. How would you go about spreading Jesus' teachings to all people? What first steps would you take? How far would you try to spread the message? Through what means would you do so?

Living the Gospel suggests ways students can put their faith into action.

LIVING the GOSPEL

How to Read Scripture

God speaks to us personally in Sacred Scripture. We read Scripture to understand God's will for our lives. So, how can we get the most out of reading from Scripture, especially the Gospels?

First, we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand and live the Gospel message.

Second, we can read intentionally and carefully. We can imagine the people and events and even "make a movie" of them in our minds.

Third, we can pause to think about what we have read and how we can apply it to our own lives. How does the Holy Spirit encourage, teach, correct, challenge, comfort, or inspire us in this passage?

This way of reading and reflecting on Scripture can yield big insights. Of course, that will not always be the case, but if you keep trying with faith, the fruits will surely be great.

roots of faith

The Church and Other Religions

The Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions is one of the final documents the Second Vatican Council approved in the 1960s. The document marks a special moment in the Church's history with other religions, including Judaism. It rejects attitudes of contempt for Judaism and the Jewish people, and it rejects anti-Semitic (anti-Jewish) teachings. The Jewish faith, unlike other non-Christian religions, is a response to God's Revelation in the Old Testament. The Church has a profound love and respect for the Jews. While the Church deeply respects other religions, it emphasizes that we can know the fullness of God's Revelation only through the Catholic Church. This does not mean that those who follow other religions are barred from eternal life with God. Many people are not Christian but seek God with sincere hearts. People who try to do God's will, even if they do not know Jesus Christ or his Church through no fault of their own, may also achieve eternal friendship with God, or salvation.

Roots of Faith provides historical insights into Catholic beliefs and practices.

People of Faith offers background on twenty-five of the many people who have strengthened the Church and inspired others with their faith.

PEOPLE of FAITH

Saint

CATHERINE OF SIENA

Catherine was born in 1347, in Siena, Italy, the twenty-fourth child born to her parents. Having experienced visions of Christ as a young child, she wanted to dedicate her life to Christ. Catherine loved the Church deeply, and she became known for her teaching and writing. She served people who were poor and sick. She ministered to people in prison and those suffering during the plague of 1374. During the papacy of Urban VI, the Church was in chaos and disarray. Urban was power hungry. The cardinals, recognizing their mistake in electing him, elected another pope. However, Urban refused to give up the papacy, so the Church had two rival popes. Catherine suffered, seeing the Church suffer. She prayed that her sufferings might heal this serious rift in the Church.

In 1380, Catherine collapsed from exhaustion and a practice of extreme fasting. Within months she was dead. At her death, the marks of stigmata (the wounds of Jesus) were seen on her body. Catherine is also known for her writings on the spiritual life. She was canonized and was the first layperson named a Doctor of the Church. Saint Catherine's feast day is celebrated on April 29.



Church History Student Book

The **Church History** student book is structured in the same way and with the same features as the *Connect!* student book.

Chapter 1

The Early Church

KEY WORDS

deacon
Ecumenical Council
Gentiles

6 Chapter 1

Rationalists also believed that the same universal laws could be applied to human behavior. If human beings operated by natural laws, rationalists argued, then people did not need the guidance of the Bible or the Church. Truth and moral law would come from natural laws. Therefore, people could guide their own behavior without help from a divine authority.

Empiricism was another philosophical movement of the 1700s. Empiricists believed that all knowledge came through the human senses and experience. In other words, everything people knew about the world, they knew by observing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling. Some empiricists thought certain Christian beliefs could be proven by human experience. For example, John Locke tried to prove that God exists as Creator based on observing the order of the universe. Many empiricists, however, denied any belief or knowledge based on faith. They used empiricism to try to prove that God did not exist. Some philosophers tried to use Newton's scientific findings to show that the universe operated like a machine; that is, it operated by its own natural laws not by a divine being's



empiricism → A philosophy claiming that all knowledge comes through the human senses and experience.

good to know

Did you know the father of the big bang theory was a Catholic priest? His name was Fr. Georges Lemaitre (1894–1966) of Belgium. As a young priest, he earned his doctorate in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was also president of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences from 1960 until he died in 1966. In 1928, Lemaitre published a paper in which he argued that the physical universe was originally a single particle that exploded and expanded into the universe.

If you listen for news about the Church in the world today, it can seem like there are two groups of Christians: One group of Christians, like those who live in the United States, are allowed to practice their religion peacefully, bringing God's love into their families, workplaces, and civic institutions. But another group of Christians, like those living in the Middle East and in some African and Asian countries, are persecuted and even killed for believing in Jesus Christ. The Catholic Church estimates that more than one hundred thousand Christians are killed violently every year.

This is not something new. It was like this for the first Christians in the years after Christ ascended into Heaven. At some times and places, Christians lived peacefully with their neighbors and witnessed to their faith in Christ and God's love. At other times and places, Christians were persecuted and sometimes killed because of their faith. Their lives remind us that following Jesus Christ and living as he taught us to live will sometimes cause conflict with people who do not believe. Yet the witness of the early Christians, even amid persecution, was also responsible for the amazing growth of the Church during that time.

CONNECT with GOD

Thank you, God, for the Church.

Thank you for this community of believers in which we learn to follow your Son through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

May we strengthen one another in faith and share our faith with others, even when we are met with ridicule, hardship, or persecution. Amen.

guidance. These empiricists believed that science and religious faith were totally at odds with each other.

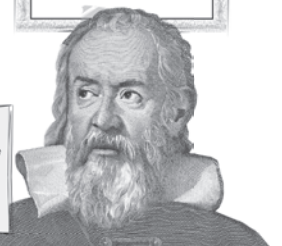
But is religion really at odds with science? During the Age of Reason, the Church was suspicious of scientific theories that seemed to contradict the Bible. For example, in the 1600s, the astronomer Galileo Galilei published his work saying the Earth revolves around the sun. The idea that the sun rotated around the Earth, however, had been accepted by the ancient Greeks. The Creation accounts in Genesis also seemed to support the theory that the sun rotates around the Earth. So the Pope had Galileo put under house arrest for suggesting the Bible was wrong. Today, we understand that different passages of the Bible are written in different genres. The Bible expresses the truth of what we need to know for our salvation. It does not need to be scientifically accurate to accomplish this purpose.

Galileo Galilei was an astronomer who discovered that the Earth revolved around the sun and not the other way around. Galileo's writings were condemned by the Church, and he was put under house arrest. The Church later expressed regret for these actions.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We can learn about God in many ways. The Church says it is important to use our reason—such as observation and logic—as well as faith to learn about God and grow closer to him. What are some ways you use reason to learn about God? How do you learn about God through faith? Take some time to think about how your reason and faith work together to help you know God better.



Teacher Guides

The **Chapter Summary** provides a concise explanation of the content covered in the chapter.

Background for the Teacher offers a point of reflection on a topic related to the chapter.

The **Chapter-at-a-Glance** page lists core understandings and highlights key information to aid planning.

8 Revelation, Scripture, and Tradition

Chapter 1

Chapter Summary

"God is love" (1 John 4:8), and love is meant to be revealed. God chooses to reveal God's very life, love, and plan for humanity to us. We call God's sharing of his life, love, and plan Divine Revelation. God has chosen to communicate his Revelation through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. These together make up the single sacred Deposit of the Word of God, preserved, protected, and passed down through the Church for the sake of the world.

Background for the Teacher

When you hear "God's Word" or "Word of God," what first comes to mind for you? For many people, it is the Bible. Sacred Scripture is a key mode of God's Revelation, but the Bible is not in itself, or solely, God's Word. Help the students see that like a two-drawer filing cabinet, Scripture is only one part of the sacred Deposit of Faith!

Jesus himself is the *Eternal Word of God* (see John, chapter 1), and the Word has made the Father known to humanity by the power of the Holy Spirit from the very beginning of time. Emphasize to the students that when discussing "the Word," we're ultimately referring to Jesus as revealed in Sacred Tradition and in Sacred Scripture. Both Tradition and Scripture are essential parts of God's Revelation to humanity. The Church preserves, protects, interprets, and communicates this Good News with the whole world in every generation. This is primarily the role of the Apostles and their successors, the popes and bishops of the Church, and we have the great joy of sharing their work.

Also emphasize that because we are human, we cannot expect to fully know God in this life. But as we live our life, we come to know God more and more until we come to fully know him in Heaven. This year will be a part of that very important journey toward God for the students, and you will be their guide.

Teacher's Prayer

Good and gracious God, open my eyes to your grace, love, and presence in my life and in the students' lives. Give me the grace to be a faithful witness to your existence, eternal truth, and loving kindness. Continue to reveal yourself to me that they might know you through me. Amen.

Teaching Tip

It is important to properly introduce the concept of mystery when talking about God. God is beyond our complete comprehension, but he is not unknowable. Help the students see that it's okay to be awestruck and filled with wonder with regard to God. It's okay for us not to have all the answers right now. God continues to draw us close to himself and reveal himself to us. Invite the students to be open to what God is revealing to them as they learn more about what God has revealed to the Church.

Revelation, Scripture, and Tradition 9

Chapter 1

Chapter at a Glance
Core Text: Student Book

Core Understandings

1. Out of love, God reveals himself and his plan for humanity in two main ways: through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.
2. The seventy-three books that make up our Sacred Scripture are the Word of God, whereby human authors were inspired by the Holy Spirit to share the truths that will bring us our salvation.
3. Sacred Tradition consists of those truths that will bring us our salvation and that have been handed down to us over the centuries through the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
4. Although God has made himself known to us, our human understanding cannot completely grasp him.

Catechism Pillar

- The Creed

Catechism Connection

- Paragraphs 31–43, 50–141 (The Revelation of God)

Key Scripture Passages

- Genesis 1:1–2:4
- Genesis 2:5–25
- 1 Samuel 3:1–10
- Job, chapter 38

Key Words

- Gospels
- Revelation
- Sacred Scripture
- Sacred Tradition

Chapter Project

- "Getting to Know Others," page 26

Prayer Suggestions

- **Prayer:** Good and gracious God, in your great love, you shared your life with humanity. You made yourself known to us that we might come to know, love, and serve you in return. Help us, Lord, to desire you above all things, to value you more than silver or gold, to make your friendship our heart's one and only desire. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.
- **Scripture Reading:** 1 John 4:7–12
- **Student Book:** "Connect with God," page 9
- **Music:** "God of Wonders," by Third Day, available on YouTube

The **Teacher's Prayer** can be prayed before preparing for or teaching each chapter.

Teaching Tip offers suggestions or points of consideration for the chapter's lessons.

The **day overview** notes the content covered in the lesson, the core understanding emphasized, and any materials needed.

Each lesson follows the same format: **Opening Prayer, Engage Activity, Core Content, Core Learning Activity, Comprehension Checkpoint, and Closing Prayer.**

10 Revelation, Scripture, and Tradition

Chapter 1

DAY 1

Student Book
Introduction and "Revelation," pages 9–12

Core Understanding
Out of love, God reveals himself and his plan for humanity in two main ways: through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

Materials Needed

- ☐ copies of the handout "Chapter 1 Reading Guide," pages 27–28, one for each student (optional)
- ☐ digital presentation tools (optional)

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)
Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 9:
➤ God, in your great love for humanity, you revealed yourself to past generations. Make yourself known to us today. Open our eyes to your constant loving presence all around us of every moment. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

- Engage** the students' experience with this challenge, using these or similar words:
 - I'd like you to think of a time when you really wanted to be friends with someone, or someone really wanted to be friends with you, and later you actually did become friends. Consider how that friendship got going and eventually developed.
- Invite** two or three volunteers to share how their friendships developed. Add comments that help the students see that relationships develop because people are intentional about wanting to be friends and make themselves known—and so it is with God.

Optional Activity: "Who Am I?" (20 minutes), page 22

Core Content (10 minutes)
Review pages 9–12 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section "Introduction and Revelation" on the handout "Chapter 1 Reading Guide," or use the handout as a homework assignment or as a review at the end of the week. Collect and grade the handout at the end of the week.

Revelation, Scripture, and Tradition 11

Chapter 1

- Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 - Throughout all of history, God has made himself known to human beings in a number of ways: through creation, through the Church, through our conscience, through friends and family. He continues to do so today.
 - God makes himself known to us because he loves us.
 - What God has made known about himself and his plan for humanity is called Revelation.
 - Revelation is communicated in two main ways: Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)
Revelation A to Z
Objective: To become aware of the variety of ways God reveals himself to us.

1. Introduce the activity in these or similar words:
➤ Several stories in the Gospels are about blindness and learning to see. These stories aren't just about seeing the things around us but also about seeing God present and working in the people, events, and things that fill our lives. This is sometimes called seeing with the eyes of faith. We are going to conduct a little activity to practice how well we can see with the eyes of faith.

12 Revelation, Scripture, and Tradition

Chapter 1

- Direct** each group to choose a recorder. The recorder should write down the six or seven letters they have been assigned on the left side of a sheet of paper. Direct their attention to the categories you have displayed. Tell the groups to come up with six or seven names of things that start with their assigned letters. These things must reveal God or something about God and can come from any of the five categories you have displayed. The recorder should then write the names of these things beside each letter on their paper. The groups must be prepared to explain to the entire class how each of these things is a revelation of God. For an extra challenge, they should include one example from each category in their list of things.
- Ask** the groups to share their lists, starting with the group or groups that have the letters A to F. When it is not clear or obvious how a particular thing may reveal something about God, ask the group to explain.
- Conclude** by emphasizing that signs of God's love and presence are all around us if we can see with the eyes of faith. Their groups' lists are examples of this truth.

Teaching Tip
Consider displaying the groups' lists in your classroom for the rest of the week to remind the students of the many ways God reveals himself to us. If there is time, the students could decorate or illustrate their lists.

Digital Option: Have the students prepare their lists using digital presentation tools. Each letter and its corresponding thing can be presented on a separate slide. The students can search online for appropriate images to illustrate the slides. The groups' presentations can then be combined to create one presentation for the entire alphabet.

