

SPARK!

MARCH 2020

SCRIPTURE WITH CHILDREN: LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!



saint mary's press

touching hearts. enlivening minds.

BRINGING THE SCRIPTURES TO LIFE

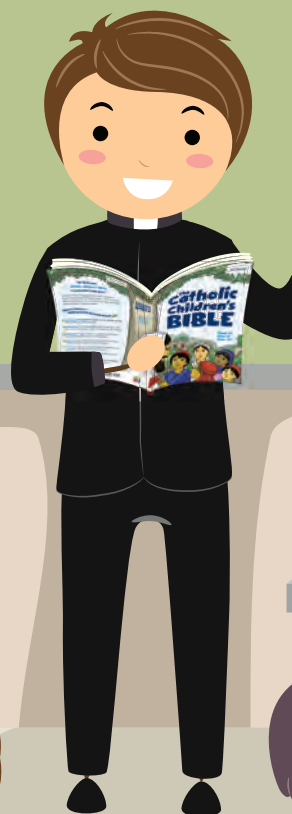
We believe bringing the Bible to life is paramount to helping children discover the connections between a learned faith and a lived faith.

This is why Scripture is at the core of our programs for elementary-aged children. To watch them engage in the word, discover the connections to Church teachings, and learn to live their faith—that is the essence of Saint John Baptist de La Salle’s teachings when he shared, “God’s Word is powerful in touching hearts.”

Discover!
Finding Faith in Life



**TURN TO PAGES 10–11 TO
LEARN HOW TO BRING
THE SCRIPTURES TO LIFE!**



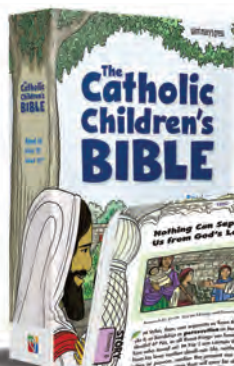
Jesus was a storyteller, and some of his best stories beg to be experienced and enjoyed “live and in color.”

When using the Scriptures to role-play, we are giving children the opportunity to learn and integrate the teachings of Jesus into their own lives through interactive learning.

Impromptu Scripture skits can happen in moments. More elaborate productions will take some preparation. **On the next few pages, you’ll find some recipes for various scenarios. Try what seems to fit your group best!**



HOW TO: IMPROMPTU



Read and discuss your chosen story. (The Featured Stories in *The Catholic Children's Bible* provide plenty of ideas!)

Check for understanding by asking point-in-time questions to focus the group's attention and to organize their thinking in establishing a time line for the story: What happened first in the story? Then what happened? What happened after that? What did Jesus say at the end?

Then ask for volunteers to act out the story. Assign volunteers to the various parts. In the story of the Good Samaritan, for example, you will need not only the main characters of the Samaritan and the man left on the road but also robbers, the innkeeper, and the Samaritan's donkey.



SCRIPTURE SKITS



You may want to move through the story by reading a few lines and having the actors act out those lines. Ask occasionally: "And then what happened?"

Encourage the children to use their own words: "I am a priest, and I am not going to help this man. I am going to pass him by."

As time permits, you might call for other volunteers to act out this same story. Children love repetition, and "Let's do it again!" is a familiar request—whether for a favorite book or for a favorite activity.

In doing the Scripture skit a second time, the shyer children may be more motivated to participate, having seen how it has been done once before.

Those who have acted the first time will have the opportunity to watch the show. And think what an imprint the story is making on the hearts and minds of the group!

Another alternative: Divide the group into small groups, and give the small groups time to put together their Scripture skits. Then view the skits and enjoy the similarities and differences!





HOW TO: PREPARATION FOR A BIGGER PRODUCTION

There are occasions when a bigger and more elaborate production of a Scripture story is called for. Perhaps the season of Lent or Easter is being celebrated at a special assembly.

(The liturgical season lessons in ***Discover! Finding Faith in Life***, our religious education program for grades 1–5, match a Scripture story to a particular feast or season.)



