

Year 1

Part 1

TEACHER GUIDE

Don't Miss This!

Handouts and other teaching
resources are available online, at
www.smp.org/connect_year1school



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Introduction

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 lessons and materials in this teacher guide will work best with a *New American Bible Revised Edition (NABRE)* Bible. 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.

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.

Special Features of This Guide

This teacher guide contains the following features:

- **An Introductory Chapter Opener:** This page includes a chapter summary, helpful background for the teacher about the chapter focus, a teacher's prayer, and a teaching tip for bringing the lesson to life for the young people. This will provide the inspiration and information you need to begin a new week of instruction.
- **A Chapter-at-a-Glance Page:** Each chapter presents a one-page overview of the key elements of the chapter. Here you will find the core understandings that will be covered, *Catechism* paragraphs that provide additional teacher background, key Scripture passages utilized in the chapter, key words introduced, the name of the optional chapter project, and prayer suggestions that can be used throughout the lesson.

- **Complete Lessons Plans:** The core pages of each chapter offer strategic learning experiences for a four-day week with options for extension. Each day within a chapter provides ideas, options, and step-by-step plans. The lesson plans use a clear and consistent structure:
 - Opening Prayer (5 minutes)
 - Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)
 - Engage Activity (5 minutes)
 - Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)
 - Core Content (10 minutes)
 - Closing Prayer (5 minutes)
- **A Range of Optional Activities:** Each chapter includes a variety of optional activities. These can replace another activity, can be used to extend the lesson, or can be combined to create an additional day of learning. Places where these optional activities would fit best into the lessons are clearly marked.
- **An Optional Chapter Project:** The chapter project is an optional activity that students can work on throughout the week. It is designed to help the students make meaning of the content they are learning and apply it to something concrete in their lives. A general description is provided as an outline or idea starter so that you can adapt and expand it to your specific class and timing.
- **Assessment Opportunities:** Each chapter notes multiple points throughout the lesson where assessment opportunities exist. In addition, reading guides, handouts, quizzes, and tests are all a part of various assessment tools that are provided for this program.

The Digital Dimension

Saint Mary's Press recognizes that the use of digital devices, the internet, and visual media is growing in popularity as part of the learning process. Schools and teachers who have made, or are making, this transition will find helpful suggestions in this teacher guide and in the online resources for including this technology. Many activities include notes about digital options that suggest ways to adapt the activity for use with digital devices, applications, and visual media.

To help teachers who like to incorporate songs and videos for classroom learning, YouTube suggestions are provided for various activities within the lessons. Because YouTube channels and postings are occasionally deleted, all suggestions are optional add-ons or part of optional activities. Whenever possible, this guide suggests songs or videos that have multiple versions, so that if one no longer exists, other similar options remain.

Online Resources

Resources specific to this teacher guide and many other useful general resources can be found online at www.smp.org/connect_year1school. These resources include all the handouts, quizzes, and tests in digital formats that you can download and customize. PowerPoint presentations that you can use to introduce and review the key chapter content are also available. Other resources include:

- a scope-and-sequence chart
- a digital version of the teacher guide
- web links to recommended digital media and background resources
- seasonal liturgical activities
- additional activities for each chapter
- additional lesson plans on life issues for young adolescents

Go to www.smp.org/connect_year1school to see how these support materials might help you.

Icons

Icons appear in the left margins throughout the chapters to help you quickly identify some special features.



Handout: This indicates that a handout is used for an activity.



Cross-Curricular Opportunity: This indicates a suggestion for extending an activity to other curricular areas.



Digital Option: This indicates a suggestion for how the activity can be adapted to use digital devices and apps.



Video: This indicates the potential to use an online song, video, or movie.



Assessment Opportunity: This indicates an opportunity for assessment or grading.

Spirit and Life

As a teacher, you have taken on an exciting and profoundly important task. Saint John Baptist de La Salle, the patron saint of teachers, often reminded his teachers that their students were not simply students in an academic sense but were disciples:

“ This must be your goal when you instruct your disciples, that they live a Christian life and that your words become spirit and life for them. ”

Our hope is that as you use the plans in this teacher guide and adapt them to your learning environment, your words may become spirit and life for your student disciples. Saint Mary's Press deeply appreciates your ministry and hopes that these resources serve you well. Please be assured of our continual prayers for you and the young people you serve.

Chapter 6

Faith: Responding to God

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the students recognize the gift of faith as a belief in God that invites a response to God's call with trust in God alone. The students see faith as believing and accepting that God made himself known to us through words and actions, most fully in the person of Jesus. Faith is something that guides our entire lives and requires us to live our lives in response to that belief.