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)
Ask the students to each write a short answer to the following prompt:
• Write down two or three examples of how God continues to reveal himself to the world today.

Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)
Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 9.

Handout icons provide a visual cue whenever a lesson uses a handout.

Optional Activities provide ways to adapt or extend lessons and can be found at the end of each chapter.

Icons also provide visual cues when lessons provide assessment opportunities, cross-curricular opportunities, video options, and digital options.

Optional Activities are offered at the end of each chapter, providing ways to adapt or extend lessons.

Optional Activities

DAY 1

Materials Needed

- ☐ art paper, one sheet for each student
- ☐ markers, poster paint, or other drawing or painting supplies

A Picture of God (20 minutes)

Objective: To enable the students to concretize their "picture" or impression of a God who cannot be pictured, and to emphasize Jesus' role in helping us to discover who God is.

1. Explain in these or similar words:

- No one knows what God looks like. Only the Son of God, Jesus Christ, became human and had a human face. God is Divine Being and is Pure Spirit. Some artists have portrayed God as an old man, but God is not affected by time. But there is one way we can express who God is to us, and that is through prayer and art. When we combine prayer and art, the Holy Spirit can help us channel our creativity so that we can make our own "picture of God." What is your picture of God?

See "Good to Know" on page 24 in the student book. You might want to note that the Israelites often pictured God in a cloud.

2. Distribute the art paper and the art supplies you have chosen. Announce a moment of silence, and then lead the group in the Lord's Prayer.

3. Invite the students to observe these three rules in creating their pictures of God:

- Do not copy or imitate another painting you have seen.
- Be prepared to explain your drawing or painting.
- Use color and abstract shapes.

4. Ask volunteers to share their pictures of God. Draw out the meanings of their pictures by asking questions like:

- Why did you choose these colors?
- Are you in this picture anywhere?
- If you could be in this picture, where would you be? What would you say to God?

5. Conclude by reminding the students that we are grateful to Jesus Christ for coming among us and telling us who God is by showing us how much God loves us. Because each of us is a unique person, each of us has a unique relationship with God. We can all know God in our own way.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

DAY 2

Materials Needed

- ☐ a bag of hard candy (wrapped) or other symbolic token of love

We Share the Love of the Trinity (20 minutes)

Objective: To emphasize that through Baptism we are made part of the Trinity through Jesus Christ, and our call as Christians is to share the love of the Trinity with others.

1. Ask the students to read "Living the Gospel" on page 25 in the student book. Note that often God loves and cares for us through the love and care of others.

2. Explain in these or similar words:

- When we are baptized, we are invited into the relationship of love that the Trinity shares with us. When two people share with each other at a deep level, in marriage or friendship, a great love springs up between them. This is what happens between the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of love that unites them and all of us with them. The Trinity is a great Mystery, and we are part of it! At Mass, during the Sign of Peace, we share Christ's peace with one another by shaking hands. This is really a symbolic way of sharing God's peace and love with others. When we treat others with kindness, we are sharing the love of the Trinity. Let's make a symbol of this Trinitarian love right now.

3. Ask the students to form a large circle. Take one piece of candy from your bag. Explain to the students that you will give this piece of candy to someone and will say some special words. (Note: When you give this piece of candy, say these words: "May the love of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you always.") The student who receives the candy is to say, "Amen," repeat the words to the next person, and pass along the candy. The next person does the same, saying "Amen" and passing the candy to the next person. Give out a second piece of candy, a third, and so on, to different students, for as many students as are present. This pattern continues until everyone has a piece of candy. When the last person in the circle receives a piece of candy, they hang onto it. Ask the students to wait until everyone has a piece so you can eat the candy together. Optional: Finish this "circle of love" by extending a handshake of peace around the circle in the same way.

4. Conclude by asking the following or similar questions:

- In our everyday lives, how do we treat the people we meet?
- Do we share the love of God with them in any way? Does this sharing have to be a concrete gift, like candy?
- What does God's love look like in your age-group?
- A Native American saying goes, "I cannot criticize someone until I have walked a mile in his moccasins." How can you put yourself into the "shoes" of another? Why is this a good thing to do?

Chapter Project

Getting to Know Others

Objective: To allow the students to build relationships and allow another person to be "revealed" to them.

Materials Needed

- ☐ digital presentation tools (optional)

1. **Explain** to the students at the beginning of the week that they will be doing a service project called "Getting to Know Others." Ask the students to each visit and interview an older person. For example, they may visit an elderly home or interview an elderly relative. They are to ask questions about that person's life: their childhood, adult life, children, grandchildren, places they traveled, their understanding of God, lived through wars, service to country and local community, and so on. The students must keep notes on what their person tells them. Remind them that the person will be revealing themselves to them; this is a holy moment, and they should treat the person with great respect. They might take a picture of the person to use with their report.

2. **Provide** some way for the students to report at the end of the week or the following week what they learned about the person they interviewed. This could be through a written report, a poster with highlights, a digital presentation, and so on.

3. Ask the following questions after their reports:

- How can getting to know another person deeply also reveal God to us?
- How is getting to know another person deeply like getting to know God? How is it different from knowing God?

The **Chapter Project** is an optional activity that students can work on throughout the week.

Activity Book

The **activity book** offers two activities to supplement each chapter in the *Connect!* student book. These activities can be incorporated into the lessons in a variety of ways.

Year 1
1A

Revelation

Thoughtfully and reflectively respond to the following questions.

Think about the events of a typical day for you—your classes in school, sports or other activities you participate in, and time with family and friends. How do you experience the presence of God in your day?

Describe how your own artistic depiction of Creation would look. What elements would you include to convey God's power?

Choose one of the elements you selected, and explain how it conveys God's power.

Year 1
1B

Scripture and Tradition

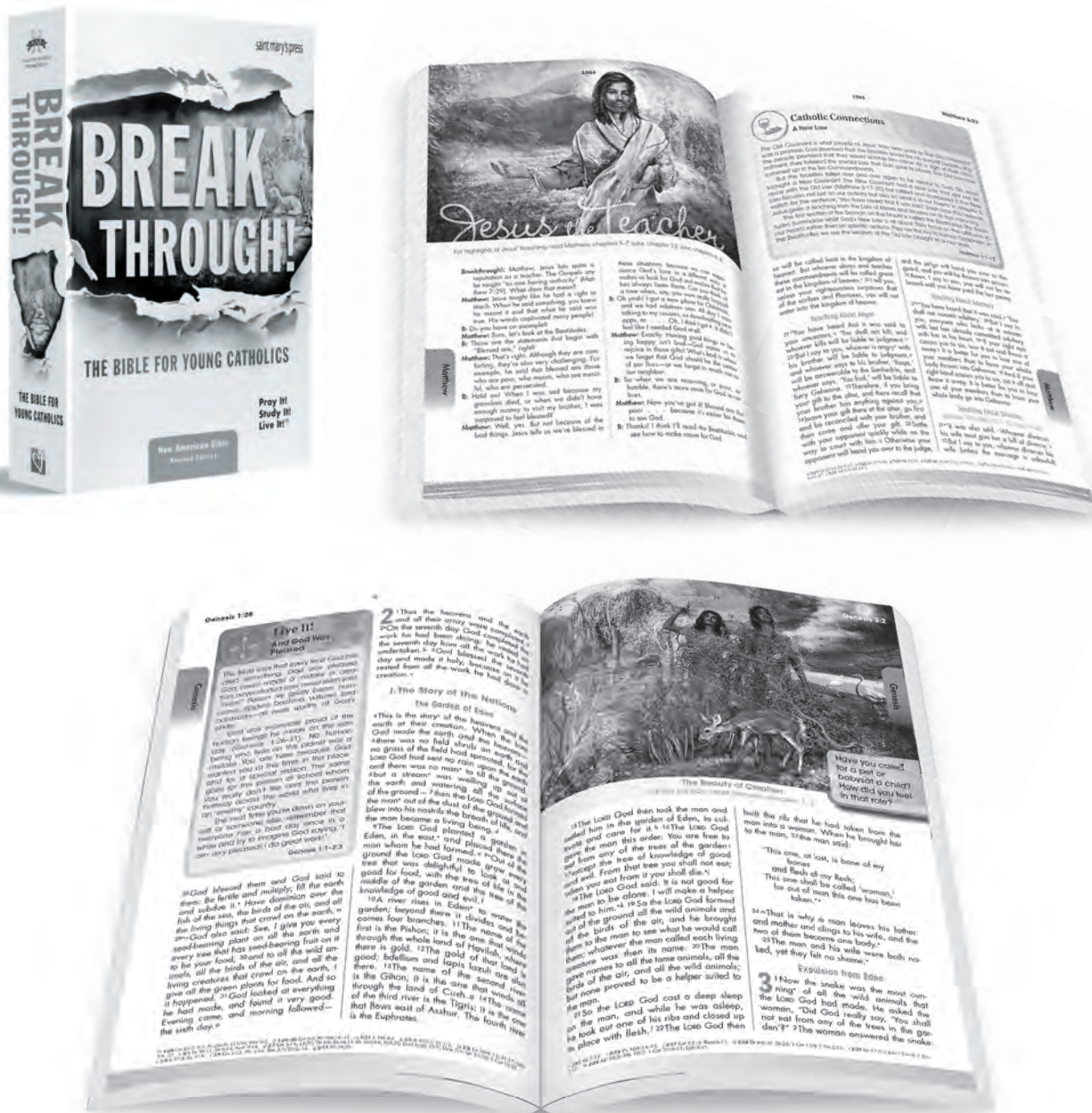
Complete the following sentences, and then find each answer in the word search below. Words can appear in any direction.

- The part of the Mass in which we hear readings about what God has done for our salvation is the Liturgy of the _____.
- The _____ is another name for Sacred Scripture.
- The Bible's authors were guided by the _____ to record without error what God wants us to know for our salvation.
- At the Council of Trent, the bishops made clear that both _____ and _____ are necessary for our salvation.
- The Bible contains the forty-six books of the _____ and the twenty-seven books of the _____.
- God's Revelation is complete in _____.
- In _____, we are called to be prophets by sharing God's Word with others in our words and actions.

N O I T I D A R T T T E
G L T P N S H Y D E N L
K D S I Q R T V W R E B
K T I U U L I F O U M I
Y E R M Y F R A R T A B
P S H S W J I Q D P T O
O T C I D C P S X I S L
O A S T F O S B E R E N
H M U P K O Y V J C T H
V E S A F O L W S W E
E N E B S M O R T Q E S
D T J C S K H Y I P N S

Bible

Students will get the most from the lessons if they have their own Bible. The program works best with the *New American Bible Revised Edition (NABRE)*. The NABRE translation of ***Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics*** (Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2016) is highly suggested for use with this program as it was developed specifically for adolescents and can enhance the study of Scripture with its special features.

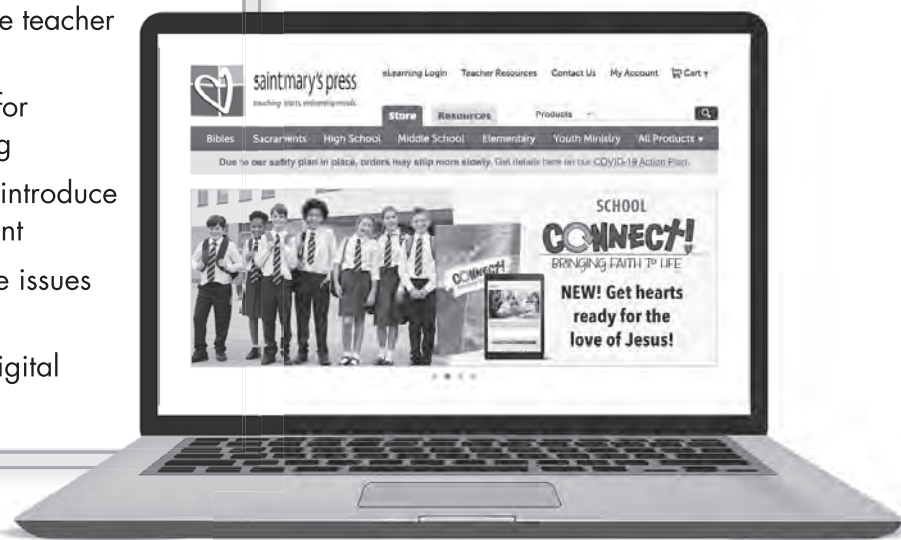


Online Resources

Online resources specific to each teacher guide can be found at www.smp.org/connect_school.

These resources include:

- a scope-and-sequence chart
- a downloadable version of the teacher guide
- handouts, quizzes, and tests for downloading and customizing
- presentations you can use to introduce and review the chapter content
- additional lesson plans on life issues for young people
- web links to recommended digital media



eLearning Lessons



Interactive **eLearning lessons** provide a digital learning option for the classroom or at home.

PART 1 CONTENTS

The first three chapters can be found on the following pages.

Introduction	7
Chapter 1: God's Plan for Salvation	7
Handouts	27
Chapter 2: The Old Testament	36
Handouts	55
Chapter 3: Biblical Covenants: Old and New	63
Handouts	83
Chapter A: The Patriarchs of Israel	88
Handouts	108
Chapters 1–A Test	114
Chapter B: The Israelites' Exodus from Egypt	118
Handouts	138
Chapter C: The Israelites Settle in the Promised Land	147
Handouts	168
Chapter D: Israel's First Kings	177
Handouts	195
Chapter E: Women of the Old Testament	203
Handouts	224
Chapter 4: The Prophets and the Hope for a Messiah	230
Handouts	250
Chapters B–4 Test	256
Chapter 5: Worshipping God	260
Handouts	280
Chapter 6: The Eucharist: The Heart of All Liturgy	286
Handouts	305
Chapter 7: The Eucharist: The Liturgy of the Word	313
Handouts	336
Chapters 5–7 Test	345
Glossary of Key Words	348
Acknowledgments	350

PART 2 CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Chapter 8: The Eucharist: The Liturgy of the Eucharist	7
Handouts	27
Chapter 9: The Eucharist: Communion and Sending Forth	37
Handouts	58
Chapter 10: The Sacrament of Baptism	64
Handouts	84
Chapter 11: The Sacrament of Confirmation	92
Handouts	114
Chapters 8–11 Test	121
Chapter 12: The Old Law and the New Law	124
Handouts	144
Chapter 13: Honoring God	154
Handouts	173
Chapter 14: Honoring Family	179
Handouts	199
Chapter 15a: Respecting Life	210
Handouts	229
Chapter 15b: Respecting Life	235
Handouts	254
Chapters 12–15b Test	263
Chapter 16: Respecting Truth and Property	266
Handouts	287
Chapter 17a: Respecting Sexuality	295
Handouts	316
Chapter 17b: Respecting Sexuality	324
Handouts	344
Chapter 18: The Lord’s Prayer: The Perfect Prayer	350
Handouts	370
Chapters 16–18 Test	376
Glossary of Key Words	379
Acknowledgments	381

Chapter 1

God's Plan for Salvation

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the students see that from the beginning of Creation God has had a plan of salvation for the whole human family. This plan can be found throughout Sacred Scripture. The student book divides salvation history into eight stages, beginning with the Creation of all that exists and culminating with the founding of the Christian Church. The students see that they too have a role to play as members of Christ's Church in sharing the Good News of salvation in Christ Jesus.