Discover!
Finding Faith in Life





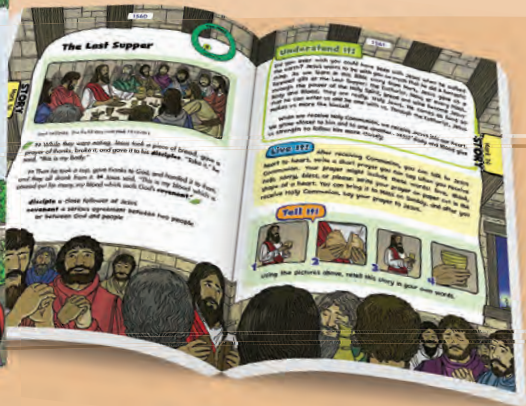
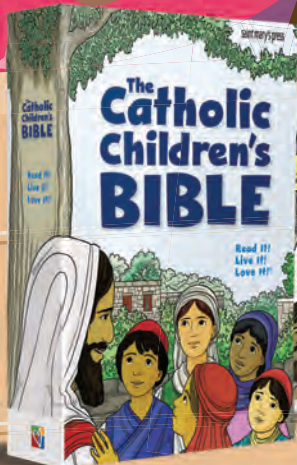
Perhaps parents are invited to an open house, and the children are asked to participate. In these cases, more planning is needed, and more than one class session should be designated to prepare for a more elaborate production.

But first a word about costumes: Prepare a special box or bag with costumes for Scripture skits. This box will become your treasure chest of old

bath towels, colorful scarves, hats, bathrobes, and other articles that lend themselves to scriptural productions.

A large gray or brown blanket can be thrown over a child (on all fours!) to become a donkey. Ask your friends to contribute to your box. Whenever a Scripture skit or production is planned, bring out the box and help your actors look the part!



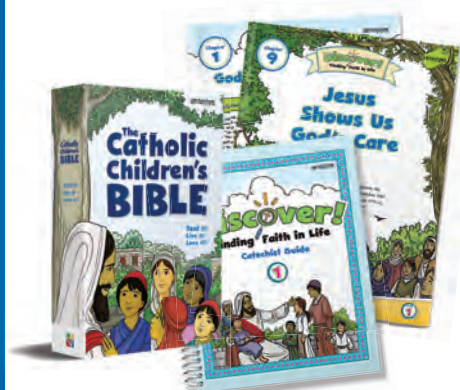


FOR A MORE ELABORATE SCRIPTURE PRODUCTION, THE FOLLOWING SCHEMA MAY BE HELPFUL:

1. Help the entire group to learn and understand the story.
2. Note the various parts, and choose actors for each.
Some stories include a crowd, a questioner, and Jesus himself. Include all the children in the production, even if you have to designate a "crowd of listeners" as part of the ensemble. (What is the point of telling a story if there are no listeners to hear it?)
3. Decide if you want the story to be told completely by the actors, with their own lines, or by reading from the Scripture in part, especially at transitional points.
Take your own preparation time to imagine how the production will work, what should be read from Scripture, and what lines the children will take.
4. Take two sessions for rehearsal.
In the first rehearsal, concentrate on the words of the story. Encourage the children to speak loudly and clearly. In the second rehearsal, distribute costumes. Continue to remind the children of loud and clear speech. Gradually the children will begin to feel comfortable with their roles in the story and will enjoy the process without being too anxious. Rehearsing the story is not a waste of time. The children are absorbing the Word of God every minute.
5. At each session, remind the children that they will be carrying the words of Jesus to their friends and families. They will be sharing God's Word not only by their words but also by their actions. And they will be making Jesus very happy to see his stories acted out so well!



BRING THE SCRIPTURES



Discover!

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Curriculum for Grades 1-5

In *Discover! Finding Faith in Life*, kids dive into *The Catholic Children's Bible* from day 1, connect it to Church teachings, and are called to age-appropriate action. **Active, engaged learning** gets them out of their seats and excited to learn.

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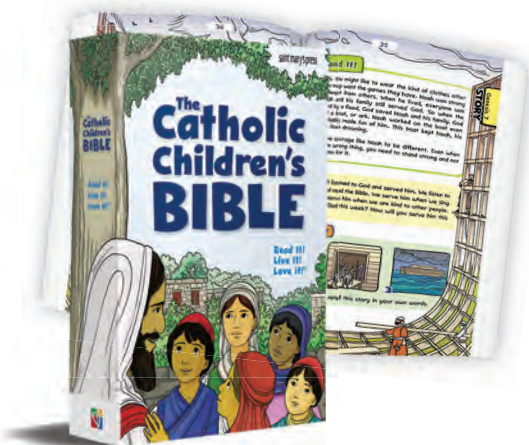
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TO LIFE FOR KIDS!



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