Background for the Teacher

Have you ever received a good-faith estimate on a car or on an insurance quote or heard someone say that they were acting in good faith? Both a good-faith estimate and acting in good faith demand trust in the truth of what is being quoted or a belief in the actions of others. In both cases, we get a glimpse of what we mean by "faith in God."

There is also a suggestion of "right relationship" that allows for trust or belief in the action taken and the people involved. Similarly, our belief and trust in the promises of God revealed through his Church are dependent on the strength of the relationship we have with God. And like any relationship, the stronger it is, the easier it is to trust and believe. Faith in God, however, does not and cannot stop simply with belief and trust. It must also mature into action. For faith to be genuine, to be authentic, it must be actualized! If a husband or wife assures their spouse and children of their love for them but does not act on their behalf, then the husband or wife's sincerity would certainly be called into question. Action is intimately connected with faith. An old song sums this up nicely in its title "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love."

A Teacher's Prayer

Lord Jesus, increase my faith! Help me desire a deeper, richer, more meaningful relationship with you that I might grow in love and service to you and my students. Open my heart to hearing your voice throughout my day, and grant me the courage to respond in faith. Amen.

Teaching Tip

For middle schoolers, faith in God is an abstract topic and can be difficult to grasp. Make it more real by sharing what it means in your life and the lives of others you know. This is a great opportunity for a guest to come and share what it means in their life. Consider inviting a priest or religious person in for this. Be sure to emphasize that faith needs to be nurtured through reading the Bible, praying, participating in the Church, and participating in the sacraments in order to grow and flourish.

Chapter at a Glance

Core Text: Student Book

Core Understandings

1. Faith is believing God made himself known to us through his words and actions, accepting God's truth with our minds, and living our lives based on this belief.
2. Faith is necessary for salvation, is a gift from God, and is an act of the entire Church.
3. Having faith means trusting in God and allowing him to be in complete control of our lives, acknowledging that true happiness cannot be achieved apart from God.
4. Faith demands action in response to the recognition that God is our true home.

Catechism Pillar

- The Creed

Catechism Connection

- Paragraphs 84–100, especially 94–95 (The Interpretation of the Heritage of Faith)
- Paragraphs 142–184, especially 153–158 (Man's Response to God)

Key Scripture Passages

- Psalm 31:3–5
- Matthew 17:20
- Matthew 23:23–28
- James 2:14–17

Key Words

- creed
- faith
- monotheistic

Chapter Project

- "Faith Is . . . ," page 157

Prayer Suggestions

- **Prayer:** Father of Faith, you sent your Son Jesus Christ, that we might more easily experience your friendship and love. Help us, Father, to have faith to move mountains, and give us the courage to move them. Amen.
- **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 17:20
- **Student Book:** "Connect with God," page 55
- **Music:** "Give Me Faith," by Elevation Worship, and "By Faith," by Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, and Stuart Townend, available on YouTube

DAY 1

Student Book

Introduction and “What Is Faith?” pages 55–57

Core Understanding

Faith is believing God made himself known to us through his words and actions, accepting God’s truth with our minds, and living our lives based on this belief.

Materials Needed

- copies of handout “Chapter 6 Reading Guide,” pages 158–159, one for each student (*optional*)
- a long rope or cord
- blindfolds, one for every two students

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 140:

- Father God, increase our faith. Help us to be strong in our faith so that we might better believe. We ask these things through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Arrange** the students into two groups, one on each side of the room. Post a sheet of newsprint (or lay it on the floor) in front of each group so each side cannot see the other’s newsprint.
2. **Engage** the students’ experience by asking the following questions:
 - Faith is sometimes a difficult thing to explain. We use the word all the time, but who thinks they can offer some explanation for what it actually is? (*Allow for volunteers.*)
 - Saint Paul compares faith to a shield. What kinds of shields are there? (*arm shield, round shield, full body shield*)
 - If you were going into battle, how big would you want your shield to be?

Optional Activity: “Shield of Faith” (20 minutes), page 153

Core Content (10 minutes)



Review pages 55–57 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 “What Is Faith?” on the handout “Chapter 6 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. Faith is the way people respond to God’s call and means a belief in God.
 2. Faith is believing that God has made himself known to us most fully through Jesus Christ.
 3. Faith is something that guides our entire lives and requires us to live our lives based on our beliefs.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Walking in Faith

1. **Explain** in these or similar words:
 - Faith can be a difficult thing at times. We journey through this life trying to be guided by the Holy Spirit, but often we are blind to many of the difficulties in life. Sometimes there are even people or events in our life that end in pain or suffering.
 - We’re going to do an activity that requires a great deal of faith. You’re going to have to trust and believe as you continue your journey to Jesus.