Background for the Teacher

God's desire is never that his children be separated from his life and love. Unfortunately, too often humanity has rejected God's friendship and love and has separated themselves from him. We call this sin. Sacred Scripture offers plenty of evidence of humanity's rejection of God's love and guidance, expressed through the covenants. God's grace, friendship, and love triumph over sin and wrongdoing time and time again—and this is the great story of salvation.

Salvation history is this most amazing story of God's pursuit of his beloved, the human race. The story of salvation is the greatest love story ever told, is recorded from cover to cover in the Bible, and continues today through the Church. To properly understand this story, we need to practice good biblical interpretation, under the guidance of the Church. For example, primeval history (see Genesis, chapters 1–11) is not meant to be interpreted literally, but instead offers the truth of God's grace and love through symbolic language and story. These first eleven chapters of Genesis offer us a glimpse of our own brokenness and continual rejection of God.

The Tower of Babel completes primeval history and begins the second stage of salvation history, the patriarchs, with the call of Abraham, the Father of Faith. From Abraham to Moses to David and then to Jesus and the Church, God has been unfolding this amazing plan to transform sinners into saints!

Teacher's Prayer

Loving Father, thank you for inspiring men and women to share and record your loving plan for humanity through Scripture. Help me see myself in that story of salvation, that I may in turn help the students see the important part they have to play in that great story. Amen.

Teaching Tip

When discussing God's plan of salvation, it may seem that God is trying to usurp our freedom to reject him. Salvation history is not a move on God's part to usurp or undermine our freedom but instead a means whereby God makes a path for those who have chosen wrongly, are sorry for their poor choice, and desire to return to him. Help the students see that we stray from God in a variety of ways—unique to each person—but that in his great love, God offers the opportunity for each of us to return if we choose.

Chapter at a Glance

Core Text: Student Book

Core Understandings

1. In the first stage of salvation history, human sin disrupts the loving and full relationships God intended. In the second stage, God begins repairing the damaged relationship with him caused by sin.
2. The call of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt continue God's saving plan in the third stage of salvation history and lead into the fourth stage, where the Israelites enter into the Promised Land.
3. The fifth stage of salvation history is the formation of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. But as a result of their broken covenant with God, the kingdoms fall, leading to the sixth stage, where the Israelites are taken to and return from the Exile in Babylon.
4. The seventh and eighth stages of salvation history introduce Jesus Christ, God's own Son, as the culminating act of God to redeem humanity, and the establishment of the Church, which preaches the Good News of salvation in Christ until his return.

Catechism Pillar

- The Creed

Catechism Connection

- Paragraphs 54–73 (Stages of Revelation)
- Paragraphs 120–141 (The Canon of Scripture)
- Paragraphs 758–769 (The Church's Origin, Foundation, and Mission)

Key Scripture Passages

- Genesis 2:4–3:24
- Genesis, chapters 4–8, 11
- Psalm 9:7–12
- John 6:47–58
- Acts of the Apostles 2:43–47

Key Words

- covenant
- the Exile
- Exodus
- Gentiles
- salvation history

Chapter Project

- "The Stages of Salvation History," page 26

Prayer Suggestions

- **Prayer:** God, throughout all of human history you have called to the human family that they might know you, know your love, and experience life in your name. Help us to hear your call today and give us the courage to answer your call through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
- **Scripture Reading:** Hebrews 2:5–18
- **Student Book:** "Connect with God," page 225
- **Music:** "Word of God Speak," by Mercy Me, available on YouTube

DAY 1

Student Book

Introduction, "Stage 1: Primeval History," and "Stage 2: The Patriarchs," pages 225–228

Core Understanding

In the first stage of salvation history, human sin disrupts the loving and full relationships God intended. In the second stage, God begins repairing the damaged relationship with him caused by sin.

Materials Needed

- ☐ copies of the handout "Chapter 1 Reading Guide," pages 27–29, one for each student (*optional*)
- ☐ Bibles, one for each student

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 9:

- God, you have revealed to us your plan of salvation through Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture. Open our eyes to see the truth of your love and your call to us despite our sinfulness and wrongdoing. Help us love you in return. Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Engage** the students' experience by asking the following questions:
 - What are the most complicated directions you have ever followed? What are the most important steps to giving good directions? (*Answers may vary but should focus on being organized, having a clear beginning, and having clear steps leading to the desired result.*)
 - Are you aware that God has a plan too—one that he has given us to follow? What do you think is the desired result of God's plan?
2. **Invite** two or three volunteers to share how their friendships developed. Add comments that help the students see that relationships develop because people are intentional about wanting to be friends and make themselves known—and so it is with God.



Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 225–228 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read and complete the section “Introduction, Stage 1: Primeval History, and Stage 2: The Patriarchs” on the handout “Chapter 1 Reading Guide,” or use the student book as a homework assignment or as a review at the end of the week. Collect and grade the handout at the end of the week.
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. The first stage of salvation history is primeval history (or prehistory), which teaches some basic truths about the world and all that is in it, human beings and their relationship with God, and the tragedy of sin in the world.
 2. Primeval history teaches that God created all that exists and that it is good, that all of God’s creatures are created to live in peace and harmony, and that without God’s help, sin leads to death—of our relationship to God, to one another, and to all of creation.
 3. The second stage of salvation history is the patriarchs. In this stage, God forms a covenant with his Chosen People, Israel, and begins the process of repairing our damaged relationship with God.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

The Same Old Story

Objective: To enable the students to recognize the pattern of God’s love, sinfulness, punishment and suffering, and God’s grace, forgiveness, friendship, and love.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - Through a variety of stories, the first eleven chapters of Genesis teach us some basic truths about what it means to be human and about our relationship with God. Though we don’t read the stories as historical events, they do teach us the truth about what it means to be human, or the human condition.
 - In this activity today, we are going to see a pattern of God’s love, of human sin, the consequences of that sin, and then how God makes things right again (grace).
2. **Arrange** the students into small groups of three or four, and distribute the Bibles. Have each group assign a recorder, and instruct the recorder to create three columns at the top of sheet of paper, labeled “Human Sin,” “Punishment and Suffering,” and “Grace and Love.”
3. **Assign** each group one of these stories (there will be repetition):
 - Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:4–3:24)
 - Cain and Abel (Genesis, chapters 4–5)
 - Noah and the Flood (Genesis, chapters 6–8)
 - The Tower of Babel (Genesis, chapter 11)

4. **Ask** the students to take turns reading their assigned story out loud in their group. As they read, they are to identify and have the recorder write down examples for each column on their sheet of paper. The first column should show humans turning away from God and doing what they should not do. The second column should note the consequences of these actions. The third column should identify the various ways, in each story, that God responds to human sin with grace and love. (Note that the Tower of Babel does not seem to have a “grace and love” component. Point them to Genesis, chapter 12, with the call of Abraham as the beginning of the restoration of the unity of the human family.)
5. **Conclude** by inviting the students to reflect on the truths of these stories. How do we sin, suffer sin’s consequences, and eventually become restored through God’s grace and love?



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

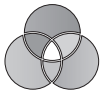
Optional Activity: “If the Shoe Fits” (20 minutes), page 22

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

Ask each student to title one side of a sheet of paper “Salvation History Stage 1” and the other side “Salvation History Stage 2.” Tell the students to write down the name for each stage, the Bible book and chapters where each stage can be found, and the significant people and events contained in each stage.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.



Cross-Curricular Opportunity: This activity could be used as a history exercise, looking for examples of sin, punishment and suffering, and restoration in history. This will help show that God is active throughout *all* of human history—not in what is sometimes referred to as particularly religious history.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 9.

DAY 2

Student Book

"Stage 3: Egypt and the Exodus" and "Stage 4: The Promised Land and the Judges," pages 228–229

Core Understanding

The call of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt continue God's saving plan in the third stage of salvation history and lead into the fourth stage, where the Israelites enter into the Promised Land.

Materials Needed

- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ "Chapter 1 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 9:

- Lord, you called Moses to lead your people out of Egypt and sent them judges to guide them toward what is good and right. Lead me too, Lord, out of sin and sinful opportunities, and provide me with great teachers and guides who will lead me to know and do the good toward which I'm called. Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Make** three columns on the board with the headings "People," "Events," and "Things." Tell the students that Exodus is one of the most well-known books of the Bible and that several movies have been based on it. Give them the following challenge:
 - As a class, I want you to fill out this chart with people, events, and things talked about in the Book of Exodus. In the next 3 minutes, I want to see if we can come up with at least five names under each column. When you have something to add, please come up to the board and write it down.
2. **Give** the signal to begin when you are ready, allowing the students to come up and write their items on the board. Gently assist with correction and placing ideas in the proper categories. Congratulate the students on their achievement. Distribute the Bibles so the students can find the Book of Exodus and refer to it as an aid.

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 228–229 in the student book using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the sections “Stage 3: Egypt and the Exodus” and “Stage 4: The Promised Land and the Judges” on the handout “Chapter 1 Reading Guide.”
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following points:
 1. God heard the cry of his children in Egypt and called Moses to lead them out of slavery and into the desert.
 2. While wandering in the desert, God gave Moses and the people the Ten Commandments of the covenant that taught these once enslaved people how to live out their newfound freedom with responsibility and love.
 3. The Israelites reached the Promised Land, were led into it by Joshua, and fought to gain control of the land.
 4. Once the Israelites were settled in the Promised Land, God called special prophets and warriors, called judges, to help deliver justice and defend the land against invaders.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

The Exodus

Objective: To discover the connection between Jesus as the Lamb of God and the Passover tradition of the Israelites.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - God saved his people from slavery and the angel of death in Egypt by the blood of the sacrificed and eaten Passover lamb. The early Christians recognized Jesus as their Paschal Lamb who would save them from slavery to sin and death.
 - As you read the account of the Passover in the Book of Exodus, make as many connections as you can to Jesus as the Lamb of God from what you remember from the Gospels.
2. **Arrange** the students into small groups of three or four. Give each group a Bible, and instruct them to read Exodus, chapter 12, together and then to come up with connections to Jesus.

Teaching Tip

If the students are struggling to make the connections to Jesus, you might give them these New Testament passages to find and read: Matthew 26:17–30, John 1:29, and John 6:47–58.

3. **Ask** each group to share their findings.
4. **Conclude** by reading John 6:47–58 aloud and then summarizing in these or similar words:
 - Jesus, the Lamb of God, gave us his own flesh to eat and blood to drink at the Last Supper and the Church continues to “do this in memory of [him]” (*Roman Missal*).
 - The earliest Christians gathered together to share in the Eucharist, the bread and wine that had become the very body and blood of Jesus, so that they too might be saved from slavery to sin and death. As early as AD 110, Saint Ignatius said, “Heretics abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ.”

Optional Activity: “We Need a Judge!” (20 minutes), page 23

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Ask** the students to form pairs and to discuss the following question:
 - What help (from people or events) did God give to the Israelites from the time they were enslaved in Egypt to the time of the judges?
2. **Circulate** among the students, and conclude by asking volunteers to share their responses.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 9.

DAY 3

Student Book

"Stage 5: The Kings and the Prophets" and "Stage 6: The Exile and the Return," pages 230–232

Core Understanding

The fifth stage of salvation history is the formation of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. But as a result of their broken covenant with God, the kingdoms fall, leading to the sixth stage, where the Israelites are taken to and return from the Exile in Babylon.

Materials Needed

- ☐ "Chapter 1 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)
- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ plastic or paper crowns, one for each small group of three or four
- ☐ a digital student response system (*optional*)

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 9.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Engage** the students' experience by asking them to make a list of the qualities of a good parent. Then ask them to make a list of the qualities of a king or president. You may wish to have them brainstorm in pairs.
2. **Make** the following observations:
 - God expects leaders—like parents and government officials—to act as God would act. Are the qualities that we have identified also qualities of God? (Hopefully, the answer is yes!) The story of the kings in the Bible teaches that when the kings followed God's Laws and were faithful to him, things went well. When they didn't, they had trouble. This isn't always easy. It's hard to keep trusting in God when it feels like it all depends on you. In class, we are going to look at making good decisions as a leader.



Digital Option: Use your digital student response system to have the students add their suggestions to the lists.

