

INSPIRE!

Touching hearts. Igniting joy.





-SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

what's inside

ARTICLES

12

OVERVIEW OF CATHOLIC
SOCIAL TEACHING

20

REFRAMING
THE HOLIDAYS

REFLECTIONS

6

LOOK AROUND!

26

STEP OUT IN LOVE!

ACTIVITIES

11

THE PROPHET ISAIAH

16

TURN BACK TO GOD

19

THE WORK OF JOHN
THE BAPTIST

24

ADVENT
PRAYER CHAIN

30

BALLOON
THANK-YOUS

35

A KINGDOM WHERE
ALL ARE FRIENDS

36

SAINT
FRANCIS XAVIER

38

ANSWER KEY: THE
PROPHET ISAIAH

39

ANSWER KEY: JOHN
THE BAPTIST

The Catholic Children's BIBLE



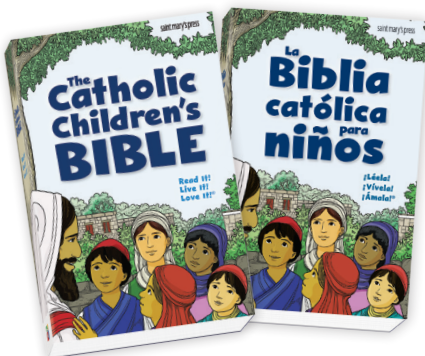
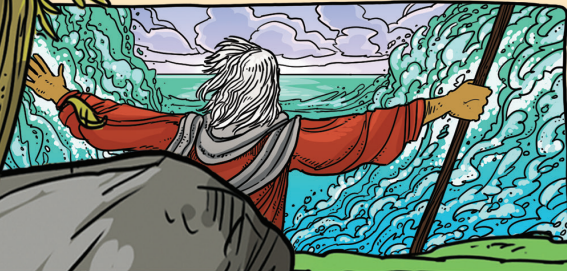
Understand It!



Live It!



Tell It!



The Catholic Children's Bible is the first complete Bible that empowers kids to read, learn, and love the Word of God!

Learn more at smp.org/ccb



saint mary's press
touching hearts. enlivening minds.

ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

Saint Mary's Press is a non-profit, Lasallian Catholic publisher administered by the Christian Brothers of the Midwest District. Our focus is a contemporary expression of the Catholic Church's mission to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Lasallian mission to provide a human and Christian education for young people, including those who are economically deprived. With our partners in schools, parishes, and families, we share the Good News of Jesus Christ with children and young people through publications and services.

CONTRIBUTORS

Joanna Dailey, Steven Ellair, Jill Johnson, Sigrid Lindholm, Julie Mickler, Laurie Ziliak



@SaintMarysPress



Saint Mary's Press



Saint Mary's Press

Copyright © 2020 by Saint Mary's Press, Christian Brothers Publications, 702 Terrace Heights, Winona, MN 55987-1320, www.smp.org. All rights reserved. Permission is granted to reproduce the materials intended for distribution to the children. No other part of this magazine may be reproduced by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

Images: © Shutterstock / iStock.com

from the editor



Advent and Christmas will feel different this year, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many continue to mourn the loss of loved ones, usual activities, or former ways of life. Our school and parish practices have changed, and we find ourselves continuing to negotiate a "new normal."

Advent—the journey from darkness to light—provides the perfect metaphor for

moving forward. And focusing on Catholic social teaching during Advent can bring a renewed sense of purpose that is much needed during these difficult times. Catholic social teaching continues to ask us to look outward and see others in need, and to respond to that need with our love and care.

This issue of *Inspire!* provides activities and materials for Advent reflection, and calls children to greater awareness of others by emphasizing Catholic social teaching. The overall focus seeks to cultivate a spirit of giving and thanksgiving. Prayer services, coloring pages, and activities all serve to invite positive reflection on the current reality and to recognize the needs of others. Activities also rely heavily on Advent themes and Scripture, allowing for greater connection to the worshipping community.

The "new normal" ranges in practice from region to region, school to school, parish to parish. Some are gathering in person, others are online, and others are working within a hybrid structure. It is our great hope here at Saint Mary's Press that the materials in this issue can be used or adapted to create meaningful experiences no matter your current reality.

Know of our continued prayers and admiration as you work to navigate the current climate to meet the needs of the children entrusted to you. We at Saint Mary's Press are blessed to be part of your journey!

Live Jesus in our hearts . . . forever!

Steven Ellair




LOOK AROUND!

by Laurie Ziliak

As we near the end of 2020, it's hard not to reflect on what a challenging year it has been.

Much has been lost, and as we moved from spring to summer to fall, it became clear that none of us would see a return to life as we knew it, at least not any time soon.

My classroom experiences have highlighted this reality. The teaching life I once knew is gone, at least as far as I can see. Online or remote teaching has become much more prevalent, and any classroom interaction needs to include as much consideration for safety and community-building as for content.



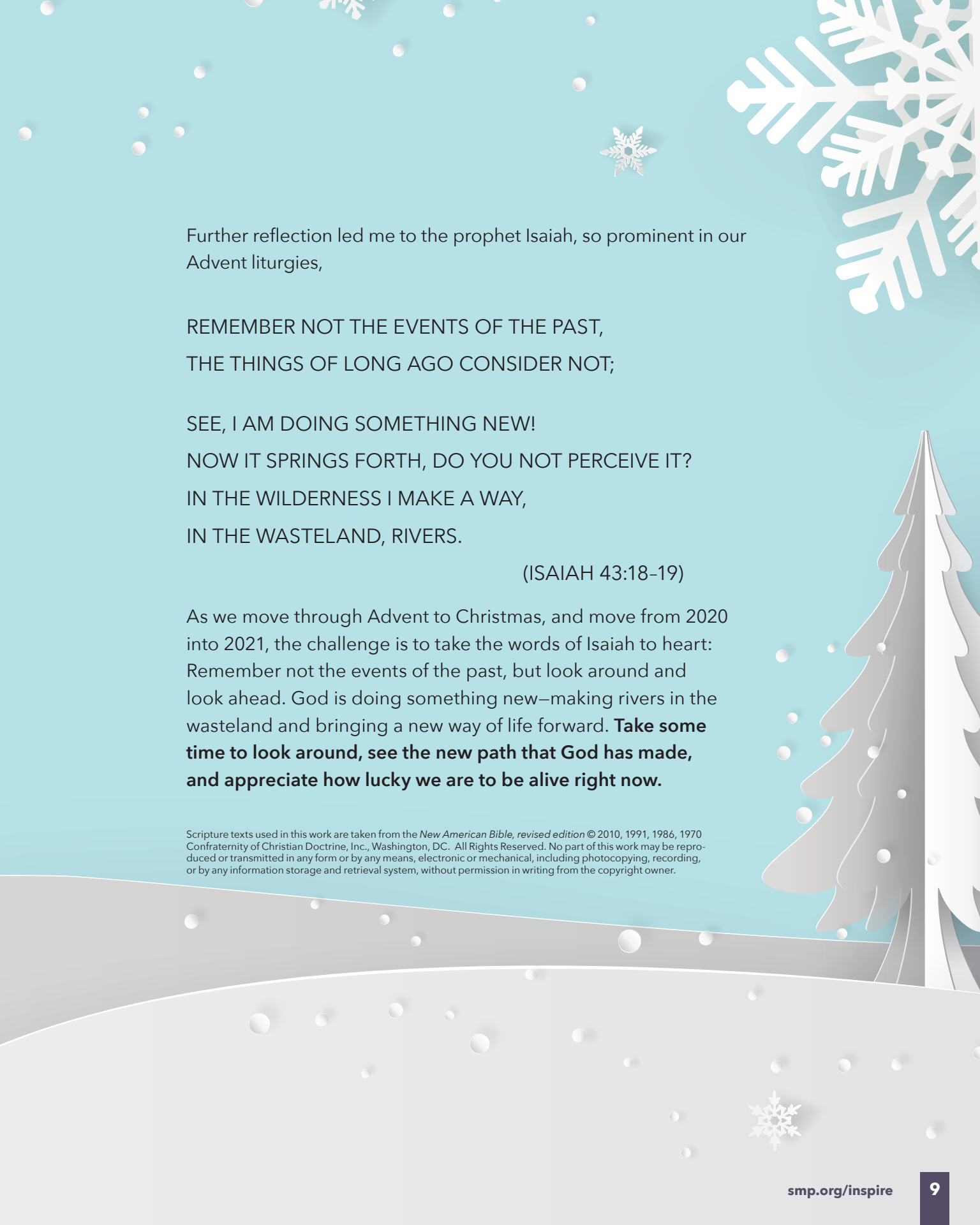
As I was reflecting on the changes that have taken place since March, I found myself—as I have many times in the past eight months—angry, and mourning all that has changed and been lost. While in this space, a song from the musical *Hamilton* popped into my head with the lyrics, **“Look around, look around at how lucky we are to be alive right now!”** (from the song “The Schuyler Sisters”). My initial reaction was that of cynicism. I wasn’t feeling very lucky and would much rather have life look like it did one year ago.