Teaching Tip

See “What Do You Think?” on page 56 in the student book. You might want to note that throughout their journey today, the students may have many questions they might want to ask—and they should feel free to do so!

2. **Run** a rope or long cord through an obstacle course in the classroom or outside through the playground.
3. **Arrange** the students into three groups. Call one group “The Spirits,” another group “The Believers,” and the third group “The Distractions.” Instruct The Believers to put their blindfolds on and not to peek! The blindfolds should go on before the students ever see the obstacle course. The Spirits are to provide guidance to The Believers as they try to make their way through the obstacle course. The Distractions are to make it difficult to hear The Spirits, providing misinformation on what action should be taken and providing stumbling blocks to The Believers. The students can make their way through the course individually or in small groups as time allows.

4. **Invite** volunteers from The Believers to briefly describe their experience.
5. **Conclude** by making connections between the activity and the journey of faith, such as this journey is not an easy one and that there are many distractions. The Believers must listen carefully to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, trust in the truthfulness of the directions, and act on what they believe is true.

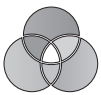
Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

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

- What is faith?



Assessment Opportunity: Collect the papers for credit or grading.



Cross-Curricular Opportunity: This opportunity could be used as a language arts activity by expanding into a longer writing assignment.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Close with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 140.

DAY 2

Student Book

"Faith Is a Gift Freely Chosen" and "Faith Is Believing," pages 57–58

Core Understanding

Faith is necessary for salvation, is a gift from God, and is an act of the entire Church.

Materials Needed

- "Chapter 6 Reading Guide" handouts (*optional*)
- Bibles, one for each student
- copies of the handout "Do You Believe?" page 161, one for every four students
- stationery, one sheet for each student
- envelopes, one for each student

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with the Apostles Creed, found in "Appendix A: Catholic Prayers," or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 140.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Engage** the students' experience by asking the following questions:
 - Who has memories of opening gifts as a child? Maybe at Christmas or at a birthday party? (*Wait for a show of hands.*)
 - How frustrating is it to see presents around the Christmas tree and not be able to open them early?
 - And now, be honest, who has ever peeked early at a gift before it was time to open it, out sheer curiosity or excitement?
2. **Conclude** with the following or similar words:
 - The same is true for faith! Faith is a gift offered to us by God through those who love us, but if it goes unopened, it remains without true value. It is in opening the gift that we find joy and satisfaction.

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 57–58 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 “Faith Is a Gift Freely Chosen” and “Faith Is Believing” on the handout “Chapter 6 Reading Guide.”
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following points:
 1. Faith is necessary for salvation and is a gift from God that must be freely chosen.
 2. Faith often comes to us through words and examples of our parents.
 3. Having faith means believing or accepting something as true.
 4. A creed is an official statement of one’s faith or what one believes and is always both an individual and communal act.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Believe!

Objective: To appreciate Jesus’ emphasis on the importance of believing throughout his public ministry.

1. **Begin** with these or similar words:
 - Jesus wants people to believe in him, his relationship with the Father, and his ability to change their lives. Very often Jesus asks people if they believe in him!
 - We’re going to study some of those instances and then write a letter to Jesus that reflects where we are on the “belief spectrum.”
2. **Distribute** the Bibles, and arrange the students into small groups of four. Give each group a copy of handout “Do You Believe?” to complete, and give each person in the group a sheet of stationery and an envelope for their letter to Jesus. Then share the following directions, using these or similar words:
 - Assign each person in your group one of the passages on the handout to look up and read. Appoint one person as your recorder. After everyone has looked up and read their passages, have each person give a summary of their assigned passage. The recorder should write the summary down on the handout. Each person should also answer question b for their passage, and the recorder should also write this down.
 - After the handout has been completed, each person will take time to write their own personal letter to Jesus. In the letter, tell Jesus about your faith in him. What do you believe about him? Is your faith in him strong or weak? What would you like your faith in him to be like? This letter will only be seen by you.
3. **Invite** the students to put their letter inside the envelope and then put it in a special place, such as on a prayer table or in their backpacks, to reread later.
4. **Conclude** by asking the students to share what they learned about the importance of belief and to share some things that make it difficult for them to have faith at times.