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 230–232 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the sections “Stage 5: The Kings and the Prophets” and “Stage 6: The Exile and the Return” on the handout “Chapter 1 Reading Guide.”
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. In First Samuel, God grants the Israelites’ request for a king, and it begins the monarchy in Israel. The first king was Saul, followed by David, who is considered the greatest king, and then Solomon, who built the great temple in Jerusalem.
 2. After Solomon’s death, Israel split into the kingdom of Israel in the north and the kingdom of Judah in the south.
 3. Prophets arose, warning of coming catastrophe if the Israelites did not repent and return to covenant fidelity.
 4. Despite the warnings, Israel and Judah turned away from God and were conquered—Israel first, by the Assyrians in 721 BC, and then Judah, by the Babylonians in 587 BC.
 5. Prophets began to speak of a future redeemer who might rise up and make them great again.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

King or Queen for a Day

Objective: To reflect on good leadership and how one is to govern with the justice and love of God.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - Good leadership is difficult! Parents struggle to provide for their children and for each other, to have the right balance of discipline and love. Governments struggle to spend tax dollars in the best way possible, on defense, roads, bridges, food production, and health care. In this activity, you pretend you are “king or queen for a day” and can do what you want for the good of your family, for the school, or for the government. What problems would you have to fix first? How would you fix them?
2. **Arrange** the students into small groups of three or four, and distribute the Bibles and paper or plastic crowns. Have the groups pick one person to be their king or queen. The other members are their advisors. The monarch should wear a crown. Each group should also choose one person as its recorder.
3. **Write** the following questions on the board for the groups to discuss and answer. Ask the recorder to write down the responses.
 - Choose your kingdom: family, school, church, nation, or other.
 - What are the most pressing problems that your kingdom faces?
 - How would you solve this problem?

Teaching Tip

You might bring up some issues the students may have to deal with in their own family (budget, employment, discipline), at school (cheating, bullying, dress code, tuition), with the Church (finances, schools, religious education programs, use of resources), or with the government (funding for education, military, medical services, abortion, the death penalty, gun control, immigration).

4. **Direct** the groups to read Psalm 9:7–12 before they discuss the third question. These verses describe some of God's characteristics as king. Their solutions should reflect these values if they are acting as responsible leaders!
5. **Ask** the king or queen of each group to share the group's problem and solution. The monarchs should wear their crowns as they pronounce their decisions.
6. **Conclude** by emphasizing the difficulty and responsibility of leadership at all levels, and the importance of praying for our leaders in the home, the school, the Church, and the nation.

Optional Activities: "The Breakthrough! Connection" (5 minutes) and "Thus Says the Lord" (30 minutes), page 24

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Direct** the students to quickly review "Stage 5: The Kings and the Prophets" and "Stage 6: The Exile and the Return" on pages 230–232 in the student book. Ask them to choose one sentence in the reading that they will take away with them—something new they learned or gained a better understanding of.
2. **Ask** each student to read their choice aloud. Or, you may want to ask the students to gather in small groups to share their sentences.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 9.

DAY 4

Student Book

"Stage 7: The Life of Jesus Christ" and "Stage 8: The Church" to end of chapter, pages 232–236

Core Understanding

The seventh and eighth stages of salvation history introduce Jesus Christ, God's own Son, as the culminating act of God to redeem humanity, and the establishment of the Church, which preaches the Good News of salvation in Christ until his return.

Materials Needed

- ☐ "Chapter 1 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)
- ☐ PDF download of *Walk with Me: A 21-Day Prayer Journey around the World* from the Catholic Relief Services website
- ☐ printed copies of *Walk with Me: A 21-Day Prayer Journey around the World*, one for each small group of three or four (*optional*)
- ☐ copies of the handout "Chapter 1 Quiz," pages 32–33, one for each student

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 9.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Challenge** the students to name twenty facts about Jesus Christ in 60 seconds. Then challenge them to name twenty facts about the Catholic Church in 60 seconds.
2. **Introduce** the day's lesson in these or similar words:
 - The last two stages of salvation history as told in the Bible are the life and mission of Jesus and the start of the Catholic Church. We will just briefly look at these stages today. We will cover them in more detail in future classes.



Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 232–236 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the sections “Stage 7: The Life of Jesus Christ” and “Stage 8: The Church” on the handout “Chapter 1 Reading Guide.” When the students finish, collect and grade the handout.
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. When the time was right, God sent his only Son, Jesus, to fulfill what he had promised to his Chosen People, Israel.
 2. Jesus was not the warrior and king many expected but instead preached love, justice, and forgiveness.
 3. Three days following Jesus’ death, God raised Jesus from the dead and his followers understood that he was in fact the promised Messiah, the Savior.
 4. Jesus instructed his Apostles to spread the Good News of salvation to all people, and sent his Holy Spirit to empower them to continue his mission.
 5. The Church continues this mission from Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Optional Activity: “The Essential Jesus” (20 minutes), page 25

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Prayers around the World

Objective: To help the students understand how the Church has spread around the world since the first Pentecost.

1. **Download** and review the free prayer book *Walk with Me: A 21-Day Prayer Journey around the World*, from the Catholic Relief Services website. (This can be found by typing the title in your search engine.) If the students have digital devices, you can direct them to download the prayer book to their device, or you will need to print enough copies to have one for each small group of three or four students.
2. **Ask** a volunteer to find and read aloud Acts of the Apostles 2:43–47. Ask the students what they notice in this passage. Explain that this passage tells us how the first Christians lived. See how they shared everything with one another and how their lives were centered around prayer.

3. **Arrange** the students into small groups of three or four. Have each group download a copy of the prayer book, or distribute a printed copy to each group. Then offer the following directions:
 - This book will give us a chance to see how Christians continue to care for one another, and it will also give us a chance to pray together for others. Please look through the book and its stories and pick a day that is especially meaningful for your group. You will get a chance to share your day with the class. You might want to pick more than one story in case another group chooses the same one.
4. **Invite** the groups to share the day they have chosen with the whole class. Ask them to read the day's prayer together after they have explained the story. You may wish to use these as the class closing prayer.

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)



1. **Distribute** the handout "Chapter 1 Quiz," and allow the students time to complete it.
2. **Collect** the quizzes for grading.



Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 9.

Optional Activities

DAY 1

If the Shoe Fits (20 minutes)

Objective: To identify concrete examples of the truth of sin, suffering, and redemption in the student's own life, and to ask for forgiveness and healing from God.

1. **Introduce** the activity in these or similar words:
 - We don't have to go far to discover the truth of the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Though we could look to Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, the Flood, or even the Tower of Babel for examples of Original Sin, all we really need to do is take an honest look in the mirror. We have already experienced sin, we've suffered because of it, and we may or may not have yet received forgiveness and mercy from God.
2. **Ask** the students to quietly write about a time in their own life that follows the pattern they discovered in chapters 1–11 of Genesis—a pattern of rejection of God's commandments, suffering, sadness, or brokenness that resulted—and an experience of redemption or restoration by God.

Teaching Tip

You may want to complete this activity yourself before the students do it. It would be helpful for the students to hear your real-life example of a time where you sinned, experienced pain, and discovered the truth of God's forgiveness and love. This activity is a great way to prepare for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Light a candle and play some quiet, reflective music. Invite the students to really take a look at their life and discover the truth of God's Word, and of the drama of sin and salvation happening in their life already. Assure them that this will be kept confidential and that they may choose, if they like, to share their example.

3. **Emphasize** that this is the great value of these stories for each generation that reads them. More than simply a history lesson, these stories teach the truth in which we all too often find ourselves, and they offer the hope of restoration and friendship with God if we would but ask for it.
4. **Invite** the students to add a prayer of petition or thanksgiving to the end of their reflection. Either a petition asking for restoration, forgiveness, and love, or a thanksgiving for having received it. Welcome the students into the story of salvation history!

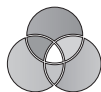


Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

DAY 2**Chapter 1****We Need a Judge! (20 minutes)**

Objective: To show the importance of strong leaders and judges who can intervene in the lives of others to show them the right way to be or act.

1. **Ask** the students to remember a time when they were doing something the wrong way and needed someone's help to teach them the correct way to do it. Or ask them to remember a time when they were confused about what they should do and had to seek advice from someone they trusted to decide what was right.
2. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - After they arrived in the Promised Land, the Israelites were now free and needed some help from God to do what was right and to defend them from their enemies. God gave the Israelites judges to help them know and do the good and to bind the tribes together to fight their common enemy, the Philistines.
3. **Arrange** the students into groups of five or six. Tell them that each group needs to create and act out a short skit showing how a judge might be of some service to help others to do what is right. They'll need two groups who disagree about something and a judge to help them come to a conclusion about what they should do, or to help unite them against a common enemy.
4. **Conclude** by having the students reflect on what life might be like today if we didn't have people around us helping us know and do what is right. Examples such as coaches, teachers, parents, Church leaders, and government leaders are all placed in our lives by God to guide us on our journey through this life.



Cross-Curricular Opportunity: This activity could be expanded into a history or government assignment. The students could research the steps the founding fathers took in creating our government to ensure that we had civic leaders who would help us know and do the good.

DAY 3**Materials Needed**

- ☐ copies of *Breakthrough!*, one for each student

The Breakthrough! Connection (5 minutes)

Users of *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics* may want to note “Pray It!” at Judges, chapter 9. This could be used as a prayer to conclude the “King for a Day” activity.

Thus Says the Lord (30 minutes)**Materials Needed**

- ☐ Bibles, one for each student or each small group of three or four
- ☐ digital presentation tools
- ☐ internet access
- ☐ poster board, one sheet for each small group of three or four (*optional*)
- ☐ markers (*optional*)



Objective: To highlight the important role that the prophets play in redirecting God's people back to the covenant and the path of righteousness and truth.

1. **Introduce** the activity in these or similar words:

- At our Baptism, we are baptized as priests, prophets, and kings, and we fulfill those duties at every moment of our lives—both in our families and in our world. In the Old Testament, the prophet is the mouthpiece of God and they speak God's truth with love to the world—sometimes even when the world doesn't want to hear it! We are called to do the same.

2. **Ask** the students to create a PowerPoint, Prezi, or other presentation, either individually or in small groups of three or four, illustrating the role of the prophet. (If they have *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics*, they can use the Bible character interviews in the color inserts to choose.) Their presentations should have two parts. The first part should illustrate a prophet from the Old Testament. The second part should illustrate some modern prophetic voices, such as religious leaders, national leaders, great coaches, teachers, or others who provide admonition, inspiration, and hope. The students' slides should include brief text summarizing the qualities of their chosen prophets and what they did. Distribute the Bibles, and direct the students to search through it for stories and to search the internet for images.

3. **Invite** volunteers or groups to share their presentations.

Teaching Tip

This activity could be done either individually or in small groups. Decide which will best work with your time and classroom needs. If the students do not have access to digital devices, this could be done by writing and drawing on poster board.



Assessment Opportunity: Create a rubric for the assignment, and have the students turn in their presentations for grading.

DAY 4**The Essential Jesus (20 minutes)****Chapter 1****Materials Needed**

- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ digital presentation tools (optional)

Objective: To help the students reflect on what they know about the high points of Jesus life.

1. **Distribute** the Bibles, and ask the students to find Acts of the Apostles 10:34–43. Explain that this is the first speech Peter gives to people who have not heard much about Jesus. Ask a volunteer to read the speech while the others follow in their Bibles.
2. **Give** these or similar directions:
 - Now that you have heard Peter's speech, it is your turn. Imagine that you have just met a group who has never heard of Jesus. What would you tell them about Jesus? Prepare for your speech by making notes for yourself. Title the top of the page "The Essential Jesus," and then fill the page, and only one page, with bullet points about Jesus. You might want to cover his role in salvation history, his teachings, the meaning of this death and Resurrection, and so on. Use your Bibles for ideas.
3. **Direct** the students to form pairs. Have the partners give their speech to each other using their list of bullet points. Have them pay attention to the things their partner talked about that were not on their list. Finish by congratulating them on being witnesses for Christ!



Digital Option: Instead of bullet lists, the students could write a blog post. They could create a mind map with Jesus at the center. They could create a digital presentation. Use a technique that engages the students' creativity.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading, or have the students submit their digital presentations at the end of the week.



Chapter Project

The Stages of Salvation History

Materials Needed

- ☐ copies of the handout "Stages of Salvation History," pages 30–31, one for each student
- ☐ digital presentation tools (*optional*)



Objective: To help the students learn the important people and events of salvation history.

1. **Distribute** the handout "Stages of Salvation History," and offer the following directions:
 - Over the week, we will be studying the eight stages of salvation history. As we do, work on filling in this chart so you can have your own reference tool for understanding God's plan for salvation. For each stage, you will need to fill in the name of the stage, the books of the Bible that refer to it, the key people in that stage, and the key events that happen in it. The first stage is filled out for you as an example.
2. **Allow** the students some time each day to fill in the key details of the stage they have studied. This can be an excellent study resource for them prior to their test.



Digital Option: The students may create their own version of the handout using digital presentation tools.

Name _____

Chapter 1 Reading Guide

Introduction, Stage 1: Primeval History, and Stage 2: The Patriarchs

Read the words and phrases in the word bank. Write the letter of the word or phrase that completes each sentence in the space provided before each number.

- _____ 1. Through _____, God has given us a road map with directions for our lives.
- _____ 2. The pattern of events in human history through which God makes his presence and saving actions known to us is called _____.
- _____ 3. The word _____ means events that happened before recorded history.
- _____ 4. A _____ is a special promise made between God and human beings.

- a. primeval
- b. salvation history
- c. covenant
- d. Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition

Stage 3: Egypt and the Exodus and Stage 4: The Promised Land and the Judges

Complete the sentences.

1. The Book of _____ teaches that the descendants of Jacob's children were enslaved in Egypt.
2. _____ led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.
3. God gave Moses the _____, which the people must obey as part of the covenant.
4. Joshua led the Israelites into _____.
5. When the Israelites trusted God, they were _____ in their battles; whenever they _____ in God, they failed.
6. God called special prophets and warriors, called _____ to help deliver _____ and defend the land against the _____ invasions.



Stage 5: The Kings and the Prophets and Stage 6: The Exile and the Return

Complete the sentences.

1. The fifth stage of salvation history teaches about the kingdoms of _____ and _____ .
2. _____ was the last of the judges and anointed the first king of Israel, King _____ .
3. _____ followed Saul as the second king of Israel and was able to _____ the Twelve Tribes into one kingdom.
4. King _____ followed David and built the Temple in _____ .
5. When the Kingdom split in two, _____ became the name of the northern kingdom alone, and _____ became the name of the southern kingdom.
6. God called _____ to encourage the people to obey their covenant with him.
7. Despite the prophets' warnings, the people turned away from God's _____ , and God allowed their _____ to be conquered.
8. Israel was conquered by the _____ in 721 BC, and Judah was conquered by the _____ in 587 BC.