But I took the lyrics to heart and looked for all the positives around me. **The more I looked for the positive, for the ways I am lucky, the more I saw.**

I have had to be more intentional about connecting with my extended family, and as a result, have spent more distant but focused time with them. The same is true for teaching. Although I'd rather not have to adjust to the changes, I am lucky not only to have a job but to have a job that allows me to continue to work and interact with young people. My time with students is less, but I am able to virtually meet with them one-on-one and get to know them in ways I wasn't able to before.





Further reflection led me to the prophet Isaiah, so prominent in our Advent liturgies,

REMEMBER NOT THE EVENTS OF THE PAST,
THE THINGS OF LONG AGO CONSIDER NOT;

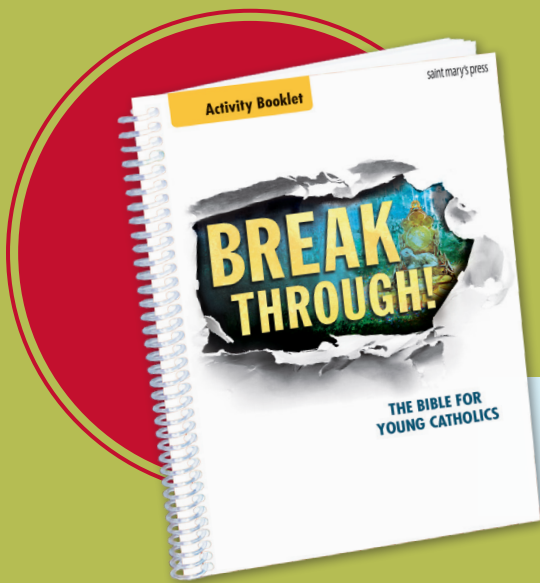
SEE, I AM DOING SOMETHING NEW!
NOW IT SPRINGS FORTH, DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT?
IN THE WILDERNESS I MAKE A WAY,
IN THE WASTELAND, RIVERS.

(ISAIAH 43:18-19)

As we move through Advent to Christmas, and move from 2020 into 2021, the challenge is to take the words of Isaiah to heart: Remember not the events of the past, but look around and look ahead. God is doing something new—making rivers in the wasteland and bringing a new way of life forward. **Take some time to look around, see the new path that God has made, and appreciate how lucky we are to be alive right now.**

Scripture texts used in this work are taken from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

TRY THIS!



This activity is taken from
*"Breakthrough! The Bible for
Young Catholics" Activity Booklet.*

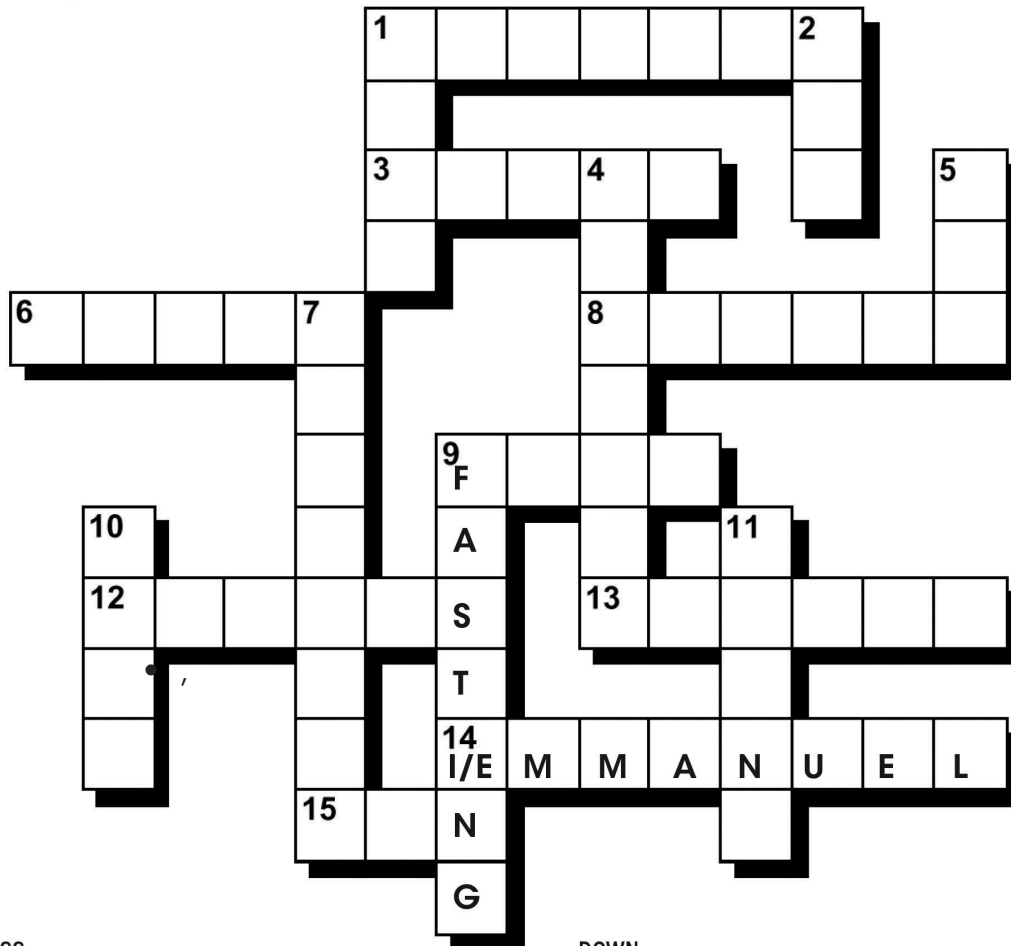
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
BREAKTHROUGH!
AND ITS COMPONENTS,

visit smp.org/breakthrough

Answers: see page 40

THE PROPHET ISAIAH

Complete the puzzle, using the chapter and verses from the Book of Isaiah, found in the *Breakthrough Bible*, indicated after each clue.