Teaching Tip

As the students share their difficulties, it is important that you not use this time to correct them or otherwise downplay their difficulty in believing certain truths of the faith. Simply thank them for their honesty and courage to share, and let them know that you continue to seek and grow in your belief. Give them permission to join you on the lifelong, uncertain journey of faith.



Assessment Opportunity: Direct the students to put their names beside the questions they answered on the handout. Collect them for credit or grading.

Optional Activity: “The Gift” (20 minutes), page 154

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Ask** the students to join with a partner and to discuss the following questions:
 - How is faith like a gift freely chosen?
 - How is it like believing?
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 140.

DAY 3

Student Book

"Faith Is Trusting," pages 58–59

Core Understanding

Having faith means trusting in God and allowing him to be in complete control of our lives, acknowledging that true happiness cannot be achieved apart from God.

Materials Needed

- "Chapter 6 Reading Guide" handouts *(optional)*
- poster board, one sheet for each small group of three or four
- sets of markers, one for each small group of three or four
- digital illustration and presentation tools *(optional)*

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with this prayer, or choose from among the prayer suggestions on page 140:

- You are my refuge and defense;
guide me and lead me as you have promised.
Keep me safe from the trap that has been set for me;
shelter me from danger.
I place myself in your care.
You will save me, LORD;
you are a faithful God.

(Psalm 31:3–5, *GNT*)

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

Engage the students' experience by asking the following questions:

- What does it mean to "trust" someone?
- What are the indications that one person is trusted by another?
- What are some of the dangers of putting your trust in people around you?
- How is trusting others similar to or different from trusting God?

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 58–59 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 “Faith Is Trusting” on the handout “Chapter 6 Reading Guide.”
- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. Having faith means we trust.
 2. We trust God and acknowledge that we cannot ever be truly happy without him.
 3. Trusting God is an essential ingredient of faith.
 4. By trusting God, we will give and receive more joy and happiness in this world and in the next.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

I Will Put My Trust in Him

Objective: To reflect on the ways in which faith requires trust.

1. **Arrange** the students into small groups of three or four. Give each group a sheet of poster board and a set of markers.
2. **Instruct** the students to think about the five letters in the word *TRUST*. What words or phrases can they think of that would help explain the main points of today’s lesson and that also include one of those five letters? For example, the letter *T* could stand for “*turning toward God*.”
3. **Explain** to the students that they are going to create an acrostic for the word *TRUST*. An acrostic is a word in which each letter of a word is part of a related word or phrase. For this activity, it does not have to be the first letter of the word or phrase. For example, the letter *U* in *trust* could be used in “*human joy and happiness*.”
4. **Encourage** the students to write down the five words or phrases of their acrostic so the letters *T*, *R*, *U*, *S*, and *T* line up vertically, spelling *TRUST*. The students may use images, symbols, and colors to make their poster beautiful. Creativity, beauty, and decorations are key!
5. **Conclude** by allowing the groups to share their acrostic with the rest of the class, explain its meaning, and then post for others to see.

Teaching Tip

Users of *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics* may want to note “Pray It!” at Proverbs 29:25, which emphasizes the importance of trusting in God and asking God to work through us.



Digital Option: This activity could be done using a digital illustration or presentation program. All illustrations and slides could be submitted and combined into a class presentation at the end of the week.

Optional Activity: “In God We Trust” (30 minutes), page 155

Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Direct** the group to review “Faith Is Trusting” on pages 58–59 in the student book.
2. **Ask** the students to choose one sentence in which they learned something new or gained a better understanding of how faith is trusting.
3. **Invite** 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 140.

DAY 4

Student Book

“Faith Is Doing” and “Faith in God Alone,” pages 60–62

Core Understanding

Faith demands action in response to the recognition that God is our true home.

Materials Needed

- “Chapter 6 Reading Guide” handouts (*optional*)
- Bibles, one for each student
- copies of the handout “Chapter 6 Quiz,” page 162, one for each student

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin with a prayer, choosing from among the prayer suggestions on page 140.

Engage Activity (5 minutes)

1. **Engage** the students’ experience by asking the following questions:
 - How do you know if someone really cares about you?
 - What does caring for someone look like to someone watching from the outside? How would someone else know that one person cares for another person? (*Allow the students to share those actions that reflect the hidden reality of love. Summarize their comments, emphasizing the importance of actions to convey feelings.*)
2. **Conclude** with these or similar words:
 - Just as we can tell that people love someone else by their actions, we can know if people have a faithful relationship with God by their actions. Actions speak louder than words.

