

# NEEDS, NEEDS,

By Brian Singer-Towns

It's 7 a.m. and Sara just arrived at school. She has 40 minutes before she becomes Mrs. Thompson to her 150 sophomores. Already her mind is buzzing with the needs of the day. She must get her mid-term grades in by the end of the week. She also needs to finish revising lesson plans for the rest of the semester's classes, which is a challenge since students need activities that pull them out of their preoccupation with friends, phones, and favorite after-school activities. And as pressing as all this is, what she really needs is another cup of coffee!

As a teacher, you assign top priority to the needs of your students. However, you must also balance students' needs with those of the institution(s) you represent, as well as your own teaching needs. Compounding this challenge is the ever-changing reality of young people's lives, new institutional priorities, and your own evolving teaching practices. Such is the life of a high school theology teacher!

At Saint Mary's Press, we care deeply about the needs of teachers, students, and administrators. In our ongoing relationships with folks in the field, we hear about and observe many needs. **How many of the following correlate to your experience? Most importantly, how do you balance them all?**

Turn the page to find out more!





# NEEDS!



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## YOUR STUDENTS' NEEDS

**"I want something that connects to MY life."**

Stories and testimonies, especially from other young people, grab their attention. Resources that apply religious teachings to real-life scenarios make faith accessible.

**"If I don't understand churchy language, I check out."** Students need resources that express religious concepts in the language they use every day, without talking down to them.

**"I have questions—but can I ask them here? I don't want to be judged."** They need to be able to express doubt and even disbelief in Church teaching and dogma. Resources that acknowledge faith questions and doubts are more authentic to their experience.

**"I have a lot going on and I need help to succeed."** Resources that provide vocabulary lists, review questions, and focused visual summaries of key chapter content are key.

## CHURCH AND SCHOOL NEEDS

**USCCB and diocesan guidelines.** The USCCB Catechism Subcommittee implemented a doctrinal framework to be used by all Catholic high schools in the U.S. Additionally, there are often diocesan guidelines or mandates to incorporate administration needs. School administrations typically require academic departments to develop a multiyear curriculum detailing the knowledge and skills students will develop through the department's courses.

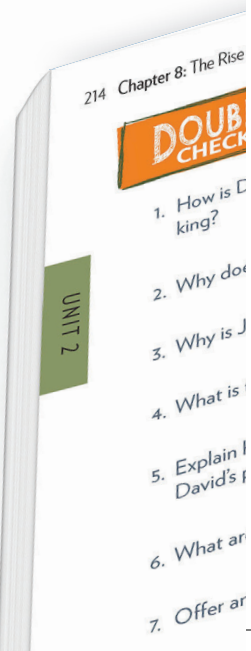
## YOUR NEEDS

**"I want a classroom where my students are engaged and resources are easy to navigate!"** Teachers look for resources that are engaging, easy-to-follow, creative, and content-rich.

**"Give me the snapshot so I know what to underscore. Make it seamless."** You want resources that provide quick summaries of the essential questions and enduring understandings students are required to master. Teacher guides that seamlessly connect to the student books are needed to make the most of your limited time.

**"My classroom looks a lot different than 20 years ago."** In today's classrooms, you need options that meet the needs of diverse student populations. Varying levels of religious knowledge, cultural understandings, and biblical literacy create a sometimes paralyzing atmosphere where some students are bored, and others are lost.

**"Help me weave Scripture into every course."** You're counting on resources that introduce young people to Scripture in an intentional, meaningful, and ongoing way. Using the Bible as a primary resource builds biblical literacy and invites students to a deeper reflection on Scripture.





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Sometimes these needs are complementary, and sometimes they seem to compete. Responding to them all can seem overwhelming.

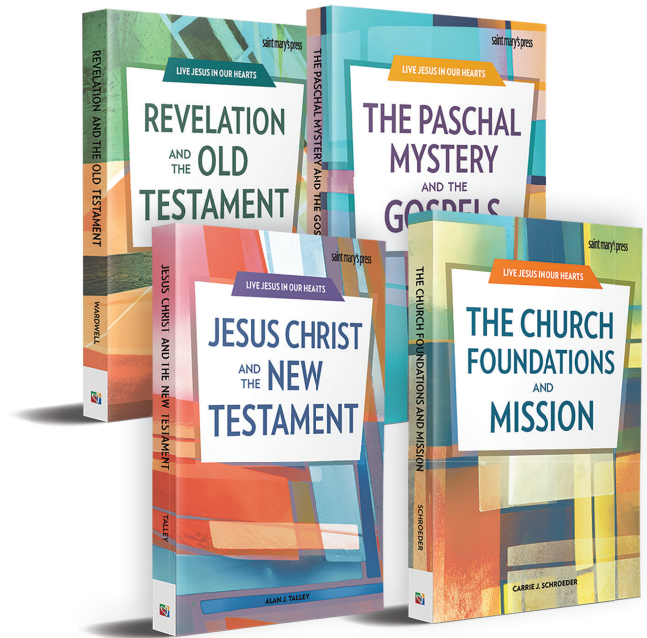
In our new high school series, Live Jesus In Our Hearts, we aim to support you with creative, engaging content balanced with classroom activities that truly touch the hearts and minds of young people.

St. John Baptist de La Salle told his fellow teachers,

**"THIS WORK OF TEACHING  
IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT  
IN THE CHURCH."**

We know that the vocation of teacher is a sacred calling. To honor that call, we promise to continue to listen to you and your ever-changing needs.

Live Jesus in our hearts...forever!



Turn the page to learn more about **Live Jesus!**

