



Chapter 1

We Are Part of the Church

Background Focus

It is human to want to belong. We look for reassurance among our family, friends, and interest groups (clubs, sports teams, and associations) that we are accepted, that we share a common goal with others, and that we are important contributors to something bigger than ourselves. This need to feel welcomed and part of something meaningful is felt at all ages.

We may find ourselves wondering sometimes what we really have to contribute to the Church or if our presence really matters. But the Church relies on the fact that each and every individual member is an essential part of the ongoing mission and ministry of Jesus. We are all called to embrace an active and engaged role in spreading the Good News through both word and deed. Simply put, the Church needs our unique gifts.

This chapter provides an opportunity for your child to reflect on what it means to be a baptized member of such an important mission. Allow yourself time to consider what being part of the Catholic Church means to you and how you respond to the Church's call that says: "You are an important member of this community. You belong here."

Family Strategies

Try to carve out key technology-free times that you can spend with your child. Taking time to be fully present to your child helps build their self-confidence and sense of security, and it strengthens your family as well as your child's notion of what it means to be a full and active participant in a larger community.

Family Activities

- Find any objects, photos, or videos you have from your child's Baptism. Use these things to tell your child about that day, what you were feeling, and why it was important to you for them to be baptized.
- Create some questions that you and your child can ask other people (other family members or people you know from Church) about what it means to them to be a baptized Catholic. Videotape their responses or write them in a notebook.
- Read together the Featured Story on page 1808 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* (1 Corinthians 12:14–18, 27). Invite your child to tell you what they remember about the meaning of this Scripture passage.

Pray It!



Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Jesus, we know that we are called to bring our gifts together for the good of the Church. Help us to grow so that we may spread your message of peace and love. Amen.