Core Content (10 minutes)

Review pages 60–62 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 “Faith Is Doing” and “Faith in God Alone” on the handout “Chapter 6 Reading Guide.” When the students finish, collect and grade the handout.



- **Presentation Option:** Give a short presentation covering the following key points:
 1. Having faith means we act upon what we believe.
 2. Actions make real our belief and trust in God.
 3. Christianity is monotheistic, meaning we believe in only one God.
 4. God is our true home, and we will be truly satisfied only by doing his will.
 5. Some Christians have chosen to give up all they have to place their faith in God alone.

Present information from “Living the Gospel” on page 62 in the student book.

Core Learning Activity (20 minutes)

Faith Versus Hypocrisy

Objective: To help the students distinguish between faithful and hypocritical actions in the ordinary events of their lives.

1. **Introduce** the activity in these or similar words:
 - True faith requires actions that are consistent with our words. As the Letter of James says, if we say we believe in helping others but then we don’t actually do so, we lack true faith. Does anyone know what we call a person who says one thing and does another? (*a hypocrite*)
 - That’s right, a hypocrite. Jesus had some very harsh words for hypocrites. Let’s look them up.
2. **Distribute** the Bibles, and instruct the students to find Matthew 23:23–28 and to take turns reading it aloud. After every two verses, stop and ask the students to summarize what Jesus just said, in their own words, coaching as necessary.
3. **Direct** the students to fold a sheet of paper into three columns and to label the top of the first column “Belief or Promise,” the second column “Faithful Action,” and the third column “Hypocritical Action.” Tell them that you are going to name a belief or promise that they are to write down in the first column. Then you will give them time to write down in the second column what the action of a faithful person would be in living out this belief and in the third column what the action of a hypocrite would be in living out this belief. Here are some possibilities for you to use:

Belief or Promise	Faithful Action	Hypocritical Action
I am a good student.	Get homework done on time.	Turn homework in late.
Church is important to me.	Attend Mass every Sunday.	Rarely attend Mass.
I care for my friends.	Help my friends whenever I can.	Disappear when my friends need help.
I am a good citizen.	Vote in every election.	Rarely vote.

4. **Ask** the students to form pairs or groups of three after you have had them work on two or three beliefs or promises individually. Direct them to work as a team to identify two more beliefs or promises, add them to their papers, and identify the corresponding actions of a faithful person and a hypocritical person.
5. **Invite** the pairs or groups to share with the class the beliefs and actions they identified.
6. **Conclude** by emphasizing the following point, using these or similar words:
 - There are many examples of people whose faith is clear in their actions. Jesus encourages us to be faithful in acting on our beliefs and promises. He does not want us to be hypocrites. People who are faithful in their actions inspire other people to be faithful to their beliefs and promises. It is not just saints who inspire us, but people who are around us every day.

Optional Activity: “Service Project: Faith in Action” (50 minutes), page 156



Comprehension Checkpoint (5 minutes)

1. **Distribute** the handout “Chapter 6 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 140.

Optional Activities

DAY 1

Materials Needed

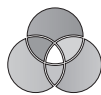
- Bibles, one for each student
- copies of handout "Shield of Faith," page 153, one for each student
- crayons or colored pencils



Shield of Faith (20 minutes)

Objective: To illustrate the importance of faith for getting through life's difficult times.

1. **Introduce** the activity with these or similar words:
 - Faith is believing in, trusting in, and acting on our relationship with God. Jesus teaches us that faith can be the size of a mustard seed.
 - In a letter to the Ephesians, Paul tells us to put on the armor of God to protect ourselves as we await the day of salvation. Ephesians lists the armor that we might need, including the shield of faith! The shield of faith will protect us and keep our faith strong.
2. **Distribute** the Bibles, and instruct the students to find Ephesians 6:10–17. Ask a volunteer to read it aloud.
3. **Distribute** the handout and the crayons or colored pencils. Instruct the students to personalize their shields with images or symbols that are meaningful to them and their family. They might draw symbols of the Trinity, the sacraments, Scripture, or family.
4. **Conclude** by posting their shields around the classroom or on a hallway presentation board.



Cross-Curricular Opportunity: For a history research paper, encourage the students to research various kinds of shields used over time and their purpose in battle.

