

WALKING by FAITH

Grade 3 / Home Lesson

CHAPTER 26 THE CHURCH TODAY

Objectives

- Give examples of ways the Church is called to make the world better.
- Describe the Church's role in hastening God's kingdom.
- Explore practical steps for giving witness to God's kingdom.

Step 1: We Are Invited (Life Experience), page 156

Read aloud and discuss a recent newspaper article about a present-day problem, then begin the lesson on **The Church Today** by praying together the opening **Prayer** on page 156.

Talk with your child about some of the world's problems that he or she is aware of, such as hunger, violence, and discrimination.

Read together the text on this page. Invite your child to respond to the bulleted question. Remind your child that Jesus wants us to love everyone in the world and to work to make the world a better place.

Invite your child to think about what the world would be like without problems. Explain that the prophet Isaiah dreamed of such a world and that the painting of the peaceable kingdom on the bottom of page 156 is one artist's idea of that world. Read the caption. Take a few minutes to look up and read *Isaiah 11:1–9*. Ask: What are we as Church called to do? (love others; live in peace)

Step 2: We Explore (Doctrine), pages 157–159

Read aloud the text on page 157, **Right Here, Right Now**. Establish that the Church is called to be a leader in working for solutions to the world's problems. Because we are the Church, we must be signs of God's kingdom in our world today.

Draw attention to the photograph. Ask: How are the people in the photograph living their faith? (They worship and pray at church, they greet one another, they try to be good parents and children, and so on.) How can we be signs of God's kingdom when we leave church and go home to our families, our neighborhoods, and our schools? (by loving and helping others, by being friendly)

Read **Catholics Believe** and emphasize that we cannot make the world perfect, but we can help make it better.

Read together **People of the Kingdom** on page 158 and use the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook to clarify the highlighted terms. Ask: Why is it important that we follow the example of Jesus? (We need to act on our faith and help others in the world.)

You may want to identify specific groups that work to solve world problems—for example, Pax Christi (which works to end wars), Amnesty International (which protects human rights), and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (which helps people who are poor). Explain that when we join together with others to work on problems, we can help hasten God's kingdom.

Remind your child that we are members of the Body of Christ. We share our gifts and serve one another. Emphasize that *all* people are our sisters and brothers, regardless of their race, religion, or nationality.

Read together **Saints Walk with Us: Jean Donovan**. Jean Donovan was a lay volunteer who worked tirelessly with Sisters Dorothy Kazal, Maura Clarke, and Ita Ford to provide people in El Salvador with food, clothing, medical care, and hope. These missionaries worked with those who were poor to help them join together and work for a better life. The four women were killed by a government-backed death squad because some powerful people in El Salvador did not want those who were poor to organize and make demands on the government.

Talk with your child about the kind of people who are willing to give up their lives in order to share the good news with others. Establish that, although we will probably never be asked to die for our faith, we are called to live it out everyday, *wherever* we are.

Ask your child to describe what he or she sees in the large photograph. (Catholic volunteers providing health care to mothers and their children) You may want to discuss a missionary group you know about, such as Medical Missionary Sisters, Maryknoll, Divine Word Fathers and Sisters, or Glenmary Home Missionaries.

Invite your child to describe Catholics he or she knows whose actions give witness to their faith. Read over and talk through each point in **Stepping Stones: Giving Witness** on page 159. Decide together as a family what you can do to live out your faith in a special way. Consider heading up a food drive, collecting donations for new sneakers for children and adults in need, adopting a section of a local roadway to keep free of litter, or some other concrete way of making the world a better place.

Draw your child’s attention to the two photographs. Ask: What step are the girls in the first picture practicing? (the first step, learning about their world) What are the students in the second picture doing? (making other people aware of a problem) What step are they practicing? (the sixth step, using their gifts to enact a plan)

Read aloud **Where Will This Lead Me?**

Step 3: We Reflect (Integration of Faith into Everyday Life), page 160

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

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

Complete the **Faith Journal** pages 51–52.

Step 4: We Celebrate (Prayer and Conclusion), page 161

Talk about the different gifts God has given us—laughter, enthusiasm, hope, musical talent, energy, and so on. Invite your child to list additional gifts. Remind him or her that Jesus calls us to use our gifts to help others and to solve problems.

Ask your child to study the photographs on page 161 carefully. Have your child describe what he or she sees in the photographs. (children praying; students painting a fence; a beautiful sunset)

What is the same about all of these photographs? (All deal with peace and love, are images of God’s kingdom, and so on.)

Read aloud **Renew the Earth**. Explain that *inspire* means “to breathe in”—to be filled with new ideas, hope, and energy.

To prepare your child for the closing prayer experience, ask him or her to sit quietly with closed eyes. Ask your child to imagine himself or herself with Jesus in a beautiful place. After a few minutes, lead your child in praying the **Prayer to the Holy Spirit** found on this page. End with a familiar hymn and the Sign of the Cross.