



Chapter

1

We Are Part of the Church



Chapter 1

Chapter at a Glance

Featured Story

Every Baptized Person
Is a Part of the Church
(1 Corinthians 12:14–18, 27)

Lesson Goals

- to recognize that we are all an important part of the Church
- to identify the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation
- to name the Eucharist as the most important sacrament in the Church

Materials Needed

- ☐ *The Catholic Children's Bible* and chapter 1 from the Eucharist Activity Book
- ☐ several 12-inch balloons in different colors, with two different body parts written on each with marker
- ☐ a timer
- ☐ materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Music Suggestions

- "We Are One Body," by Tony Melendez, Jim Cowan (Integrity Music)
- "One Body, One People," by Michael Mangan (World Library Publications)



Scan for
Playlist

Additional Resources

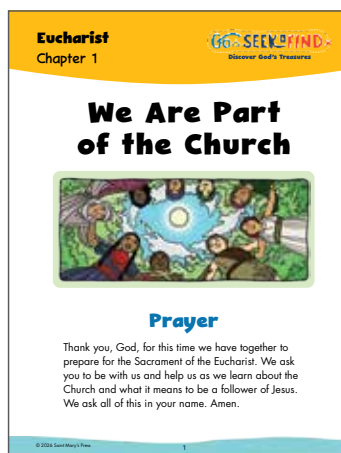
- the chapter 1 digital eLearning lesson for student or family review
- the chapter 1 Home Guide if this lesson will be taught at home or for reinforcement in the home

Background Focus

It is human to want to belong. We constantly 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.

Through our Baptism, we become an important part of a truly amazing community—the Church. We may find ourselves sometimes wondering what we 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 absolutely 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 word and deed. Simply put, the Church needs our unique gifts.

This chapter provides an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a baptized member of such an important mission. As you lead the children in this reflection, allow yourself 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."



Activity Book, Page 1

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to look at page 1 from the Activity Book.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and then saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on the page. Invite all of the children to say, "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

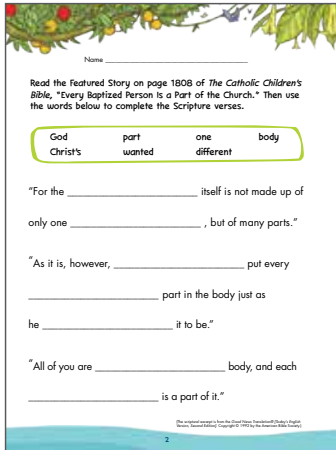
- Invite the children to brainstorm a list of groups that they might belong to, and record their responses on the board. Give some examples if they need help. (*Responses might include: sports teams, family, friends, school, class, church, etc.*)
- Ask the children to think about what it means to be part of a group:
 - What are some of the rules of being part of this group?
 - What does it mean to be a good group member?
- Take some time to go through their brainstormed list on the board and ask the different questions of each type of group. If *church* is on the list, leave that until later.
- Tell the children that today they are going to learn about what it means to be a part of a very important group that follows Jesus. Ask them if they know what this group is called (*the Catholic Church*). If this is listed on the board, put a circle around the phrase.

Seek (30 minutes)

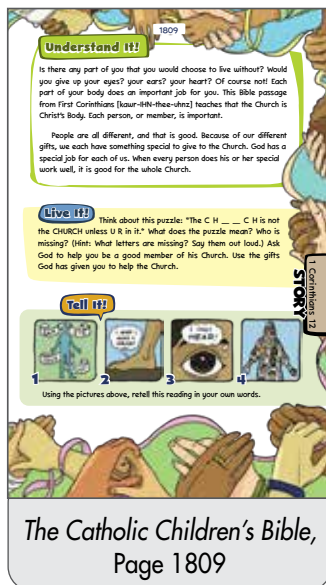
Featured Story

- Invite the children to find 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1807).
- Direct them to turn the page and place a "Found It!" sticker next to the Featured Story (page 1808). Tell them that the text between the leaves is a shortened version of what appears on the previous page.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1808–1809. Invite them to describe what they see in the artwork, and ask them to predict what the story might be about.
- Invite a volunteer to read the title of the Bible story, and ask the children to share what it means to be baptized. If they have ever been to a Baptism, ask them to share what they remember about what happened. Then ask them if they remember their own Baptism.