DAY 2**Materials Needed**

- a preselected "We're Going to Disney" video (*optional*)
- a video camera or camera phone
- gift boxes
- wrapping paper
- items of faith brought from home by the students (Bible, candles, crosses, worship music CDs, prayer books, etc.)

**The Gift** (20 minutes)

Objective: To show that faith, symbolized by items of faith, is a gift that must be opened.

Teaching Tip

This activity requires two or more days to do. Introduce the activity on the first day, and send home reminders so that all the students will bring something meaningful to wrap and unwrap. In the reminder, also indicate that the students will be creating videos and that they might ask parents for some assistance. On the following days, you can show the videos the students recorded.

1. **Begin** with a preselected short video of excited young people being told they are going to Disney (*optional*). Ask the students to think about the best gift they have ever received, and take a few responses.
2. **Ask** the students to think about a person in their lives who has given them the gift of faith. Explain using these or similar words:
 - When we were born and baptized, our parents, godparents, and the whole Church agreed to share their faith with us and help us grow. Through Mass, prayers, faith formation, sharing and caring, and service and love, we have been "unpacking" this amazing gift of faith. Your assignment is to go home tonight and record yourself symbolically opening the gift of faith that you've received from God through the person you are thinking about. You will need to have some symbol of faith, a candle, a cross, religious art, a rosary, or something similar that will be a sign of your faith. Wrap that item just as you would wrap a wonderful gift for someone you love. Do a great job boxing and wrapping the gift!
 - Invite the person who has helped you grow in faith to be in your video production if possible, and with the camera rolling have that person give you the gift of faith and then watch as you open it. When you have opened the gift, show appropriate thanks to that important person. If that person is not available, record yourself briefly discussing the person who gave you the gift of faith and how they have been part of your faith journey.
 - Your video must not be longer than 1 minute, and it should be prayerful, respectful, and meaningful.
3. **Continue** the next few days with class presentations of the students' videos. Consider inviting those people in the videos to come and watch with the class.



Assessment Opportunity: Create a rubric to assess the videos for credit or grading.

DAY 3**In God We Trust (30 minutes)**

Objective: To highlight the characteristics of a nation that places its trust in God.

Materials Needed

- several US one-dollar bills
- several US coins, all the same type (e.g., pennies, nickels)
- digital presentation tools



1. **Begin** with these or similar words:
 - Trust is a central part of faith. The founders of the United States understood the importance of trust and wanted to build a country that placed its trust in God. Does anyone know the official motto of the United States? (*"In God We Trust"*)
 - Most people come into contact with that motto every day and even carry it around in their pocket. Where do we find that motto most frequently? (*on US bills and coins*)
2. **Pass around** some bills and coins. Be certain that all the bills and coins are the same (all one-dollar bills, all nickels, etc.), and make sure they all get back to you.
3. **Facilitate** a discussion with the following questions:
 - What does it say about the country to have the motto displayed so prominently on currency?
 - Do you think people have to go to Church to believe our national motto?
 - What does the motto indicate are the central characteristics that unite the nation?
4. **Direct** the students to create a digital presentation, either individually or in small groups, illustrating "In God We Trust." The students should include symbols and images of the United States and its commitment to trusting in God. Ask the students to use musical accompaniment for the presentation and other creative ideas to increase the presentations' appeal. (If creating digital presentations is not feasible, ask the students to sketch out a storyboard that identifies the symbols and images they would feature.)
5. **Invite** the students to share their presentations in small groups or with the larger class.



Assessment Opportunity: Create a rubric to assess the presentations for credit or grading.

DAY 4

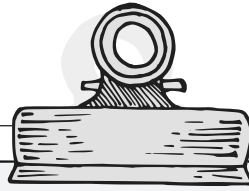
Materials Needed

- food and clothing, donated by the students
- a camera

Service Project: Faith in Action (50 minutes)

Objective: To allow the students to share their faith, in accord with the Letter of James, in a practical way with those in need.

1. **Make** contact with a local charity organization to determine how the students could help them with a class food or clothing drive.
2. **Inform** the students about the drive, and invite them to bring in items throughout the week.
3. **Display** items as they come in, and draw attention to the display each day. Pray daily for those who are in need and will receive the items.
4. **Take** pictures of the class with the week's collection. Take pictures as the items are being delivered (invite parents to help deliver). Display the pictures throughout the classroom as a reminder of the students' faith in action.



Chapter Project

Faith Is . . .

Materials Needed

- several magazines with pictures of both people and nature
- several pairs of scissors
- several bottles of glue
- art paper
- digital presentation tools (*optional*)

Objective: To help students deepen their understanding of what faith is by conveying it to others through images.