Stage 7: The Life of Jesus Christ and Stage 8: The Church

When the time was right, God sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. List three ways Jesus did not fit the expectation that some of the Chosen People had for the Messiah.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Answer the following questions:

4. How did Jesus’ followers feel when the Romans killed him?

5. What event caused Jesus’ followers to understand that he was truly the Messiah?

6. What did Jesus instruct his Apostles to do after his Resurrection?

7. What did God reveal to Paul about Jesus? What did Paul do about it?

8. How does the Church continue Christ’s mission today?

Name _____

The Stages of Salvation History

Stage	Name of the Stage	Books of the Bible	Key Figures	Key Events
1	Primeval History	Genesis, chapters 1–11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam and Eve • Cain and Abel • Noah • The Tower of Babel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation and Fall • First murder • God floods the Earth • God confuses languages
2				
3				
4				



Stage	Name of the Stage	Books of the Bible	Key Figures	Key Events
5				
6				
7				
8				



Name _____

Chapter 1 Quiz

Multiple Choice

Write the letter of the best answer in the space provided before each number.

- _____ 1. God called _____ to preach the Good News to the Gentiles.
a. Abraham
b. Moses
c. Paul
- _____ 2. God called _____ to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.
a. Abraham
b. Moses
c. Paul
- _____ 3. _____ was the second king of Israel.
a. Saul
b. David
c. Solomon
- _____ 4. God called special prophets and warriors called _____ to deliver justice and defeat the Philistines.
a. judges
b. scribes
c. Pharisees
- _____ 5. Who did Jesus' followers understand him to be after the Resurrection?
a. a prophet
b. Elijah
c. the Messiah



Fill in the Blank

Read the words in the word bank. Write the letter of the word that completes each sentence in the space provided before each number.

- _____ 6. Without God's help, this leads to death and destruction.
- _____ 7. This word refers to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt and also to the book of the Bible describing this event.
- _____ 8. This word means the events that happened before recorded history.
- _____ 9. This word refers to people who are not Jewish.
- _____ 10. This is the special promise given by God to his Chosen People.

- a. primeval
- b. Gentiles
- c. sin
- d. covenant
- e. Exodus



Chapter 1 Answer Keys

Chapter 1 Reading Guide

Introduction, Stage 1: Primeval History, and Stage 2: The Patriarchs

1. d
2. b
3. a
4. c

Stage 3: Egypt and the Exodus and Stage 4: The Promised Land and the Judges

1. Exodus
2. Moses
3. Ten Commandments
4. Canaan
5. successful, lost faith
6. judges, justice, Philistine

Stage 5: The Kings and the Prophets and Stage 6: The Exile and the Return

1. Judah, Israel
2. Samuel, Saul
3. David, unite
4. Solomon, Jerusalem
5. Israel, Judah
6. prophets
7. covenant, kingdoms
8. Assyrians, Babylonians

Stage 7: The Life of Jesus Christ and Stage 8: The Church

1. Jesus preached love, justice, and forgiveness.
2. Jesus healed and worked miracles as signs of God's power.
3. Jesus showed that true salvation comes through faith and a change of heart.
4. They believed that all was lost.
5. the Resurrection
6. to go and spread the Good News of salvation to all people
7. God revealed to Paul that Christ came for all people. Paul began preaching to non-Jews.
8. by telling the whole world about God's saving love



Chapter 1 Quiz

Multiple Choice

1. c
2. b
3. b
4. a
5. c

Fill in the Blank

6. c
7. e
8. a
9. b
10. d



Chapter 2

The Old Testament

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the students appreciate the importance of the Hebrew Scriptures in the life of the Christian community and identify the four major divisions of the books of the Old Testament: the Pentateuch, the historical books, the wisdom and poetry books, and the books of the prophets.

Background for the Teacher

What is your favorite Old Testament book? Are you inspired by the stories of our origins in Genesis or of God's saving power in Exodus? Are you fascinated by the actions and words of Israel's prophets? For many people, the Old Testament is an unexplored ocean, and they are only familiar with a few popular islands. It is a wonderful and broad testimony to the saving action of God in the life of his Chosen People, Israel. The books are faith testimonies that span hundreds of years, told by a variety of people or communities from a variety of places.

The books of the Old Testament reflect the faith of God's people and the way their faith informed their understanding of God's action in their lives. They are not eyewitness testimonies documented the moment the events occurred, but they are instead reflections on the past—some recent, some distant. They are written through the lens of the authors' faith and cultural situation.

The Old Testament books reflect geographical disputes, social and political realities, pride and nationalistic concerns, and prejudices both within and outside of the community. They are all written through the lens of how God is saving us through, in spite of, and because of this lived experience. The Hebrew Scriptures (the Christian Old Testament) were written by the Hebrew people for the Hebrew people. The books are thoroughly theirs and, because of Jesus, are now ours.

Teacher's Prayer

Loving Father, you inspired men and women to share their experience with you in Sacred Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit that they might share with every generation your power and love. Inspire me by that same Holy Spirit so that I might share my experience of you with my students as well. Amen.

Teaching Tip

Because our schools are religiously and spiritually diverse, the students will come to class with a variety of interpretive methods they've learned from home. It is our responsibility to teach the Catholic way of interpreting Scripture, while recognizing that it is not the only way of interpreting Scripture. It is helpful to use phrases like, "Although a variety of interpretations might exist, we understand this passage to mean . . ." Allow the students to safely express what they were taught or the way they understand the passage. Be particularly careful to honor their parents as their primary educators in faith, knowing that some instruction may need to be expanded upon or gently corrected.

Chapter at a Glance

Core Text: Student Book

Core Understandings

1. The Old Testament is divided into four major parts and includes a variety of literary genres. The first section is the Pentateuch, which reveals foundational truths about God's plan for Creation and humanity.
2. The second section of the Old Testament is the historical books. These books are not unbiased history but instead are written to emphasize God's action in history.
3. The third section of the Old Testament is the wisdom and poetry books, which use Hebrew poetry to teach how to live a good and holy life.
4. The fourth section of the Old Testament is the prophets. The prophets of Israel had two basic messages: calls to reform and hope-filled promises.

Catechism Pillar

- The Creed

Catechism Connection

- Paragraphs 101–141
(Sacred Scripture)

Key Scripture Passages

- Genesis, chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 17 (excerpts)
- Exodus, chapters 1–15, 19–20, and 24:1–8
- Deuteronomy, chapters 5–6, 7:7–8:19
- Joshua 24:15
- Book of Proverbs (excerpts)
- Wisdom 6:12–21

Key Words

- Baal and Asherah
- judges
- Pentateuch

Chapter Project

- "Wisdom from around the World," page 54

Prayer Suggestions

- **Prayer:** Good and loving Father, in your great love for us, you have shared your own life with the Hebrew people and revealed yourself in their life and story. Help us see you in the experience of their lives, in their words, and in their hearts, that we might experience you in our lives, words, and hearts. Amen.
- **Scripture Reading:** Jeremiah 31:33–34
- **Student Book:** "Connect with God," page 238
- **Music:** "We Delight," by Caedmon's Call, and "God of Wonders," by Third Day, available on YouTube
- **Prayer/Hymn:** Portions of Saint Francis's "Canticle of the Sun" (readily available online)

DAY 1

Student Book

Introduction and “The Pentateuch,” pages 238–242

Core Understanding

The Old Testament is divided into four major parts and includes a variety of literary genres. The first section is the Pentateuch, which reveals foundational truths about God’s plan for Creation and humanity.

Materials Needed

- ☐ copies of the handout “Chapter 2 Reading Guide,” on pages 55–56, one for each student *(optional)*
- ☐ Bibles, one for each student

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 38:

- Lord Jesus, Word of God, help us to understand and appreciate the sacred books of the Old Testament. Help us to see your Father’s plan of salvation in the experience and words of the Israelites so that we might see his plan in our own lives. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Distribute** the Bibles, and engage the students’ experience with the following challenge:
 - Please open your Bibles to the table of contents and find the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. I will give extra credit points to the first person who can memorize the names of those five books in order and tell them to me.

Teaching Tip

Use extra credit points or another reward of your choosing. You might give extra credit points to every student who memorizes the names of the books within the given time.

2. **Offer** this additional challenge if time allows:

- I will now give extra credit points to the person who makes the longest list of important people in the books of Genesis and Exodus. You have 2 minutes to search the books and to make your list.

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 238–242 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:



- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the handout pages and to complete the section “Introduction and The Pentateuch” on the handout “Chapter 2 Reading Guide,” or use the handout as a homework assignment or as a review at the end of the week. Collect and grade the handout at the end of the week.
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. The Pentateuch is the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
 2. These five books of the Pentateuch reveal important things about God and his original plan for creation and humanity.
 3. God made everything good, and humans, in particular, to be in a special relationship with him.
 4. Human sin disrupts our relationship with God, but God continues to reach out and teach us how to live in union with him and with one another.

Chapter 2

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

God’s Word and Our Life Skits

Objective: To recognize the key themes revealed in the Pentateuch about God and his original plan for creation and humanity in their own lives.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - God’s Sacred Word reveals many important truths to us. The Scriptures are not just ancient texts for people “back then” but also important guides to help us know God’s plan for our lives right now.
2. **Arrange** the students into small groups of three or four, and explain that they will be applying eternal truths of Scripture to their lives now. Assign each group one of the following Scripture passages and themes. These passages are based on the bulleted list on pages 241–242 in the student book. You may need to assign a passage to more than one group.
 - God created everything good; every person is good (Genesis 1:26–31).
 - God made us to be in a close relationship with him (Genesis 2:7–15).
 - God made man and woman to complement each other and join in marriage (Genesis 2:18–24).
 - Sin damages our relationship with God and one another (Genesis 3:17–24).
 - God hears and responds to us when we call out to him (Exodus 3:7–10).

3. **Instruct** the students that they will have 10 minutes to read their assigned Scripture passages and to discuss how its teachings can be applied to their school, social, and family life. Based on their discussion, they will create short skits showing how that truth can be applied to a real-life situation. When you call time, they will teach the truth of their Scripture passages to the rest of the class by acting out their skits.
4. **Prepare** a place for the students to act out their skits, either in the classroom or outside.

Optional Activity: “Service Project: Care for Creation” (30 minutes), page 51

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

Ask the students to list the five books of the Pentateuch, as well as the most important things God wanted to reveal to humans through these five books.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 38.

DAY 2

Student Book

"The Historical Books," pages 242–246

Core Understanding

The second section of the Old Testament is the historical books. These books are not unbiased history but instead are written to emphasize God's action in history.

Materials Needed

- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ "Chapter 2 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)
- ☐ biblical heroes strips, a set for each group of five, created from the handout "Biblical Heroes," pages 57–59

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 38:

- Let us pray the Hail Mary to ask Mother Mary to help us to discover her Son, Jesus Christ, in the Israelites' historical books:
Hail Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Invite** a student or students to share something they learned about US history. Who do they think is our greatest president, general, or religious leader? What is our greatest triumph or success? What is our greatest defeat or failure?
2. **Tell** the students the following in these or similar words:
 - The Israelites wanted to share their story of their ancestors, heroes, battles, and more! They too collected their stories, but because they were people of great faith, they told their story as a religious story. They told who God was calling to lead and to do great things or how God was helping them be successful in battle.
 - The historical books are not just history, they are religious history—a people's story about how their God was active through all their experiences.

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 242–246 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section “The Historical Books” on the handout “Chapter 2 Reading Guide.”
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following points:
 1. The historical books are not books of pure history but instead emphasize God’s actions in the history of the Jewish people.
 2. After Joshua led the Israelites into the land of Canaan, God raised up spirit-filled leaders, called judges, who helped to lead the Israelites.
 3. Samuel, the last judge of Israel, anointed Saul as the first king of Israel, who was then followed by the great kings David and Solomon. David united all the Israelites together, and Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem.
 4. After Solomon’s death, civil war split the Kingdom of Israel into two separate kingdoms that were later conquered by the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Biblical Heroes Roundtable

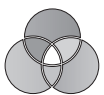
Objective: To become familiar with some key figures from the historical books.



1. **Arrange** the students into groups of five. Give each group the five slips of paper from the handout and ask each member of the group to take one slip. Give each student a Bible.
2. **Offer** the following directions:
 - You’ve each been given the name of a biblical hero from the historical books of the Bible. Look up and read the Scripture passages listed. Write on your slip the key points you learn about your biblical hero. When I call time, each of you will share with your group what you learned about this Bible hero. You probably won’t have time to read all the readings listed on the slip, but get as far as you can.
3. **Circulate** among the groups, helping the students as needed. Allow about 10 minutes for the students to research their biblical heroes. Then call time and direct the groups to take turns presenting what they learned about their assigned heroes. Encourage them to ask one another questions.
4. **Conclude** by asking the groups to take a minute to decide together which of the five heroes was their favorite and why. Have each group share their decision with the class.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the slips and notes for credit or grading.



Cross-Curricular Opportunity: Have the students do a similar roundtable for heroes from US history or world history. Then have them write a short paper comparing the qualities of the biblical hero they researched to the qualities of the hero they researched from US history or world history.

Optional Activities: “The Breakthrough! Connection” (5 minutes) and “God, Are You Near?” (20 minutes), page 52

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Ask** the students to form pairs to discuss this question:
 - What are the major events, and who are the most significant people included in the Historical Books?
2. **Circulate** among the students, and conclude by asking volunteers to share their responses.

Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 38.



DAY 3

Student Book

"The Wisdom and Poetry Books," pages 246–248

Core Understanding

The third section of the Old Testament is the wisdom and poetry books, which use Hebrew poetry to teach how to live a good and holy life.

Materials Needed

- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ "Chapter 2 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)
- ☐ blank paper, one sheet for each student
- ☐ markers or crayons
- ☐ digital presentation tools (*optional*)

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 38.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Distribute** the Bibles, and instruct the students to find the Book of Proverbs. Ask them to search for definitions of *wisdom* and to raise their hands and share the definitions when they find them.
2. **Conclude** by reading Wisdom 6:12–21, where King Solomon, the patron of wisdom, declares the value of wisdom.