The Catholic Children's Bible,
Page 1808



Activity Book, Page 2



- Read the Bible story to the children. Then ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as these:
 - Is the body made up of one part or many parts? (*many*)
 - What are some of the different parts of the body mentioned in the Scripture verses? (*feet, hands, ears, eyes*)
 - What does the story say about us? (*We are parts of Christ's body.*)
- Have the children turn to page 2 from the Activity Book and complete the activity with their Bibles open. *Answers: body, part, God, different, wanted, Christ's, one*

Understand It!

- Read Understand It! on page 1809 aloud to the group, or invite a volunteer to read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - Each part of our body does an important job for us.
 - The Bible teaches that the Church is Jesus' Body.
 - Each person in the Church is important and has different gifts.
 - God has a special job for us, which helps the Church.
- Explain to the children how we use the terms *Christ's Body* and *Body of Christ*, using the following points:
 - When we say we are Christ's Body, it means that we work together as members of the Church to continue Jesus's mission of love that he started when he was on earth.
 - Sometimes we use the term *Body of Christ* as another name for all of the people in the Church. (*You may also wish to explain that the children may hear Body of Christ used as another name for the Eucharist.*)
 - The Church needs each of us, sharing our unique gifts together, just like a body needs many different parts to work well.

Live It!

- Read Live It! on page 1809 aloud to the group, or invite a volunteer to read it.
- Ask the children if they understood the puzzle, and invite a volunteer to share what the puzzle means.
- Point out the significance and importance of each person in the Church and what a gift the Church is in that we can join with other people who are trying to use their gifts to follow Jesus. Encourage the children to pray to God to help them be the best members of the Church possible and to use their gifts to help the Church.

Additional Activity Options

If the core learning activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 25 in its place.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in Tell It! on page 1809.
- Invite the children to find a partner and use the images to retell the Bible reading the best that they can.
- Encourage several volunteers to stand and summarize the Bible reading for the group, using the images in Tell It!
- Have the children use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story pages (pages 1808–1809) that capture their interest. Remind them to save enough stickers to use in the remaining chapters.

Core Learning Activity

Parts of One Body Relay

Note: Balloons are used in this activity. If any of the children have an allergy to latex, you should choose a different activity.

- Blow up several balloons and write two different parts of the body on each, such as *Elbow/Shoulder* or *Head/Nose* or *Side/Back* or *Eye/Ear* (or do this in advance).
- Choose two children and explain to them that they have to get from one side of the room to another by using only body parts written on it. For example, if *Head/Nose* is written on the balloon, one child may touch the balloon with only their head and the other child may touch the balloon with only their nose. Together they must move themselves and the balloon to the other side of the room.
- Give the pair a start signal, and time how long it takes them to get to the other side of the room. If they drop their balloon, they have to go back to the beginning and start again. Encourage the rest of the group to cheer on the pair.
- Continue the activity with another pair of children and a different balloon. Repeat this process until all of the children who want a chance have been paired and have raced, reusing some of the balloons if necessary. *Note:* If you have space, you can also make this a race between several different teams at the same time.

Process the Activity

- Invite the children to share how the activity they just took part in is like being part of the Church. (*Responses might include: like the parts of the body, we all had to work together; the rest of the group cheering them on is like the support we get from being part of the Church; we work together with our different gifts for the same purpose—continuing the mission of Jesus, etc.*)
- Ask the children how a person becomes a part of the Church. If they need help, remind them of the title of the Bible reading for the day: “Every Baptized Person Is a Part of the Church.”

Handout Options

You may wish to have the children read all or parts of the handout on pages 26–27 to supplement your presentation, or you may send it home for review with the family.

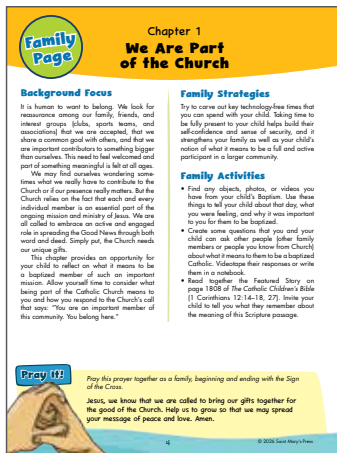
✕ Find (20 minutes)