ACROSS

- 1 Isaiah said the ___ were misleading the people. (3:12)
- 3 Isaiah told of a child who would be born and would be called the Prince of ___. (9:5-6)
- 6 Isaiah spoke of new heavens and the new ___. (66:22)
- 8 God's love is compared to the love of a ___. (49:14-15)
- 9 Isaiah told the people that offering ___ to the hungry pleases God. (58:10)
- 12 Those who trust in the Lord and wait for him to save them will be taken up on ___ wings. (40:31)
- 13 The Lord appeared on a ___ to Isaiah. (6:1)
- 14 Isaiah told of a woman who would have a child and name him ___. (starts with an I in some translations) (7:14)
- 15 The name of Isaiah's ___ was a prediction of what was to happen to Samaria. (8:3-4)

DOWN

- 1 An angel touched Isaiah's ___ with a burning coal or ember. (6:6-7)
- 2 In a vision, Isaiah saw flaming creatures with this number of wings. (6:2)
- 4 God told Isaiah to ___ his people. (40:1)
- 5 Isaiah said there would come a time when nations would no longer go to ___. (2:4)
- 7 Isaiah preached that God wanted the people to help the ___. (58:7)
- 9 Isaiah told the people what true ___ is. (58:1-7)
- 10 Isaiah replied to the Lord, "___ me!" (6:8)
- 11 Isaiah accused the people of spending time getting ___. (5:11)



Overview of Catholic Social Teaching

In the Sacrament of Baptism, we are urged to keep the light of Christ alive in our hearts for the rest of our lives. We are called to holiness. Though this may seem like a tall order, when we live lives that focus on loving God, ourselves, others, and creation itself, we move in the direction of lifelong holiness.

The Catholic Church has a rich history of social teaching that helps us live positive, meaningful, and holy lives through an understanding of our relationship and responsibility to others. This teaching has guided the lives of Christians since the beginning of the Church. Modern Catholic social teaching has been addressed and explained in Church documents since the 1800s. **Catholic social teaching promotes our Catholic identity and helps ensure that we treat those around us and our environment with dignity and respect.** It gives us the guidance to live our faith and navigate our modern world.

Some of the key themes of Catholic social teaching have been highlighted as general themes or principles. These principles challenge us globally—to view the world as one family and to work for justice and peace. They also challenge us locally. We are called to apply these principles daily in our encounters with people, in forming our opinions regarding current events, and in our willingness to give our time and money to those in need.

**THE FOLLOWING ARE SEVEN
OF THE KEY PRINCIPLES OF
CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING:**



**1 LIFE AND DIGNITY
OF THE HUMAN PERSON**

This first principle is the foundation for the others. We cannot practice the other principles without fully embracing this one. This principle seems simple, but it is extremely complex. It states that **every life is sacred, and every person has dignity**. The challenge to this principle is to comprehend that there are not degrees of sacredness and degrees of dignity. No one life is more valuable than another; every life is significant. An incarcerated person has just as much dignity as a priest or a bishop. An elderly person's life is just as sacred as an infant's. Every person is a child of God, and every person is precious.



**2 CALL TO FAMILY,
COMMUNITY, AND
PARTICIPATION**

Catholics are communal, and this principle reminds us that we cannot live in isolation. The first and most important community is family; we are called to strengthen and protect families. **By participating in our communities, we can work on social issues** and ensure that laws and policies benefit the common good.



**3 RIGHTS AND
RESPONSIBILITIES**

We must work to have all human rights protected. **Every person has rights, such as the right to life, food, shelter, and work**. Everyone has economic, political, and cultural rights. Along with these rights comes the responsibility to help others in our society and to protect and safeguard the rights of others.



4 OPTION FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE

Jesus focused on those in most need—the disabled, the diseased, and the outcast. His concern for their welfare was a sign of the coming of the Kingdom of God among us. This principle encourages us to look for those who might need our help. The Catholic Church teaches that **by celebrating the Eucharist, the sacrament of unity, we commit ourselves to concern for those who are poor and in need.**



5 THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS

All occupations are valuable and should be respected. Workers have a right to fair wages and to safe working conditions. Workers have a right to join unions. This principle especially speaks to our responsibility as consumers. Who makes the products we purchase? Where are they produced? What are the working conditions of those who produce them? Expanding our knowledge as responsible consumers means that we can use our consumer power to better the lives of workers around the globe.



6 SOLIDARITY

As one family, we have a commitment to one another. Regardless of culture, race, or social status, we are called to be nonjudgmental in our support for one another. This principle reminds us that we are not to participate in groups that set one side against another. We should work to eliminate the “we-they” mentality in our speech and other social communication. Under this principle, **we commit ourselves to seek common solutions to common problems in an atmosphere of respectful dialogue.** Working for peace in a world that is often filled with violence and conflict is at the core of this principle.



7 CARE OF GOD'S CREATION

The Catholic Church deems care for the Earth and all of God's creation essential to our faith. **The responsibility of taking care of the Earth's resources needs to be taken seriously and thoughtfully.** Each day we are faced with choices, large and small, that help sustain our environment or contribute to the abuse of the tremendous gift of God's creation.



One person can dramatically affect the lives of others. Catholic social teaching reminds us that we are called to embrace everyone: the poor, the immigrant, the incarcerated, the unborn, our nosy neighbor, the coworker that irritates us, and those whose opinions differ from our own. **We are called to treat everyone lovingly, as God loves us.** We are also called to use the resources in our environment with careful consideration.

The goal of Catholic social teaching has been articulated in the Church since the beginning: "Love one another" (John 15:17). The principles of Catholic social teaching articulate this love in a precise and measurable way. Together they serve as an "examination of conscience" for the Church today, and they can serve as a beacon of hope for all of human society. In our world today, the principles of Catholic social teaching outline our path toward building a just society and a life of holiness.

This article is taken from the *Online Director's Manual* of the *Discover! Finding Faith in Life* program.

Turn Back to God

An Activity and Liquid Picture Based on Mark 1:1-8

Responding to the Gospel

Background for the Leader

In this Gospel passage, John the Baptist shows us the path to God. In some ways, the path is straightforward: "Turn back to God." When we do that, all our sins will be forgiven. It's that simple. But as we know from our daily life, John's message is much easier said than done. The message of John the Baptist reminds us of two central aspects of faith: We are deeply loved by God, and we are sinners. John's message is a good reminder that although the path may not be easy, it is straightforward. Turn back to God (again and again as necessary in the face of our failings), and the path will be straight.