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 246–248 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section “The Wisdom and Poetry Books” on the handout “Chapter 2 Reading Guide.”
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. The wisdom and poetry books provide teachings about how to be a wise person—that is, a person who lives a good and holy life.
 2. The Book of Psalms contains 150 prayers that are meant to be sung as part of Jewish worship. Today, we encounter the Psalms in the Responsorial Psalm at Mass.
 3. The Book of Proverbs is a collection of sayings that gives advice on how to be a good and wise person.
 4. The Book of Job seeks to understand the age-old question, Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

That’s Great Advice!

Objective: To discover the Hebrew Wisdom tradition and make a sign for the classroom “wisdom wall.”

1. **Assign** each student a chapter from the Book of Proverbs. If necessary, you can also assign chapters from Sirach. It would be easiest to simply have the students count off and then assign them that chapter number.
2. **Distribute** the blank paper and markers or crayons, and share these or similar words:
 - Even though the wisdom and poetry books were written thousands of years ago, some of their advice is surprisingly relevant today. Look through your assigned chapter for a verse or a saying that you believe people need to follow today. Choose one that, if followed by everyone, would make our world a better place.
 - After you have decided on your verse, use the paper and markers or crayons to make a sign with both the words of the verse and the citation (book name, chapter number, and verse number). For example: “For the LORD gives wisdom, / from his mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6).
3. **Post** the verses on a wall or on a bulletin board display for the school to see.



Digital Option: Have the students create a presentation slide with their verse and turn it in. Combine all the slides to make a presentation that you can show during study time or before school.

Optional Activities: “The Breakthrough! Connection” (5 minutes) and “The Illustrated Psalms” (30 minutes), page 53

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Ask** the students to quickly review “The Wisdom and Poetry Books” on pages 246–248 in the student book and to choose one sentence in which they learned something new or gained a better understanding of the wisdom and poetry books.
2. **Invite** each student to read their sentence aloud.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 38.

DAY 4

Student Book

"The Prophets" to end of chapter, pages 249–251

Core Understanding

The fourth section of the Old Testament is the prophets. The prophets of Israel had two basic messages: calls to reform and hope-filled promises.

Materials Needed

- ☐ "Chapter 2 Reading Guide" handouts *(optional)*
- ☐ thank-you cards and envelopes, one for each student
- ☐ extra thank-you cards and envelopes *(optional)*
- ☐ internet access *(optional)*
- ☐ copies of the handout "Chapter 2 Quiz," pages 60–61, one for each student

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 38.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Remind** the students that each of us is called to be a prophet of God and that God needs us to share his message of truth and love with those around us. Tell them that as a teacher, you have this prophetic message for them:
 - Thus sayeth the Lord: If you want to do well in this class, you must read your assignments, pay attention, and study for your tests!
2. **Invite** the students to live out their prophetic gifts by giving their own words of wisdom to the class about what God is calling them to do. These can be spiritual messages, messages about succeeding academically or athletically, or messages about being responsible to your family, friends, and society.

Core Content (10 minutes)



Review pages 249–251 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section “The Prophets” on the handout “Chapter 2 Reading Guide.” When the students finish, collect and grade the handout.
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. A prophet is a person God calls to speak on His behalf.
 2. The prophets of Israel had two basic types of messages. The first type was condemnation, because the Chosen People had failed to live out their promises to God in keeping their part of the covenant.
 3. The second basic type was messages of hope, focusing on themes such as God’s faithfulness to his people, the survival of the faithful, and God sending a Messiah.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Honoring a Prophet

Objective: To identify and thank a person who has been a source of God’s truth, life, and love.

1. **Remind** the students that a prophet is a mouthpiece for God, delivering God’s truth to those who need to hear it.
2. **Instruct** the students to identify the person in their life that God has been using most often to speak the truth to them. It could be a person who has had to reprimand them for something they did that was unloving, or it could be a person who has been a constant source of encouragement and hope.
3. **Distribute** the thank-you cards and envelopes, and instruct the students to write a thank-you note to the person they identified. The note should say something like, “Thank you for being God’s prophet in my life.” The note should then go on to be specific in thanking the person by describing the event or the words that were said.
4. **Explain** to the students that the person may not even have realized that they were being a mouthpiece for God at the time. In other words, their words of advice or encouragement probably didn’t start with “Thus says the Lord.”

Teaching Tip

You may wish to have some extra cards on hand in case some of the students would like to thank more than one person. Check with the students to see if they have a plan for delivering their thank-you notes, and help them create a plan if necessary.



Digital Option: The students could create digital cards using an online greeting card site.



Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Distribute** the handout “Chapter 2 Quiz,” and allow the students time to complete it.
2. **Collect** the quizzes for grading.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 38.

Optional Activities

DAY 1

Materials Needed

- ☐ a Bible
- ☐ trash bags, gloves, hand sanitizer
- ☐ gardening tools
- ☐ plants
- ☐ digital recording tools *(optional)*
- ☐ digital presentation tools *(optional)*

Service Project: Care for Creation (30 minutes)

Objective: To help the students to recognize their own role in caring for God's creation and do a campus cleanup as a testimony to that role.

Teaching Tip

You will need to prepare for this project in advance by determining where on the school campus the students can serve and what they will do. The type of project will determine what tools and supplies you will need.

1. **Read** Genesis 1:26–31 aloud, or ask a student to do so. Explain that God created the Earth and has given it to us as a gift for ours and future generations. In other words, we are called to be stewards of God's gift. Help them to know that sin is disobedience to this call to stewardship or care for creation.
2. **Explain** that their own school is a part of that stewardship and that too often students don't do a very good job of caring for their school, as God's gift.
3. **Tell** the students that they are going to participate in a school cleanup or beautification project to undo the sin of destruction and neglect and also to encourage life and beauty at their school.
4. **Arrange** the students into work groups, distribute gardening and cleaning materials, and pick an area of the school in need of service. The students will serve for up to 30 minutes.
5. **Conclude** by inviting the students to reflect on their service and how they felt making their school a cleaner, more beautiful place.



Digital Option: Appoint some students to be digital reporters during the project. Their role is to record before-and-after scenes of the work site, to interview some students working, and to create a short video or digital presentation showing the service that was done.

DAY 2**Materials Needed**

- ☐ copies of *Breakthrough!*, one for each student

Chapter 2

The *Breakthrough!* Connection (5 minutes)

Users of *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics* can find and read the Bible character in the color inserts that correspond to the heroes listed on the “Biblical Heroes” handout.

God, Are You Near? (20 minutes)**Materials Needed**

- ☐ text or video of the poem “Footprints in the Sand,” available on YouTube

Objective: To identify how God has been acting in the everyday experience of the students’ lives.

1. **Introduce** this reflection activity in these or similar words:

- The historical books of the Old Testament show us that the ancient Israelites recognized God working in their lives and history. They even saw God at work during their times of greatest suffering, when their kingdoms were destroyed and they were taken into captivity. This is an important spiritual skill to have, to be able to see God’s actions in our lives. In a few minutes, we are going to write on this topic, but first I want to share with you an inspirational poem you may have heard.



2. **Read** the text or show the video of “Footprints in the Sand.”

3. **Share** a time in your own life (as a teacher, parent, friend, etc.) when you recognized God’s active presence. Explain that God is always active in our lives, but we often don’t discover it until later and upon reflection.

4. **Give** the following directions:

- I would like you to write about how God might have been present during an experience in your life—pleasant or unpleasant. You may have come to recognize his presence through events like an unexpected act of love by another person. Or perhaps you heard something you really needed to hear at just the right time. Your writing is private and will only be read by me unless you choose to share with someone else.

5. **Invite** the students who feel comfortable sharing their stories to do so.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.



Digital Option: Have the students write their reflections and turn them in using email.

DAY 3**Materials Needed**

- ☐ copies of *Breakthrough!*, one for each student

The *Breakthrough!* Connection (5 minutes)

Users of *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics* may want to note “Catholic Connections” at Wisdom 7:22–8:1. This feature notes the value of wisdom in every generation.

The Illustrated Psalms (30 minutes)**Materials Needed**

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ internet access
- ☐ digital presentation tools



Objective: To highlight the beauty and worship of God by God’s people through the Psalms.

1. **Arrange** the students into pairs or small groups of three. Assign each group a range of psalms to look at.
2. **Offer** the following directions:
 - The Psalms are beautiful expressions of our human experience of God’s love, power, and might. Many are filled with beautiful imagery. Please choose one of the psalms I’ve assigned your group. You will then create a visual presentation for that psalm with images you find on the internet. You can also add a musical background to your presentation if you wish. When you are done, your group will read your psalm to the class with the visual presentation illustrating the words you are reading.
3. **Conclude** with a class presentation of each group’s completed project.



Assessment Opportunity: Grade each group’s visual presentation if you wish.

Teaching Tip

Be sure to follow your school’s policy for internet searching, and direct your students to safe websites to search for images.



Chapter Project

Wisdom from around the World

Materials Needed

- ☐ internet access
- ☐ poster board, one sheet for each student
- ☐ sets of markers, one for each student
- ☐ digital presentation tools (optional)



Objective: The students discover other sources of wisdom from around the world in other cultures or religious traditions.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - The wisdom and poetry books of the Old Testament are primary sources of God's revealed wisdom for Jews and Christians. But other religions have their own sources of wisdom: for example, Confucius, the Buddha, and the Dalai Lama are sources of wisdom for Confucianism and Buddhism. It is sometimes surprising how similar their teachings are to the teachings in the Bible.
2. **Distribute** the poster board and markers, and give the following instructions:
 - Your assignment is to search the internet for good advice from different cultures or religious traditions. I suggest you start by looking for quotes from Confucius, Buddha, and the Dalai Lama. (*Write these names on the board.*) Find at least three to five quotes that you find inspiring. These should be from at least three different sources, including at least one quote from the Bible. Write down these quotes and who said them. Then make a poster with all your quotes along with their source.
3. **Display** the posters on a wall or on a bulletin board for all to see. You might lead a discussion on common themes and unique themes from the quotes. You could also connect some of the wisdom quotes to wisdom taught by Jesus and the Church.



Digital Option: The students might consider making a digital presentation illustrating their quotes with musical accompaniment. If possible, create a class YouTube channel on which to post the presentations.

Name _____

Chapter 2 Reading Guide

Introduction and The Pentateuch

Read the words and phrases in the word bank. Write the letter of the word or phrase that completes each sentence in the space provided before each number.

- _____ 1. The different kinds of writing in the Bible are called _____ .
- _____ 2. The _____ is the first five books of the Bible.
- _____ 3. The Book of _____ tells about the creation of the world.
- _____ 4. The Book of _____ tells how the Jewish people escaped slavery in Egypt with the help of God and the leadership of Moses.
- _____ 5. _____ tell us more about God's Law and his covenant with the Israelites, as well as the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land.

- a. Pentateuch
- b. Exodus
- c. Genesis
- d. literary genres
- e. Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy

The Historical Books

Mark each statement as true (T) or false (F).

- _____ 1. The second section of the Old Testament contains writings about important Jewish prophets like Isaiah and Ezekiel.
- _____ 2. Under Joshua's leadership, the Israelites conquered the Land of Egypt.
- _____ 3. Samuel was the last judge of Israel.
- _____ 4. King David was a great king, and he was perfect in every way.
- _____ 5. God allowed the kingdoms of Israel and Judah to be conquered because their kings and the people had broken their covenant with God so many times.



The Wisdom and Poetry Books

Complete the sentences.

1. The wisdom books provide us with teachings about how to be a _____ person.
2. People study the Book of Job today to understand why God allows _____
_____ to happen to _____.
3. The Book of Psalms contains 150 _____ that were meant to be _____
as part of Jewish worship.
4. For Christians, the Song of Solomon symbolizes the love between _____ and the
_____.
5. _____ contains teachings of a man who lived about 150
years before Jesus was born.

The Prophets

List the three most common failures addressed by the prophets.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List the three themes of hope that were commonly spoken by the prophets.

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____



Biblical Heroes

Make a copy of this handout for each group of five students. Cut apart the slips, keeping them in groups of five to distribute to each small group.



Joshua

Scripture to look up and read:

- Joshua 1:1–7
- Joshua 3:7–8, 14–17
- Joshua 11:16–23
- Joshua 24:14–15

Key points I learned about this biblical hero:



Ruth

Scripture to look up and read:

- Ruth 1:14–18
- Ruth 2:1–12
- Ruth 3:6–16
- Ruth 4:13–17

Key points I learned about this biblical hero:





David

Scripture to look up and read:

- 1 Samuel 17:41–51
- 2 Samuel 5:1–5
- 2 Samuel 11:1–17
- 2 Samuel 22:1–7

Key points I learned about this biblical hero:



Samuel

Scripture to look up and read:

- 1 Samuel 3:1–10, 19–21
- 1 Samuel 7:2–6, 15–17
- 1 Samuel 8:4–9
- 1 Samuel 16:6–13

Key points I learned about this biblical hero:





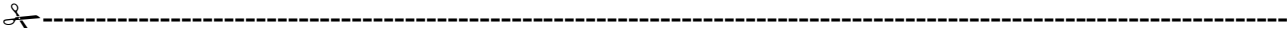
Nehemiah

Scripture to look up and read:

- Nehemiah 2:1–6
- Nehemiah 2:11–18
- Nehemiah 5:1–12
- Nehemiah 5:14–19

Key points I learned about this biblical hero:

Chapter 2



Name _____

Chapter 2 Quiz

Multiple Choice

Write the letter of the best answer in the space provided before each number.