God's Treasure of the Eucharist

- Explain to the children that Jesus gave the Church seven **sacraments** to bring us closer to him and to help us answer his call to be his followers. Invite the children to name as many sacraments as they can, and list all of them on the board. If the children have witnessed any of the sacraments, encourage them to share briefly.
- Tell the children that there are really three sacraments that begin our life in the Church, and that these three sacraments, together, are called the **Sacraments of Christian Initiation**. Circle, or write, *Baptism*, *Confirmation*, and *Eucharist* on the board, and write "Sacraments of Christian Initiation" near them. Explain that *initiation* is another word for *beginning*.
- Explain some basic information about the Sacraments of Christian Initiation to the children, using the following as possible points to cover:
 - The Sacrament of **Baptism** gives us new life and unites us with Jesus.
 - This is a sacrament you have already received and probably don't remember because most of you were likely babies. (*Ask if anyone was baptized after infancy and what they recall about the sacrament.*)
 - In the Sacrament of **Confirmation**, a bishop or priest anoints us with holy oil, which is a sign that we are strengthened as Christians.
 - Confirmation makes our relationship with Jesus and the Church even stronger.
 - The Sacrament of the **Eucharist** is the Sacrament of Christian Initiation that you are preparing for now, as you have already been baptized. This sacrament prepares us for a lifetime of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ at the **Mass**, which helps us be the best members of the Church and followers of Jesus we can be.
 - The Sacrament of the Eucharist is the Church's most important sacrament. This is why it is important to spend some time preparing and learning about this sacrament.
- Ask the children some of the following questions to check for comprehension:
 - How many sacraments are there? (*seven*)
 - What is the first sacrament we celebrate? (*Baptism*)
 - Which three sacraments are also called the Sacraments of Christian Initiation and help us become a full part of the Church? (*Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist*)
 - Which Sacrament of Christian Initiation do we celebrate again and again, all throughout our life? (*Eucharist*)
- Invite the children to complete the activity on page 3 from the Activity Book. Give them a few minutes to look at each symbol and then choose the one that suggests the sacrament they are preparing for now. Make sure they put a check mark next to the symbol for the Sacrament of the Eucharist.



Chapter 1



Activity Book, Page 4

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - We are all an important part of the Church.
 - The three Sacraments of Christian Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.
 - The Eucharist is the most important sacrament in the Church.
- Ask the children to place the chapter 1 sticker in the correct circle on their treasure map.
- Remind the children to have their parents read the family page on page 4 from the Activity Book with them at home.
- Invite the children to complete the chapter 1 digital eLearning lesson at home for review, alone or with their family.

Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and then saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Read, or invite a volunteer to read, the prayer on page 1 from the Activity Book.
- Invite the children to come to you, one by one. Make the Sign of the Cross on each child's forehead as you say: "____, you are an important part of the Church. Spread the love of Jesus in everything that you do." Encourage each child to respond, "Amen."
- Play a piece of music, that speaks about being part of the Church, the Body of Christ, if time allows. See the "Music Suggestions" playlist at the beginning of this lesson for options.
- End by saying: "May God bless us as we continue to learn and grow as followers of Jesus. Amen." Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a large piece of paper or poster board with a full-body outline of Jesus

The Gifts We Bring to the Church (15 minutes)

- Invite the children to think of a gift they have that they can use to continue Jesus' mission of love. (*Examples include: be kind, love others, be a good son or daughter, pray for others, help those in need, go to Mass.*) Call on the children, one by one, to stand and name a gift. Then invite them to come up and write their name and gift inside the outline of Jesus. Make sure to include your name and a gift as well.
- Show the children all of the different names and gifts just in this room, and invite them to think of the many people throughout the world who are also part of the Church.
- Display this poster throughout the preparation time for First Eucharist as a reminder to the children that we are all important as members of the Body of Christ, the Church.

Materials Needed

- long strips of paper, one for each child, with the phrase, "I can be a good member of the Church by . . ."
- glue or a stapler

Being a Part of the Church (15 minutes)

- Distribute the slips of paper with the sentence starter on them. Ask the children for examples of how they might finish the sentence, and record several of their responses on the board.
- Encourage the children to think of a way they can be a good member of the Church, and invite them to write it on their slip of paper.
- Ask the children to bring their completed strips of paper to you. Make a circle by joining the ends of a strip of paper together and gluing or stapling them. As other children come forward, make links by joining the circles together. When you are finished, you will have connected links of all of the different ways the children have thought of to be good members of the Church.
- Bring this to the room throughout the preparation time for First Eucharist so the children can be reminded that as a Church, we work together to spread Jesus' message of love.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector

We Are One Body (15 minutes)

- Show the video "The Body of Christ," by Clinton Sharp, available on YouTube (3:09).
- Invite volunteers to explain what happens in the video.
- Ask the children to share how they think the video reflects the Scripture reading from First Corinthians.
- Remind the children that we all have different gifts that when shared together can do amazing things, just like our body parts work together to help us do things every day.



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