Activity

- Show the children the image of the two paths from point A to point B. (You could use masking tape to create two paths on the floor of the room. Make one a straight path and one with many twists and turns. Invite the children to walk single file along both paths.)
- Ask the children which path they would take if they wanted to get from Point A to Point B. Invite each child to explain their choice.
- Point out that both paths lead to the same place but provide very different ways of getting there.
- Ask the children which path would be the easiest.
- Tell them that this idea can represent the message of John the Baptist. As believers, we are always able to find our way to God, but it is up to us to identify the path.
- Ask the children to name some things that can make their path to God crooked and to think of ways to get back on the straight path when that happens.
- Tell the children that John the Baptist reminds us that no matter what, we can always take the straight path if we "turn back to God."

The simple message is that John the Baptist tell us that the straightest path can be found in turning back to God.



Reflecting on the Gospel

A Liquid Picture Based on Mark 1:1–8

A liquid picture is a type of Gospel drama that allows a story to be presented in a flowing or liquid manner. A familiar Scripture story is divided into five or six parts. The leader assigns a part to each child and asks the child to create a simple action to represent the part. For a larger group, children can be assigned parts in pairs—one to do the action and one to speak the phrase. If there are older children in the group, the leader may assign one the role of leader.

Proceed as follows:

Children with parts stand with their backs to the rest of the group.

The leader speaks first.

Child 1 turns to face the group, speaks their part while doing their action two or three times (once is not enough for children to remember!), and then freezes.

The group responds by repeating the phrase and the action.

This pattern continues until the last child speaks and the group responds.

The leader speaks the concluding line.

Leader: John the Baptist told everyone . . .

Child 1: Get ready!

Child 2: Follow Jesus!

Child 3: Do kind deeds!

Child 4: Speak kind words!

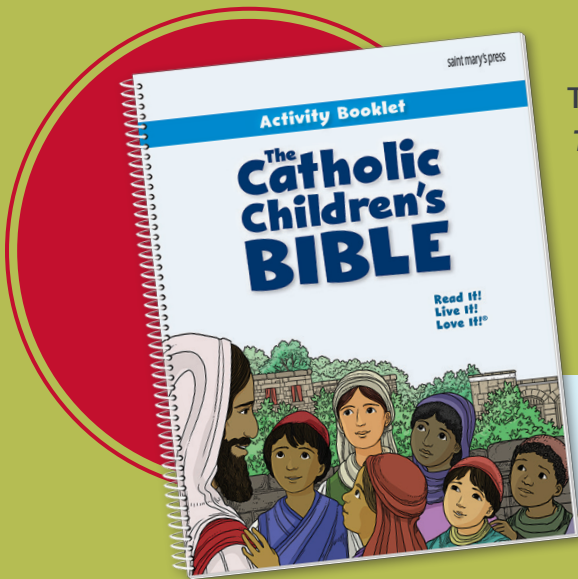
Child 5: Be a peacemaker!

Child 6: Follow Jesus!

Leader: Get the road ready for Jesus!

This activity is adapted from the Second Sunday of Advent as found in *Kids' Liturgy: A Comprehensive Liturgy of the Word*. © 2019 by Saint Mary's Press.

TRY THIS!



This activity is taken from
The Catholic Children's Bible Activity Booklet.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
"THE CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S BIBLE"
AND ITS COMPONENTS,

visit smp.org/ccb

Answers: see page 41

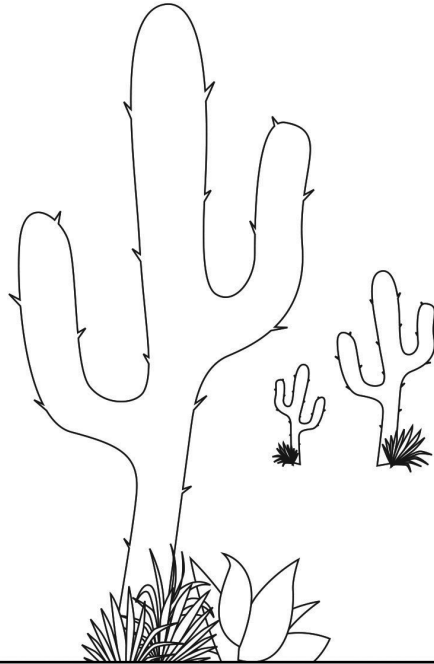
Name: _____

The Work of John the Baptist

Featured Story: John the Baptist Prepares People for Jesus

Find and circle the words listed in the box.
One is done for you.

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



BAPTIZING	HONEY	PREACHING	NEWS
DESERT	JORDAN	SPIRIT	HOLY
GOOD	LOCUSTS	WATER	

Some letters were not circled. Starting at the top left corner, write these extra letters in the correct order on the lines below to find the hidden message. The first four letters of the message are filled in for you. Look in *The Catholic Children's Bible* at Mark 1:4 to help you.

" T U R N _____

_____." (Mark 1:4)



Seek and Find: How many people are gathered at the river at the bottom of the story pages?

This activity is taken from "The Catholic Children's Bible" Activity Booklet © 2013 by Saint Mary's Press.



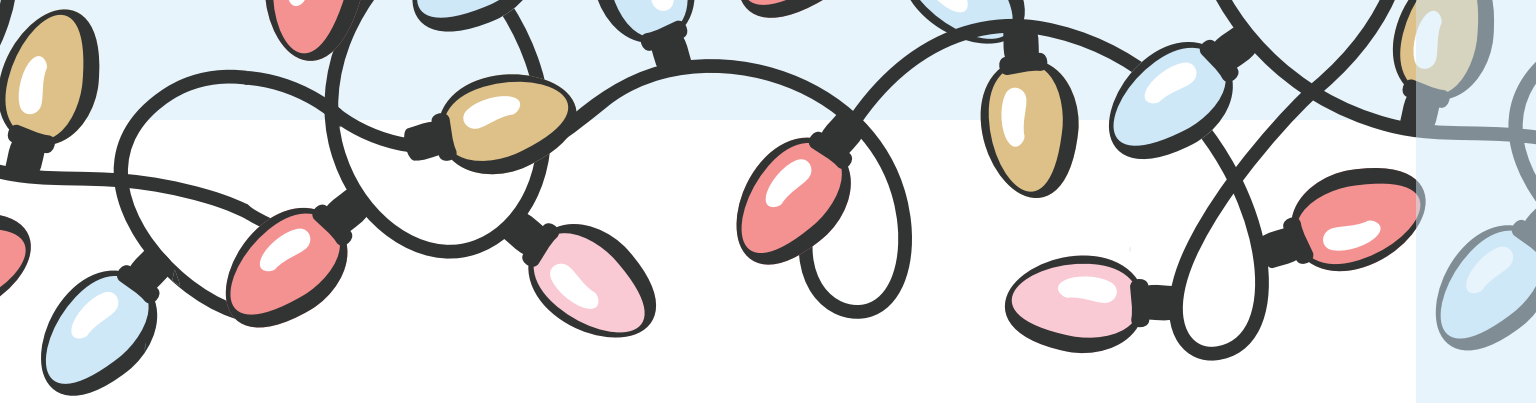
Reframing the Holidays

by Laurie Ziliak

Christmas is just around the corner. This one is bound to be different as families continue to grapple with the impacts of the corona virus crisis. Unemployment remains high, many are facing their first holiday without loved ones, and the overall economic reality continues to have major impacts. Christmas will likely be very different for people around the world.