- _____ 1. The _____ is the wisdom and poetry book containing the sung prayers of the Chosen People.
- a. Song of Songs
 - b. Proverbs
 - c. Psalms
- _____ 2. Under _____ leadership, Israel conquered the land of Canaan.
- a. David's
 - b. Solomon's
 - c. Joshua's
- _____ 3. Samuel anointed _____ the first king of Israel.
- a. David
 - b. Solomon
 - c. Saul
- _____ 4. The Book of _____ helps us understand why God allows bad things to happen to good people.
- a. Job
 - b. Jeremiah
 - c. Joshua
- _____ 5. The Book of _____ tells how the Jewish people escaped slavery in Egypt.
- a. Genesis
 - b. Exodus
 - c. Leviticus



Fill in the Blank

Read the words and phrases in the word bank. Write the letter of the word or phrase that completes each sentence in the space provided before each number.

_____ 6. A _____ is a person God calls to speak on his behalf.

_____ 7. _____ were two false gods that the Israelites turned to instead of worshipping the true God.

_____ 8. The _____ is made up of the first five books of the Old Testament.

_____ 9. The Hebrew word for “anointed one” is _____ .

_____ 10. Spirit-filled leaders who helped the Israelites fight off threats were called _____ .

- a. Pentateuch
- b. judges
- c. prophet
- d. Baal and Asherah
- e. Messiah



Chapter 2 Answer Keys

Chapter 2 Reading Guide

Chapter 2

The Pentateuch

1. d
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. e

The Historical Books

1. F
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T

The Wisdom and Poetry Books

1. wise
2. bad things, good people
3. prayers, sung
4. Christ, Church
5. Ben Sira

The Prophets

Common Failures

1. idolatry
2. injustice
3. false worship

Themes of Hope

4. God is faithful.
5. The faithful will survive.
6. God will send a messiah.

Chapter 2 Quiz

Multiple Choice

1. c
2. c
3. c
4. a
5. b

Fill in the Blank

6. c
7. d
8. a
9. e
10. b



Chapter 3

Biblical Covenants: Old and New

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the students encounter the God who keeps his promises as they learn about the covenants found in Sacred Scripture. Beginning with the covenants made with Abraham, Moses, and King David, and culminating with their ultimate fulfillment in Christ Jesus, God makes and keeps his promise to bring salvation to the world. God's saving action fulfilled in Jesus continues to be fulfilled by the power of the Holy Spirit acting through the Church.

Background for the Teacher

Do you consider yourself to be a trusting person? Do you give your word and keep it? What is the most significant promise someone made to you but did not keep? The danger of living in a world of broken promises and broken contracts is that we might begin to harden our hearts toward others and even toward God. We might begin to take on an untrusting attitude toward God and believe that it is acceptable to break our promises with him.

Sacred Scripture gives testimony that from the beginning, God has entered into sacred agreements, called covenants, with humans. God promises that those who keep his covenants will experience blessing and abundance, but those who reject his promises will experience hardship, pain, and suffering. We should not look at these as rewards or punishments but as the natural consequences of living in sync or out of sync with the will of God. Scripture explains these consequences as "blessings" (see Deuteronomy 28:1–14) and "curses" (see verses 15–69).

Scripture reveals that time and time again human beings are the unfaithful ones and, despite this, God always keeps his promises! God is forever faithful, trustworthy, and true and remains so not because of who we are or what we do, but because of who he is and what he's done. In other words, God keeps his end of the bargain even if we do not! That's good news.

Teacher's Prayer

God, Keeper of Promises, help me not to grow hard of heart. Help me to be willing to trust, willing to believe, and willing to act on your promises so that I may be ever hopeful and ever joyful. As your minister to young people, empower me to share that hope and joy with my students and their families. I ask these things through Christ Jesus, the Lord. Amen.

Teaching Tip

It will not be hard for the students to appreciate the idea of "broken promises," as middle school life and friendships are often chock-full of them! Young people often promise friendships, help, or time with one person and then quickly break that promise for what seems like a better offer. It will not be difficult to connect their experience with how much this hurts to the idea that it should not be done! This is a great time to offer God's unconditional, uncompromising, and unending promise of love and salvation. Earthly friends, family, and even parents fail us, but God never does! Celebrate this truth with the students.

Chapter at a Glance

Core Text: Student Book

Core Understandings

1. God enters into sacred agreements, called covenants, with his people, and God remains faithful to his covenant promises even when his people are not faithful to him.
2. God entered into a covenant with Abraham, making the Israelites God's Chosen People, and with Moses when he gave the Israelites the Law.
3. God entered into a covenant with David, promising him that he would always have descendants and that his kingdom would last forever.
4. Through Jesus Christ, God establishes a new and everlasting covenant with the human race.

Catechism Pillar

- The Creed

Catechism Connection

- Paragraphs 612–614
(The Sacrifice of the New Covenant)
- Paragraphs 839–840
(Old Covenant)

Key Scripture Passages

- Genesis, chapters 2–3
- Genesis 6:5–13, 9:1–17, 12:1–9
- Exodus, chapter 31
- 1 Chronicles 17:1–15

Key Words

- Chosen People
- New Covenant
- Satan
- Ten Commandments

Chapter Project

- "Covenant Chart," page 82

Prayer Suggestions

- **Prayer:** Trustworthy God, help us to trust in and have hope because of your promises. Thank you for the people who testify to the truth of your Word. Help us to be faithful people, putting you first in our life at home and at school. We ask this through Christ Jesus, the Lord. Amen.
- **Scripture Reading:** 2 Peter 3:9
- **Student Book:** "Connect with God," page 253
- **Music:** "Lord, I Need You," by Matt Maher, available on YouTube

DAY 1

Student Book

Introduction and "God Gives Second Chances," pages 253–256

Core Understanding

God enters into sacred agreements, called covenants, with his people, and God remains faithful to his covenant promises even when his people are not faithful to him.

Materials Needed

- ☐ copies of the handout "Chapter 3 Reading Guide," pages 83–84, one for each student (*optional*)
- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ markers
- ☐ poster board, one sheet for each small group of three or four

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 65:

- God of second chances, thank you for your love, your faithfulness, and your great mercy. Help us, Father, to be like you in loving our friends and family. We pray for your continued mercy toward us as we journey toward greater wholeness, through Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

Engage the students' experience by asking the following questions:

- Have you ever experienced a time when someone broke a promise to you? Maybe a friend or family member? Briefly share with a partner what the circumstances were and how the situation made you feel. (*Allow a chance for the students to share in pairs, and then invite a volunteer to share their situation with the class.*)
- What would the world be like if we were always lied to by others and we couldn't trust anything that anybody said? Do you think this is the world that God would have for us? Or do you think God has something better in mind?

Optional Activity: "Keeping the Covenant with God" (15 minutes), page 78

Core Content (10 minutes)



Review pages 253–256 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section “Introduction and God Gives Second Chances” on the handout “Chapter 3 Reading Guide,” or use the handout as a homework assignment or as a review at the end of the week. Collect and grade the handout at the end of the week.
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. The most important promises in the Bible are called covenants in which both God and people vow to keep a promise forever.
 2. In the story of Adam and Eve, God promised to deliver us from the power of sin and death.
 3. Despite our sin, God still promises us salvation and continues to give all of us second chances.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Adam, Eve, and Noah

Objective: To illustrate the key components of the covenant between God and Adam and Eve and God and Noah.

1. **Introduce** the activity in these or similar words:
 - God entered into covenant relationships with Adam and Eve and also with Noah and his family and all living beings.. You’ve no doubt heard these stories, and now I’d like you to create a drawing illustrating these two important covenants.
 - It will be up to you to emphasize in your drawing what you believe is most important about these covenant relationships. You may think it was a big deal that Adam and Eve disobeyed God, or you may really want to emphasize that life had changed for them after disobeying God, or you might even want to focus not on the sin or the consequence, but instead on God’s mercy and forgiveness. It will be up to you!
2. **Arrange** the students into small groups of three or four. Distribute the Bibles, markers, and poster board. The groups can use the verses below to read the stories in the Bible and use the key points mentioned in the student book.
 - Genesis, chapters 2–3 (Adam and Eve’s sin and God’s promise)
 - Genesis 6:5–13, 9:1–17 (the Flood and the Covenant with Noah’s family)
3. **Ask** each group to title its poster and illustrate both stories and then to post their drawing in the classroom. The students can add words to their posters too, if that makes the poster easier to understand.
4. **Conclude** by allowing each group to share their work and to explain what aspect of the covenant they believed was the most important to emphasize through their art.

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

Ask the students to write a short answer to the following question:

- What is a covenant? Use examples from either the story of Adam and Eve or Noah and the Flood to help explain your definition.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 65.

DAY 2

Student Book

"God's Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David" (first four paragraphs), pages 257–258

Core Understanding

God entered into a covenant with Abraham, making the Israelites God's Chosen People, and with Moses when he gave the Israelites the Law.

Materials Needed

- ☐ "Chapter 3 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)
- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ digital recording tools (*optional*)

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 65:

- Heavenly Father, you called Abraham and Moses to do your will as you promised to bring your people to salvation. Through your covenants with Abraham and the Israelites, you guided your people so that the world might experience salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to hear your call and have the courage to answer it so that we too will be part of your saving plan. Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

Engage the students' experience by distributing the Bibles and facilitating a dialogue with these directions and questions:

- How fast can you find the Bible passage in which God made a covenant with Abraham? I'll give you a hint: It's in the first book of the Bible, and it may be called something like "God's Call to Abraham" or "Abram's Call"! Raise your hand when you find it. *(Let the students look until a good portion of them have their hands raised. Ask the student who first responded to give the location: Genesis 12:1–9.)*
- How fast can you find the Scripture passage in which God made a covenant with the Israelites? I'll give you a hint, it is in the second book of the Bible. It happened on a mountain and involved some commandments! Raise your hand when you think you've found it. *(Let the students look until a good portion of them have their hands raised. Ask the student who first responded to give the location: Exodus, chapter 19 or 20.)*

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 257–258 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section “God’s Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David (first four paragraphs)” on the handout “Chapter 3 Reading Guide.”
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following points:
 1. God entered into a covenant with Abraham in which God promised to give Abraham land and many descendants who would be a blessing to all people.
 2. Through Moses, God entered into a covenant with the Israelites—called the Mosaic Covenant—in which God promised to be their God and protect them.
 3. Both Abraham and the Israelites promised to honor God as the one true God and obey him and his Commandments.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Abraham and Moses

Objective: To understand the covenants God entered into with Abraham and with the Israelites through Moses.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - God entered into a covenant relationship with Abraham and later into a covenant relationship with the Israelites. God made his covenant with Abraham directly with Abraham, but he made his covenant with the Israelites through Moses. These covenants with Abraham and Moses are an important part of bringing salvation to the whole world through Jesus Christ. We’re going to now act out each of these important covenants initiated by God.
2. **Arrange** the students into four or six groups. Assign each group one of the following Bible stories. You will have two or three groups working on the same story. The groups will need to work together to read through the story, create a simple script, assign parts, and be ready to act out their creation. They will have 10 minutes to prepare. Each person in the group must be a part of the action. The students will need to be creative in order to get everyone involved.
 - Genesis 12:1–9 (the call of Abram)
 - Exodus, chapter 3 (the call of Moses)
3. **Create** a “stage” in front of the classroom, and determine which group will go first.
4. **Conclude** with praise for all the groups and their efforts. Ask them to identify what is common in both of these covenant stories. (*God calls and people respond.*)



Digital Option: Direct the students to film their skits. When all the groups are finished, have them take turns showing their recorded skits to the class.

Optional Activity: “Hey, God . . . Call” (15 minutes), page 79

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Ask** the students to form pairs. Direct the partners to recall the details of the two covenants covered in this lesson, writing them down on a sheet of paper.
2. **Circulate** among the students, and conclude by asking volunteers to share their responses.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 65.

DAY 3

Student Book

"God's Covenant with Abraham, Moses, and David" (last two paragraphs), pages 258–259

Core Understanding

God entered into a covenant with David, promising him that he would always have descendants and that his kingdom would last forever.

Materials Needed

- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ "Chapter 3 Reading Guide" handouts *(optional)*

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 65.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

Introduce the theme of this chapter by telling a short story:

- You may not have heard the story about the boy who rubbed a bottle and a genie came out. "Okay," the genie said. "What's your wish?" The boy said, "I want all girls to love me," and the boy immediately turned into a puppy!
- Sometimes we are hoping for one gift and we get something different. That can be disappointing, or it can be very exciting. Has anyone ever expected to receive a particular gift but received something quite different? *(Allow for volunteers to share, or provide an example of your own.)*
- God promised King David that his kingdom would last forever. David thought God was referring to an earthly kingdom, but God had something much greater in mind: the Kingdom of God!

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 258–259 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section "God's Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David (last two paragraphs)" on the handout "Chapter 3 Reading Guide."

- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following points:
 1. As with Abraham, God made a covenant with King David that he would have many descendants. One of those descendants was Jesus Christ.
 2. God also promised David that his kingdom would last forever, but David's earthly kingdom did not last forever.
 3. David's kingdom will last forever through the Kingdom of God, established by David's descendant, Jesus Christ.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

A Thankful Heart Gives Willingly

Objective: The students will learn that David's desire to build a temple was motivated by his gratitude for God's gifts.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - God entered into a special relationship with David in which he blessed David abundantly and promised to continue to do so. In response to God's great generosity, David wanted to build a temple for God. God appreciated David's thoughtfulness and generous heart but told David that David's son would build the temple instead.
2. **Distribute** the Bibles, and instruct the students to find 1 Chronicles 17:1–15. Invite the students to take turns reading the passage aloud.
3. **Ask** the students to form pairs, and then ask the pairs to make a list of all those things mentioned in the passage about what God has done, is doing, or will do for David.
4. **Invite** the pairs to share their lists with the class.
5. **Direct** the students to imagine that the prophet Nathan came to them with a message from God. What would Nathan say to remind them about what God has done for them? Ask them to make a list of all the things God has done for them, including material, social, family, or spiritual blessings.
6. **Conclude** by asking the students to discuss the following questions:
 - David wanted to honor God by building him a temple so the people could worship him together. What are some ways we as individuals can honor God and thank him for his blessings?
 - What can we do together as a community to honor God and thank him for his blessings? How does belonging to the Church help us to do this?

Optional Activities: "The Breakthrough! Connection" (5 minutes) and "Earthly Kingdoms and the Kingdom of God" (20 minutes), page 80

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

Ask volunteers to respond to the following questions.