1. **Ask** the students to create an illustration of this chapter on faith. Tell them that they will create a brochure for someone who cannot read. They will need to find pictures, symbols, or images that convey the key concepts covered in this chapter. They can use their student books as a guide and for inspiration. The sections of their brochure should address and illustrate the following:
 - Imagine hosting the greatest dinner party ever. It will be a joyful, lavish feast. Who will be there? What will you eat? What will it cost? What will make it truly great?
2. **Remind** the students that their audience cannot read but should be able to understand each of the topics clearly from the pictures they choose.



Digital Option: The students may create their brochure using digital presentation tools.

Name _____

Chapter 6 Reading Guide

What Is Faith?

Give five explanations of what faith is, according to the student book.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Faith Is a Gift Freely Chosen

Complete the sentences.

1. Faith is _____ for _____ and is a _____ from God.
2. Before a person can have the gift of faith, they must first have the _____ to choose it.
3. Faith often comes to you through the words and examples of your _____ .

Faith Is Believing

Complete the sentences.

1. Having faith means you _____ or _____ something to be true.
2. A _____ is an official statement of one's _____ .
3. Believing is an act of the entire _____ .
4. Without your _____ and the _____ , there is no one to pass on the faith.



Faith Is Trusting

Complete the sentences.

1. Having faith also means you _____ .
 2. When we trust God, we acknowledge we cannot ever be truly _____ without him.
 3. Explain what happens by trusting God and allowing him to lead our lives.
-

Faith Is Doing

Answer the questions.

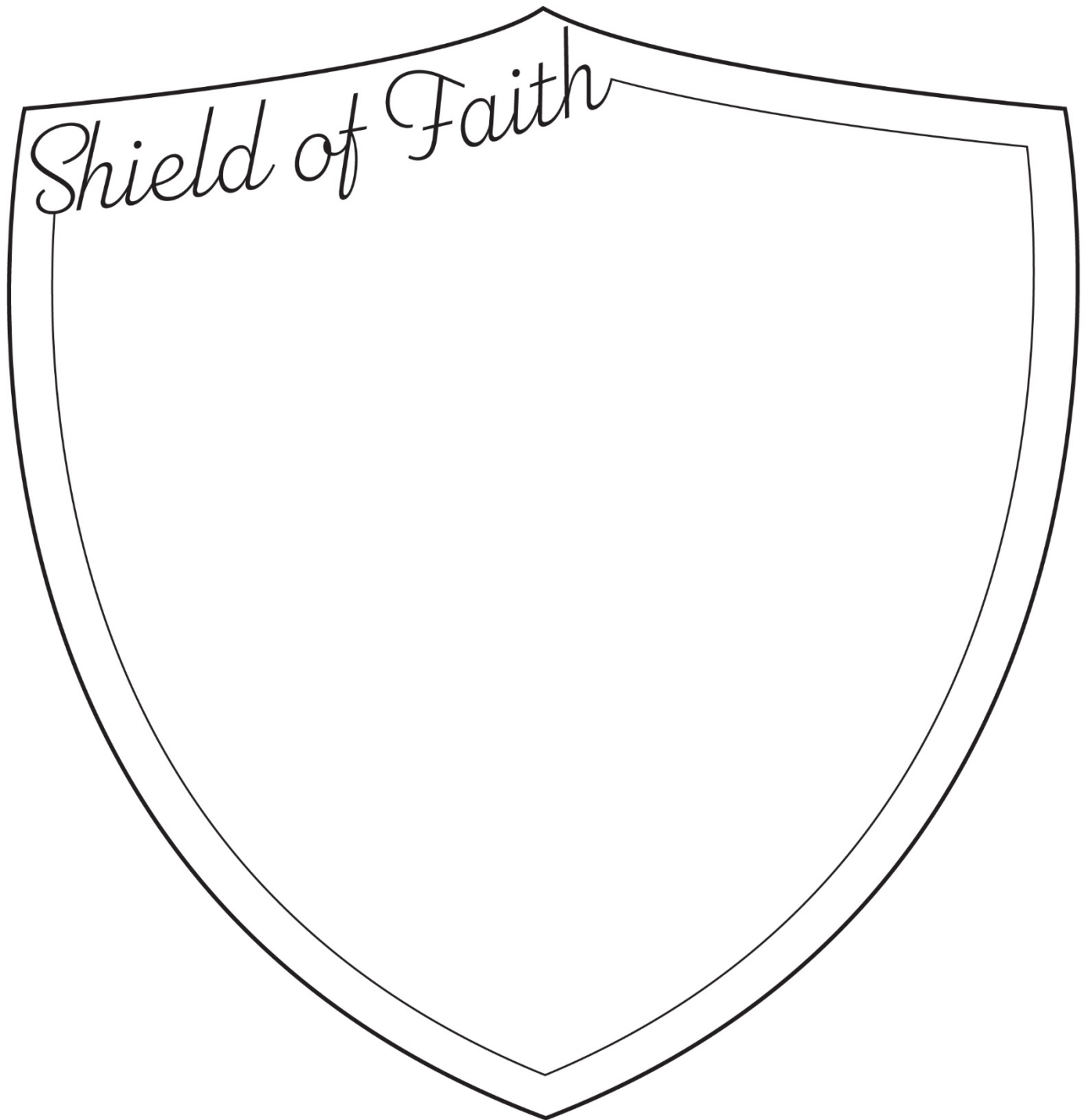
1. What does faith have to do with “doing”?
-
2. What does “actions speak louder than words” mean, and how does that relate to faith?
-