The cultural celebration of Christmas is largely directed toward children. They are the recipients of gifts, constantly being reminded of the impending arrival of Santa Claus (and how their behavior impacts their presence on the naughty or nice list). Our liturgical life also offers a special nod to children at Christmas. Many liturgies have special additions just for children, such as a Christmas story or a role-play of the Gospel. In some cases, candy canes are even distributed. Children are on the receiving end of Christmas.

Children likely are aware of the changes and challenges faced by their families this year. **Help them reframe Christmas by inviting them to actively create Christmas joy or “bring” Christmas to others this year.** Invite them to be givers and to embrace the spirit of Christmas generosity.

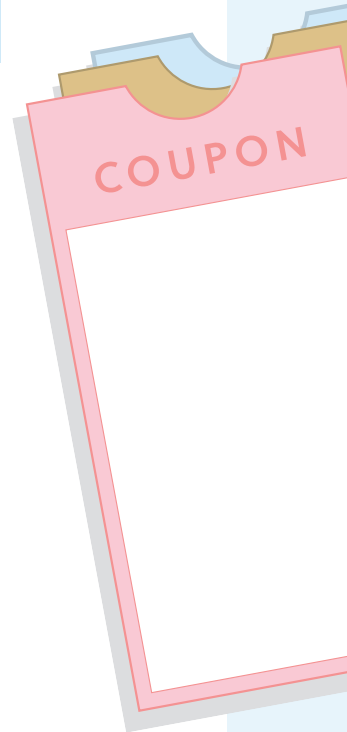


Focus On Giving to Others

Remind children that Christmas is often seen as the season of giving. This is because of the wonderful gift that was given to us at this time—Jesus! Invite the children to explore how they can spread Christmas joy through giving gifts.

Coupon books: Invite children to name five things they can do around the house to help out their families. Have them use those five things to create coupon books for their families and give them as gifts before Christmas. Or invite children to help out, mark the date on the coupon book, and give the “completed” book as a gift.

Gifts of kindness: Invite children to think of a person whom they could spread Christmas joy to and encourage them to send this person a daily note, text, email, or video call.





Pray: Many people are in need of prayer. Ask each child to identify one person or family to pray for each day. Introduce a Christmas prayer project and facilitate daily prayer time for the children to pray for these people, either silently, or by first names only. Encourage the children to continue the daily prayer practice throughout Advent and Christmas. Create paper ornaments with the first names of the people the children will be praying for as reminders.

Reach out: Many in care facilities have faced increased isolation since March. Take on a project to reach out to residents in a local facility. Connect with a local facility to identify names of those most in need of communication, and assign children to one or two specific people in the facility by name (facilitating personal relationships). Invite the children to create cards weekly for their resident(s). Many care facilities have their own closed-circuit TV system. If your local facility has this capability, create a video of your group singing or verbally sending good wishes for the care facility and naming their assigned resident(s) by name.

Celebrate: Many loved ones will be unable to gather this year for the holidays. Invite the children to create a physical representation of those who will not be able to gather by including pictures and prayers for the family. Alternatively, invite the children to create a representation of their family to send to those who will not be able to gather.





Facilitate Creativity

Help the children reorient their sense of gifts away from material possessions by inviting them to reimagine what they might include on their Christmas wish list.

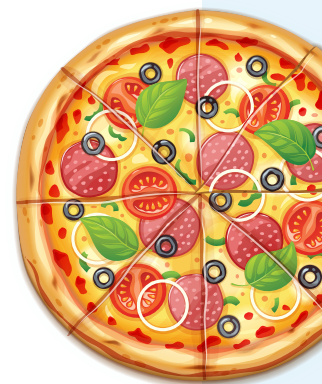
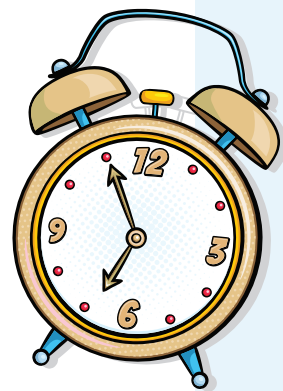
Time: For many families, the gift of unscheduled time can be more significant than material gifts. Invite the children to think about ways their family can spend time together (watching a specific movie together, reading a book aloud, playing a board game, and so forth), and ask for that as a gift.

Baking project: Baking is part of many families' Christmas rituals. Invite the children to think about baking rituals in their family and to ask if they can help this year or learn to make a special family recipe. Encourage them to include a family baking project on their wish list.

Favorite meal: Encourage the children to think about their favorite meal or homemade treat and to replace something material on their list with their favorite meal.

Something to share: Encourage the children to think about a gift they could share with others (maybe a game they can play with a younger sibling, or art materials to allow them to make something for a family member).

To pretend that this Christmas will be a Christmas like others is to do a disservice to children and ourselves. Help the children actively be involved in reframing Christmas, inviting them to be givers this year.



Advent Prayer Chain

MATERIALS NEEDED



strips of purple or pink construction paper, ten for each child



markers or crayons



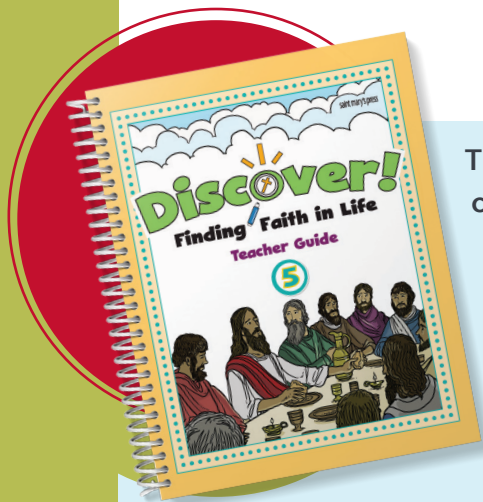
several staplers

1. Explain that praying for others is one way we follow the Prince of Peace, Jesus. Tell the children that Advent is a perfect time to make prayer a priority.
2. Tell the group that today they will make an Advent prayer chain. Explain that the prayer chain will help them count down each day until Christmas but also remind them of people they'd like to pray for.
3. Give each child ten long strips of construction paper. Instruct the children to complete each strip by writing the name of a person for whom they want to pray in a special way during Advent. Tell the children that they can write a description if they don't know the person's name (such as someone they see at church).