- Why did David want to build a temple for God?
- What does God promise David, and how did David misunderstand God?
- How did God's promise to David that David's kingdom would not end come to be fulfilled?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 65.

DAY 4

Student Book

"The New Covenant" to end of chapter, pages 259–261

Core Understanding

Through Jesus Christ, God establishes a new and everlasting covenant with the human race.

Materials Needed

- ☐ "Chapter 3 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)
- ☐ Bibles, one for each student
- ☐ copies of the handout "Chapter 3 Quiz," pages 85–86, one for each student

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 65.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Read** prayerfully this section of Eucharistic Prayer IV from the *Roman Missal*. Ask the students to listen carefully for any language describing covenants:
 - We give you praise, Father most holy, / for you are great /and you have fashioned all your works / in wisdom and in love. / You formed man in your own image / and entrusted the whole world to his care, / so that in serving you alone, the Creator, / he might have dominion over all creatures. / And when through disobedience he had lost your friendship, / you did not abandon him to the domain of death. / For you came in mercy to the aid of all, / so that those who seek you might find you. / Time and time again you offered them covenants / and through the prophets / taught them to look forward to salvation.
 - And you so loved the world, Father most holy, / that in the fullness of time / you sent your Only Begotten Son to be our Savior. / Made incarnate by the Holy Spirit / and born of the Virgin Mary, / he shared our human nature / in all things but sin. /To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation, / to prisoners, freedom, / and to the sorrowful of heart, joy. / To accomplish your plan, / he gave himself up to death, / and, rising from the dead, / he destroyed death and restored life.
2. **Ask** for volunteers to share any references to covenants they heard. Then tell the students you are going to read the prayer a second time. This time ask them to listen for the parts that describe how the covenants with Noah, Abraham, and David were completed. Who completed them?
3. **Invite** volunteers to share what they heard. Why might this be called the "New Covenant"?

Core Content (10 minutes)



Review pages 259–261 in the student book, using one of the following options or another one of your choosing:

- **Reading Guide Option:** Ask the students to read the student book pages and to complete the section “The New Covenant” on the handout “Chapter 3 Reading Guide.” When the students finish, collect and grade the handout.
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. When humans have gone astray, God has sent prophets to guide us.
 2. Through God’s Son, Jesus Christ, God established an eternal covenant that was the fulfillment of the covenants God made with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. It is sometimes called the New Covenant.
 3. The Good News that God’s promise of salvation was fulfilled in Jesus Christ continues to be preached by the Church until Christ returns.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

The New Covenant

Objective: To discover the meaning of the New Covenant through discussion of passages in Scripture.

1. **Share** the following with the students, using these or similar words:
 - Throughout the Old and New Testaments, there are hints about the way God will fulfill the covenants he made in the Old Testament and extend the promises of those covenants with all people. We are going to do a Scripture search to see what some of those passages tell us about the New Covenant.
2. **Write** the following passages on the board:
 - Romans 6:23
 - Jeremiah 31:31–33
 - John 3:16
 - Matthew 5:17
 - Luke 22:20
 - Hebrews 9:15
3. **Distribute** the Bibles, and arrange the students into groups of six. Each group member is to look up one of the passages and write it down. The group members are then to read their passages to the group in the order listed on the board. The final step is for the group to create a summary statement about the New Covenant informed by the ideas or statements found in the Scripture passages.
4. **Conclude** by inviting each group to share their summary statement with the class.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the summaries for credit or grading.

Optional Activity: “Covenant People” (40 minutes), page 81



Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Distribute** the handout “Chapter 3 Quiz,” and allow the students time to complete it.
2. **Collect** the quizzes for grading.



Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 65.

Optional Activities

DAY 1

Keeping the Covenant with God (15 minutes)

Objective: To give the students an opportunity to reflect on their own relationship and commitment to Christian discipleship, and then to make a commitment to seeking a stronger relationship with God.

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - God desires to enter into a relationship with each one of us. Like our relationships with our family, friends, teachers, and coaches, sometimes we do a better job in our relationship with God than at other times. This activity provides you with an opportunity to think seriously about your relationship with God. What are your commitments in your relationship with God? What are some things you can work on?
2. **Direct** the students to read “Living the Gospel” on page 256 in the student book. Ask them to write answers to the questions. Encourage them to take their time and to answer as seriously as they can.
3. **Conclude** by asking the students to share some of their promises and commitments to God, and ask the students to give themselves a grade on how well they’ve been doing!



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.

DAY 2**Hey, God . . . Call** (15 minutes)

Objective: To open the students up to hearing God's call by specifically asking God to speak to them and guide them.

Materials Needed

- ☐ sheets of stationery, one for each student
- ☐ markers or crayons
- ☐ soft, instrumental music
- ☐ a candle and matches (or an LED candle)
- ☐ a prayer table
- ☐ envelopes, one for each student (*optional*)

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:

- When we are baptized, we enter into an eternal covenant with God, and at Confirmation that covenant is confirmed and strengthened. This covenant relationship we have with God means that we should be open to what God is calling us to do in our lives. Sometimes, however, we are so busy answering other people's call—those of our parents, teachers, coaches, and families—that we don't take time to think about what God is calling us to be and encouraging us to do.

2. **Distribute** the stationery, envelopes, and markers or crayons. Play some soft, instrumental music, light the candle, and tell the students that this is their opportunity to invite God into their busy lives. They are to write a prayerful letter to God, asking for guidance in their lives. They can include some challenges that they're facing, give thanks for good things in their lives, and write a promise to do their best to respond to God's call. Tell the students that no one else will see the letters they write.3. **Give** the students time to write their letters, and allow them to decorate them.4. **Conclude** by having the students place their letters on the prayer table and return quietly to their seats, reminding them to be open to hearing God's response through family, friends, teachers, or directly from God in their hearts.**Teaching Tip**

Consider having the students put their letters in envelopes and write their names on the envelopes. After several weeks, return their envelopes to them during a prayer time. Ask them to reflect on how they have experienced God's call since they wrote the letters.

DAY 3**Materials Needed**

- ☐ copies of *Breakthrough!*, one for each student

The Breakthrough! Connection (5 minutes)

Users of *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics* may want to note “Study It!” at 2 Samuel 7:12–29. It explains the meaning of God’s message to David about an eternal kingdom, fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It also explains the origin of the symbolic name for Jesus as Root of Jesse.

Chapter 3**Materials Needed**

- ☐ a Bible
- ☐ poster board, one sheet for each small group of three or four
- ☐ sets of markers, one for each small group of three or four

Earthly Kingdoms and the Kingdom of God (20 minutes)

Objective: To help the students make the distinction between the earthly kingdom of David and the eternal Kingdom of God.

1. **Ask** the students the following questions:
 - Which lasts longer, earthly kingdoms or the Kingdom of God? (*the Kingdom of God*)
 - Which is better, earthly kingdoms or the Kingdom of God? Why?
 - Which is more beautiful, earthly kingdoms or the Kingdom of God? Why?
 - Which would you rather live in, earthly kingdoms or the Kingdom of God? Why?
2. **Find** and read aloud Revelation 21:1–4 to the class. Share the following in these or similar words:
 - Earthly realities are good—but they are only a foretaste of the better reality yet to come as we just read in the Book of Revelation. If anything is good here, it’s better in Heaven with the fullness of life, love, and goodness that is God.
3. **Arrange** the students into groups of three or four. Give each group a sheet of poster board and a set of markers. Instruct them to divide the poster board in two. On the left, they are to write “Earthly Kingdom,” and on the right “Kingdom of God.” On the left, they should draw images of the best that this life has to offer and what makes it great. On the right, they should portray their idea of the Kingdom of God, inspired by the reading from Revelation and their own imagination.
4. **Invite** the students to share their kingdoms with the class.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the posters for credit or grading.

DAY 4**Covenant People** (40 minutes)

Objective: To highlight the positive aspects of covenant relationships with family, friends, and God.

Materials Needed

- ☐ digital presentation tools
- ☐ digital recording tools
(optional)



1. **Tell** the students in these or similar words:
 - Covenants in the Bible are not just contracts. They aren't just promising something so that you get something. Covenants are about loving relationships. They are promises made by God to stay in loving relationship with us and promises made by us to stay in loving relationship with God and other human beings. Are you in a covenant relationship with others? How are you in a covenant relationship with others?
2. **Ask** the students to create a digital presentation, either individually or in small groups, on the concept of "covenant relationships." Their presentation should illustrate what it means to be in a covenant relationship with significant people and with God. It should illustrate the qualities of the relationship and the promises made in such relationships. These relationships can be with family members, friends, and especially with God.
3. **Invite** them to illustrate their presentation with photos and words as necessary. They must also narrate their presentation to explain the meaning of the images. This narration can be recorded as part of the presentation, or they can deliver it live.
4. **Direct** the students to share their presentations when they are ready.



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the presentations for credit or grading.



Chapter Project

Covenant Chart

Materials Needed

- ☐ poster board, one sheet for each student or each small group
- ☐ magazines with pictures of people and nature
- ☐ several pairs of scissors
- ☐ several bottles of glue
- ☐ internet access *(optional)*
- ☐ digital presentation tools *(optional)*

Objective: To help the students clarify and organize, in a visual way, their knowledge of the covenants of the Old and New Testaments.

1. **Explain** to the students that for this project, they will find images throughout the week that illustrate the covenants covered in this chapter. They will need to be creative in using symbols and metaphors to illustrate the important aspects of the covenant described in the text. They will cut out the images they find and glue them to poster board to create a covenant chart showing the development of the covenants through the Old and New Testament. *(You may choose to use one sheet of poster board for the entire group, one for each student, or one for each small group of students.)*
2. **Distribute** the art materials, and direct the students to write "Covenant Chart" at the top of the poster board. Then have them write the names of the covenants along the bottom of the chart (i.e., Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and New Covenant). Then, above the names, they are to glue and label the images displaying the different covenants. At the end of the week, display the poster(s) in a prominent place in your school or parish.



Digital Option: Have the students create digital covenant charts using images they searched for on the internet. They could also add music to accompany the images in their presentations.

Name _____

Chapter 3 Reading Guide

Introduction and God Gives Second Chances

Complete the sentences.

1. _____ is an extremely important part of life.
2. The most important promises are the ones between _____ and _____.
3. _____ are sacred agreements between God and human beings.
4. Sacred Tradition teaches us that in the Genesis account, the snake represents _____.
5. Tradition teaches us that the offspring of the woman is _____.
6. The Bible identifies the _____ as the symbol of the covenant between God and Noah and all living beings.

God's Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David (first four paragraphs)

Read the words and phrases in the word bank. Write the letter of the word or phrase that completes each sentence in the space provided before each number.

- _____ 1. God promised to give _____ land and many descendants, who would be a blessing to all people.
- _____ 2. Abraham's many descendants became God's _____, the Israelites.
- _____ 3. God called _____ to lead the Israelites to freedom.
- _____ 4. The _____ summarize the Law Moses received and brought to the Israelites.

- a. Moses
- b. Abraham
- c. Ten Commandments
- d. Chosen People



God's Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David (last two paragraphs)

Complete the sentences.

1. God promised David that his throne would last _____.
2. After nineteen of David's descendants ruled as kings of Israel, the kingdom was _____ by the Babylonians.
3. A descendant of David would _____ again sit on the throne in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel.
4. But Scripture and Tradition teach us that God's covenant with David was not about an earthly kingdom but about the _____ Kingdom of God.
5. Jesus Christ was a _____ of David and established the Kingdom of God, fulfilling all the covenants in the Old Testament.

The New Covenant

Complete the sentences.

1. All through history, God has been faithful to his promise of _____.
2. When human beings have gone astray, God has sent his _____ to guide us.
3. Through God's Son, Jesus Christ, God established the _____.
4. The New Covenant is really the _____ of the covenants God made with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.
5. Jesus gave his _____ the power to carry on his _____.
6. The Holy Spirit continues to _____ the _____ and will do so until _____.



Name _____

Chapter 3 Quiz

Multiple Choice

Write the letter of the best answer in the space provided before each number.

- _____ 1. _____ are sacred agreements between God and human beings.
a. Holy Orders
b. Covenants
c. Promises
- _____ 2. Sacred Tradition teaches that the snake in Genesis represents _____, the fallen angel who is always looking for ways to tempt us to disobey God.
a. Judas
b. Satan
c. reptiles
- _____ 3. The name we use for Abraham's many descendants is _____.
a. Canaanites
b. Apostles
c. Chosen People
- _____ 4. _____ confronted Pharaoh and led God's people out of Egypt.
a. Abraham
b. Moses
c. David
- _____ 5. God made a covenant with _____ and all living things and promised to never again destroy the Earth.
a. Abraham
b. David
c. Noah



Fill in the Blank

Read the words and phrases in the word bank. Write the letter of the word or phrase that completes each sentence in the space provided before each number.

- _____ 6. The _____ summarize the law given to Moses by God.
- _____ 7. The _____ is really the fulfillment of the covenants God made with Abraham, Moses, David, and Noah.
- _____ 8. The _____ continues to guide the Church and will do so until Christ returns.
- _____ 9. The Bible identifies the _____ as a symbol of the covenant with Noah.
- _____ 10. God promised _____ a kingdom that will never end.

- a. Holy Spirit
- b. David
- c. Ten Commandments
- d. rainbow
- e. New Covenant



Chapter 3 Answer Keys

Chapter 3 Reading Guide

God Gives Second Chances

1. Trust
2. God, people
3. Covenants
4. Satan
5. Jesus Christ
6. rainbow

God's Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David (first four paragraphs)

1. b
2. d
3. a
4. c

God's Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David (last two paragraphs)

1. forever
2. conquered
3. never
4. eternal
5. descendant

The New Covenant

1. salvation
2. prophets
3. Covenant forever
4. fulfillment
5. Apostles, mission
6. guide, Church, Christ returns

Chapter 3 Quiz

Multiple Choice

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. b
5. c

Fill in the Blank

6. c
7. e
8. a
9. d
10. b

