

WALKING by FAITH

Grade 3 / Home Lesson

CHAPTER 18 THE CHURCH HELPS

Objectives

- Recognize that Christians are called to do the right thing when faced with difficult choices.
- Identify how the Church helps us develop a conscience.
- Explore the role of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in forming a good conscience.
- Identify the steps in an examination of conscience.

Step 1: We Are Invited (Life Experience), pages 108–109

Begin the lesson by praying together the opening **Prayer** on page 108.

Read together the story about Nathan found on pages 108 and 109; this is a continuation of the story of Nathan and William from the previous chapter. Ask your child to predict what might happen next.

Ask: How is Nathan's mother showing him in the picture that she wants to help? (She is sitting and listening to Nathan, holding his hand, and asking questions.) Be sure your child understands that we should go to someone we trust whenever we need help. Use the **Activity** on page 108 to further this idea in your child's mind.

Draw attention to the picture on page 109. Ask: How can you tell that the boys are friends? (They are having a good time together; Nathan is smiling.)

Read aloud **Our Moral Guide**. Have your child respond to the question. Children of this age may not have had much experience praying to the Holy Spirit. Emphasize that the Holy Spirit is always there to listen to our prayers. Take time during the week to lead your child in praying to the Holy Spirit for help in making good choices. Invite your child to share his or her response with you. You might share an appropriate experience in your life when you sought the Holy Spirit's help in making a good choice.

Share the following prayer: Holy Spirit, be with us when we need to make good choices. We need your help to do what is right.

Step 2: We Explore (Doctrine), pages 110–111

Ask your child to recall times when he or she understood which choice was the right thing to do. Read together **The Church Helps Us Choose Wisely** on page 110. Use the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook for further understanding of the term *conscience*.

Read **Catholics Believe** and point out that the Church's teachings are based on the word of God revealed through Scripture.

Invite your child to respond to the caption question. (Possible answers: Scripture, my family's advice, what I learned in religion class, my conscience.)

Ask your child why it is important to develop a conscience. Read through **Stepping Stones: Examining Your Conscience** on page 111. Remind your child that one of the times we examine our conscience is just before we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Make sure he or she understands what the term *examining your conscience* means. Stress that through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, our sins are always forgiven if we are truly sorry. Ask: How is the boy in the picture preparing for this sacrament? (He is examining his conscience.) Point out that it is a good idea to examine our conscience at other times, too, such as at night before going to sleep.

Read **Where Will This Lead Me?** to your child.

Find out when your parish celebrates this sacrament as a community during the Church year, such as during the liturgical Seasons of Advent and Lent. Plan on celebrating this sacrament as a family at the next communal service.

Lead your child in praying the following prayer: God, we have thought about our good choices and our unloving choices. We have asked forgiveness for our sins. Help us do better with the help of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Step 3: We Reflect (Integration of Faith into Everyday Life), page 112

Review the material taught in this lesson by discussing **Recall** and **Think and Share**. Have your child complete the **Continue the Journey** activity.

Read **We Live Our Faith: At Home and In the Parish**. Try to follow through on the suggestions found there.

Refer to the **Language of Faith** section in the back of the textbook for clarification and review of the highlighted words.

Complete the **Faith Journal**, pages 35–36.

Step 4: We Celebrate (Prayer and Conclusion), page 113

Ask your child to think about the last time he or she celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation and how he or she felt receiving God's forgiveness. Then read aloud **We Ask Forgiveness** on page 113. Explain that the word *neglect* in this paragraph means "not doing something we know we should do."

Have your child study the pictures on page 113, and then ask him or her to describe the similarities and differences between the communal and private celebrations of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Ask: What did the young girl do before meeting with the priest? (She examined her conscience.)

Pray together the closing **Prayer**. Begin and end the prayer experience with the Sign of the Cross.