4. Have the children staple one strip together so that it forms a circle. Show them how to make a chain by looping a second strip through the first and stapling it into a circle, and so on. Continue until their chains have ten links. Assist each child in adjusting the band to fit comfortably around their head. Then have them tape or staple the ends together.

Process the Activity

- Tell the children that they can continue adding to their Advent prayer chains at home until they have one chain for each day of Advent.
- Lead a discussion as the children work on their prayer chains, asking them where they could keep their chains to remember to pray and count down to Christmas.



This activity is adapted from the Advent chapter of the Grade 5 Teacher Guide in the *Discover! Finding Faith in Life* program.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
DISCOVER! FINDING FAITH IN LIFE
AND ITS COMPONENTS:

ARE YOU AT A PARISH?
SMP.ORG/DISCOVERPARISH

ARE YOU AT A SCHOOL?
SMP.ORG/DISCOVERSCHOOL

Step Out in Love!

by Julie Mickler

Catholic social teaching makes it clear that acts of charity are crucial steps in alleviating immediate suffering for the world's poor. **The Corporal Works of Mercy challenge every person of faith to help provide desperately needed food, drink, and shelter to those in need.** For many who are poor and vulnerable, these resources are necessary for survival.

Catholic schools and parishes sponsor awesome programs that help meet these immediate needs. Food pantries, home-building efforts, clothing drives, donations to global hunger-relief organizations, disaster relief, and canned food drives are just a few examples of the Works of Mercy alive and well in our Catholic communities.



Local and global Catholic organizations also work on our behalf to feed, clothe, and shelter the world's poor. Catholic Charities and Catholic Relief Services have fought tirelessly to alleviate much of the suffering inherent in a life of poverty.

These actions are good and pleasing to God.

But . . . they are not enough.

To truly live out our Christian mandate to serve the poor, we must not only make charitable contributions but also participate in actions for justice.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops calls charity and justice the Two Feet of Love in Action. When we step forward in charity, we offer short-term relief through donations of food, shelter, and clothing. It is that next important step, however, that promotes social change and ultimately provides a long-term solution to the problems of poverty, racism, sexism, environmental destruction, and so on. Actions for justice address the root causes that create injustice.

In the end, it is never enough to simply feed a hungry person. We must ask, "Why are they are naked, hungry, homeless, or oppressed?"

Becoming a person committed to creating a just world can feel overwhelming.

For today, it is enough to grow in awareness and open yourself to being part of the solution—one loving step at a time.



Corporal Works of Mercy

1

Feed the hungry.



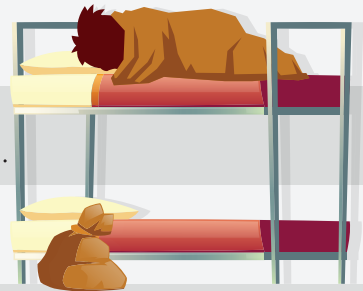
2

Give drink to the thirsty.



3

Shelter the homeless.



4

Visit the sick.



5

Visit the prisoners.



6

Bury the dead.



7

Give alms to the poor.



DONATE



NEW! Middle School Faith Formation



**CATHOLICISM
101**

Harnessing the flexibility of eLearning with meaningful conversations they need

What if there was a way to engage young people's hearts and go deeper into the concepts of faith, while equipping your catechists to lead meaningful, deeper conversations with them, whether in-person or via video call? *Catholicism 101* answers this by first having young people engage in interactive eLearning modules for self-directed learning, which then lead to catechist-led follow-up sessions.



Learn more at smp.org/catholicism101

Balloon Thank-Yous

MATERIALS NEEDED



three or more balloons of different colors
(depending on the size of your group)



blank pieces of paper



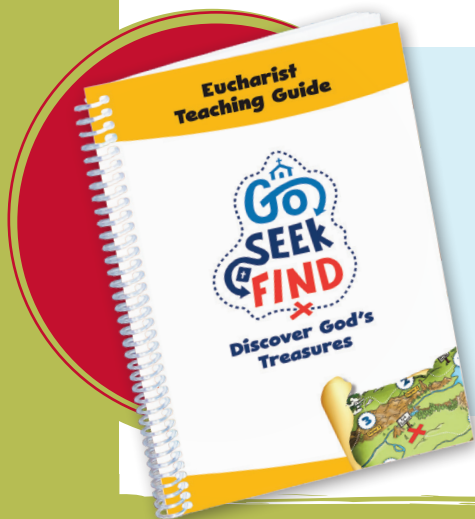
crayons, pencils, or markers

1. Invite the children to take a minute to think of all the things they are thankful for.
2. Blow up three or more balloons of different colors and tie them.
3. Explain to the children that they are going to play a game called "Balloon Thank-Yous." Tell them that you are going to hit the balloons in the air. The goal is to keep the balloons up in the air as long as possible by taking turns hitting them. If a balloon touches the floor, it is out of play. No child can hit the same balloon two times in a row.
4. Tell the children that each time they hit the balloon, they must say something they are thankful for, trying not to say the same thing twice. If they forget to say something, the balloon is taken out of play. They must stay in their seats at all times and can't stand up.

5. Count to three, and hit the balloons to the children. Create excitement by encouraging the children as they strike the balloons, making sure they are naming things they are thankful for as they hit the balloons and try to keep them in play.
6. Time how long it takes until the last balloon goes out of play. If this happens quickly, restart play and encourage the children to try to beat their best time.

Process the Activity

- Invite the children to think about ways the activity shows us how much we have to be thankful to God for. Of course, in real life, we can thank God again and again for the same things.
- Remind the children that telling God we are thankful is important, and it is also important to show our thankfulness and gratitude through our words and actions.



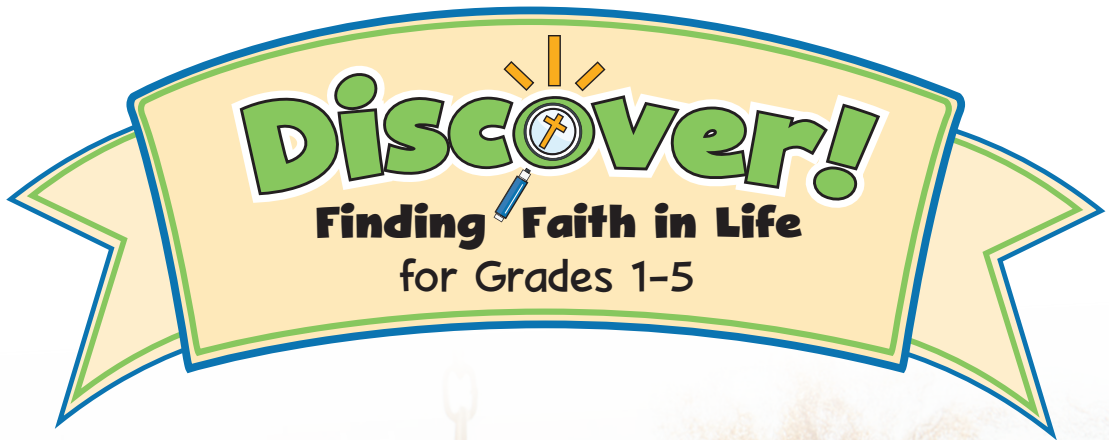
This activity taken from chapter 4 of the *Eucharist Teaching Guide* in the *Go, Seek, Find: Discover God's Treasures* program.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
**GO, SEEK, FIND: DISCOVER GOD'S
TREASURES** AND ITS COMPONENTS:

VISIT SMP.ORG/GOSEEKFIND

Have you discovered *Discover?*

Now including eLearning with every child



Finding Faith in Life?