Faith in God Alone

Answer the questions.

1. What does *monotheistic* mean? _____
 2. What does it mean to say that God is our “true home”?
-





In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield,
to quench [all] the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Ephesians 6:16



Name _____

Do You Believe?

Record a brief summary of each Scripture passage, and then write Jesus' own words about belief as found in the story. Include the verse number in your answer.

1. Matthew 9:27–31

a. Summary:

b. What question does Jesus ask about belief? Include the verse number with your answer.

2. Mark 9:14–29

a. Summary:

b. What does Jesus say about those who have faith? Include the verse number with your answer.

3. Mark 16:14–18

a. Summary:

b. What does Jesus say will happen to those who believe? Include the verse number with your answer.

4. John 11:38–44

a. Summary:

b. What does Jesus say will happen to those who believe? Include the verse number with your answer.



Name _____

Chapter 6 Quiz

Multiple Choice

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

- _____ 1. _____ is when you confidently turn control of your life over to someone else with hope.
 a. Trust
 b. Belief
 c. Faith
- _____ 2. When we trust God, we acknowledge that we can never be truly _____ without him.
 a. wealthy
 b. happy
 c. famous
- _____ 3. Trusting God is an _____ ingredient of faith.
 a. optional
 b. important
 c. essential
- _____ 4. By trusting God and allowing him to lead our lives, we will give and receive more _____ and _____ in this world and in the next.
 a. joy, happiness
 b. fame, fortune
 c. word, deeds
- _____ 5. A _____ is an official statement of what one believes.
 a. Gospel
 b. letter
 c. creed

True or False

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

- _____ 6. The Holy Spirit is essential for one to have faith.
- _____ 7. Freedom is not required for a person to receive the gift of faith.
- _____ 8. Faith often comes to us through the words and examples of our parents.
- _____ 9. Monotheism is belief in three gods.
- _____ 10. Our actions don't matter as long as we have faith.



Chapter 6 Answer Keys

Chapter 6 Reading Guide

What Is Faith?

1. The way people respond to God's call.
2. Belief in God.
3. Believing and accepting that God made himself known to us.
4. Accepting God's truth with our minds.
5. Guides our entire lives.

Faith Is a Gift Freely Chosen

1. necessary, salvation, gift
2. freedom
3. parents

Faith Is Believing

1. believe, accept
2. creed, faith
3. Church
4. family, Church

Faith Is Trusting

1. trust
2. happy
3. We receive joy and happiness.

Faith Is Doing

1. We act on what we believe.
2. We see the true significance in a person's ideas or beliefs by the way they act.

Faith in God Alone

1. We believe in only one God.
2. Our true happiness can be found only in God, not in money or material goods.



Do You Believe?

1. Matthew 9:27–31
 - a. Jesus heals two blind men.
 - b. “Do you believe that I can do this?” (verse 28).
2. Mark 9:14–29
 - a. Jesus heals a boy with an evil spirit.
 - b. “Everything is possible to one who has faith” (verse 23).
3. Mark 16:14–18
 - a. Jesus appears to the eleven.
 - b. “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. . . .” (verse 16).
4. John 11:38–44
 - a. Lazarus is brought to life.
 - b. “Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?” (verse 40).

Chapter 6 Quiz

Multiple Choice

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

True or False

6. T
7. F
8. T
9. F
10. F