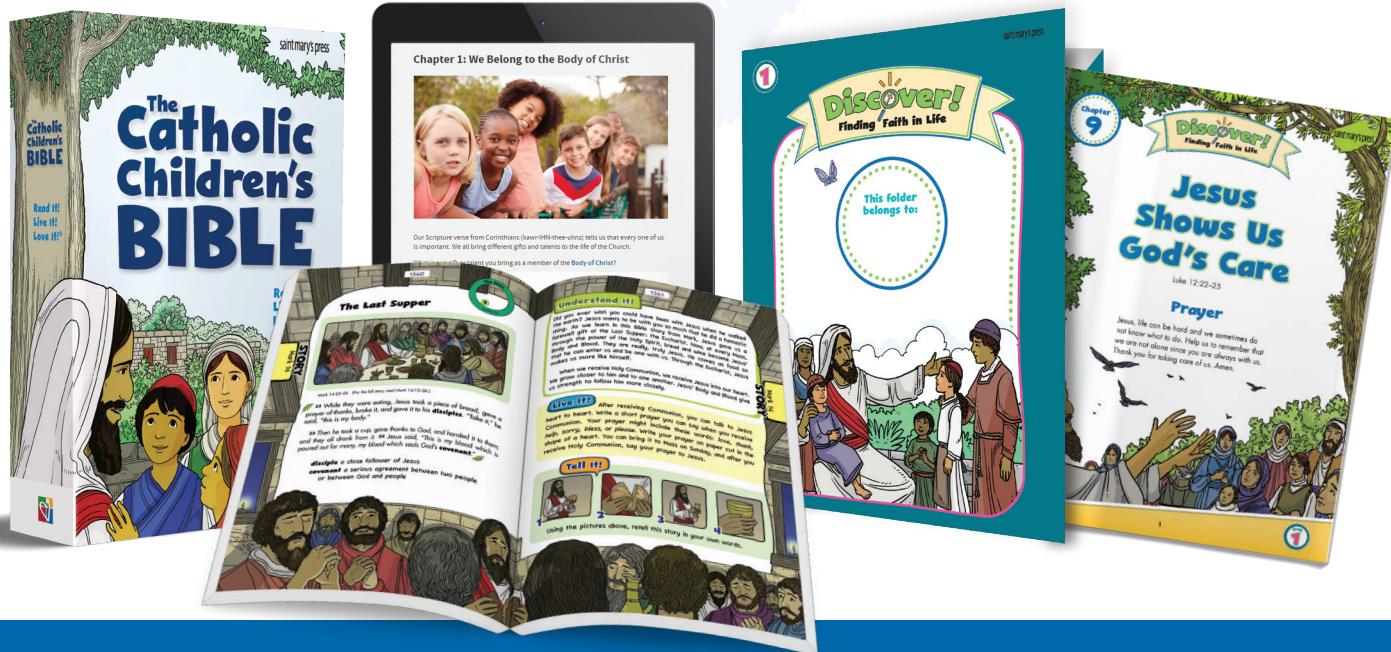
pack ordered!

“It was great getting my kids right into the Bible and learning to read and look up Scripture at a young age. Many small-group leaders reported

Their kids were engaged

and enjoyed the activities and how well they connected to the lesson.”

Kayla, Minnesota

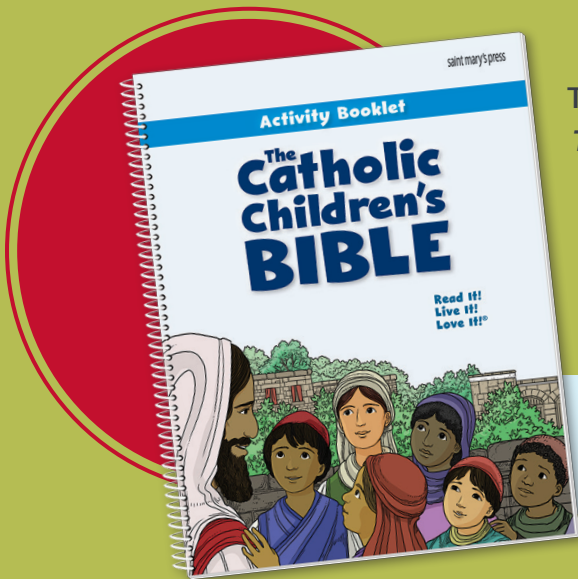


REQUEST A REVIEW

If you're at a school:
smp.org/discover_school_try

If you're at a parish:
smp.org/discover_parish_try

TRY THIS!



This activity is taken from
The Catholic Children's Bible Activity Booklet.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
"THE CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S BIBLE"
AND ITS COMPONENTS,

visit smp.org/ccb

Answer: wolf

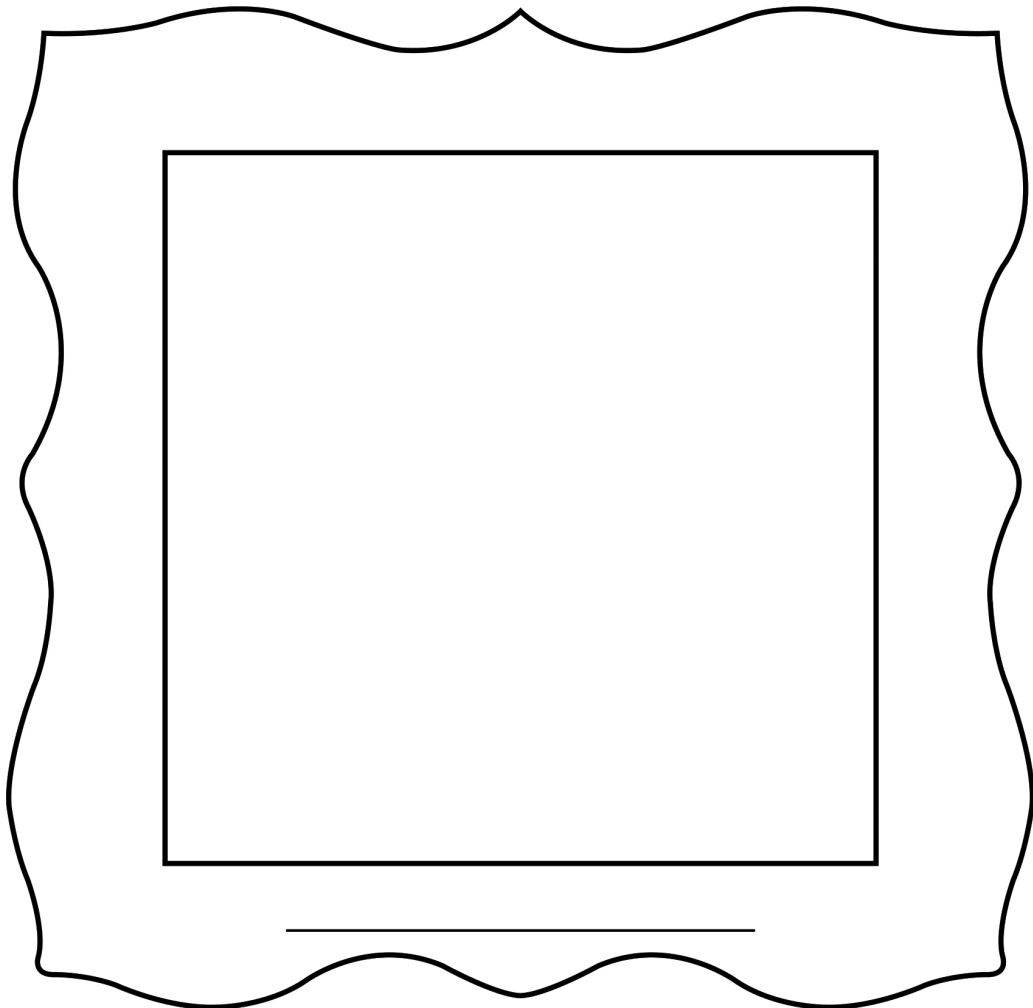
Name: _____

A Kingdom Where All Are Friends

Featured Story: Isaiah Promises a Peaceful Kingdom

(The Catholic Children's Bible, pages 1106-1107)

You may have seen Christmas cards showing children and all kinds of animals at peace together. This is how Isaiah described the Kingdom of the Messiah who brings justice and peace in Isaiah 11:1-9. Draw what a peaceful, safe world means to you. Give your picture a title.



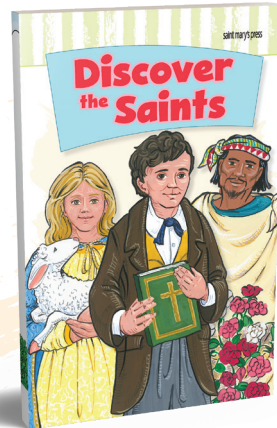
Seek and Find: What animal is lying with the sheep at the top of the story pages?

This activity is taken from "The Catholic Children's Bible" Activity Booklet © 2013 by Saint Mary's Press.

Saint Francis Xavier

(1506-1552)

Tell
everyone
about God's
mercy!



This activity is taken from the
Discover the Saints book.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
DISCOVER THE SAINTS
AND ITS COMPONENTS,

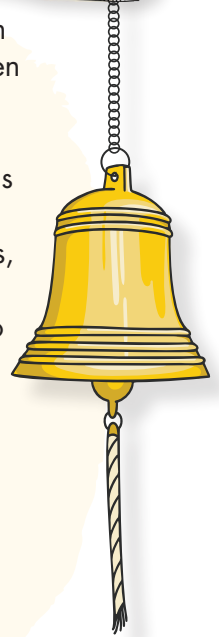
visit smp.org/Discover-the-Saints



Feast Day
December
3


Francis Xavier was born to a well-to-do family in the Kingdom of Navarre (later taken over by Spain) and met Saint Ignatius Loyola when both were studying in Paris. With five other friends, they took religious vows and began the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). Francis was sent to spread the Catholic faith in India when the priest originally chosen for this mission fell ill. When he reached India, Francis began to minister to the sick. Then he reached out to the children as he walked through the streets, ringing a bell to announce his lessons about Jesus. Francis's missionary journeys later took him from India to Japan and Borneo. He was about to enter China when he died on a nearby island.

Francis Xavier is called "Apostle to the Indies" and "Apostle of Japan." Together with Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, he is honored as the patron saint of missionaries.



Prayer

Saint Francis Xavier, pray for me, that I may share my faith, hope, and love with others.



Choose a missionary society or other agency that serves people outside the United States. Write the name of this group here, and write a prayer asking Saint Francis Xavier to pray for the people they serve. If possible, send a donation to this group.

ANSWER KEY

THE PROPHET ISAIAH



"Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics"
Activity Booklet © 2017 by Saint Mary's Press.

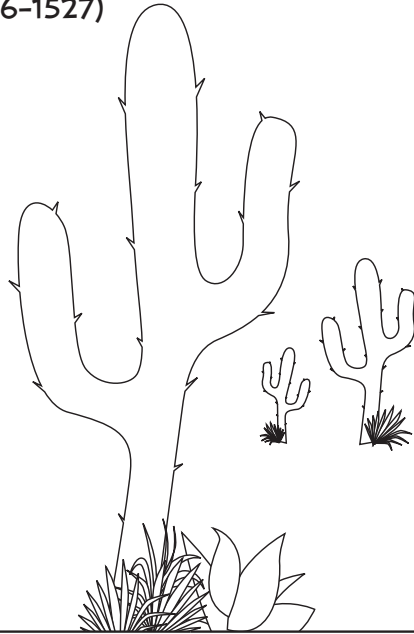
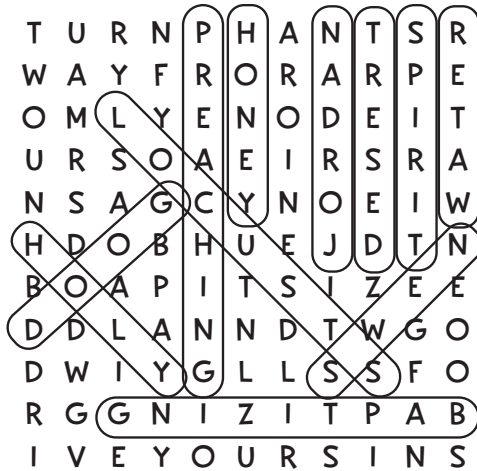
Answer Key

The Work of John the Baptist

Featured Story: John the Baptist Prepares People for Jesus
(*The Catholic Children's Bible*, pages 1526-1527)

Find and circle the words listed in the box.

One is done for you.



BAPTIZING	HONEY	PREACHING	NEWS
DESERT	JORDAN	SPIRIT	HOLY
GOOD	LOCUSTS	WATER	

Some letters were not circled. Starting at the top left corner, write these extra letters in the correct order on the lines below to find the hidden message. The first four letters of the message are filled in for you. Look in *The Catholic Children's Bible* at Mark 1:4 to help you.

" T U R N A W A Y F R O M Y O U R
S I N S A N D B E B A P T I Z E D ,
A N D G O D W I L L
F O R G I V E Y O U R S I N S ." (Mark 1:4)



Seek and Find: How many people are gathered at the river at the bottom of the story pages? **18 on shore, plus 1 in water**

Featured Story 24, Level 2



saint mary's press

touching hearts. enlivening minds.

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Rochester, MN
Permit 289

702 Terrace Heights
Winona, MN 55987

Customer No.

Mail Code
VOLUME6



LOOK
AROUND!

page 6

REFRAMING THE
HOLIDAYS

page 20

STEP OUT IN
LOVE!

page 26