

WALKING by FAITH

Grade 4 / Home Lesson

CHAPTER 21 LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Objectives

- Discover how using and sharing gifts helps people feel like “new.”
- Explore how the Sacraments of Initiation change people.
- Relate these sacraments to Jesus’ ministry as priest, prophet, and king.
- Explore ways to live one’s baptismal commitment.

Step 1: *We Are Invited* (Life Experiences), pages 156–157

Ask your child to name television shows, movies, or books that feature characters whose lives changed for the better. Encourage your child to describe what caused the changes to take place. Then refer to the chapter title on page 156 (**Life in the Spirit**), and tell your child that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can grow in our relationship with God and become new people. Pray together the opening **Prayer**.

Read the text on page 156. Ask: What clues in the story so far tell you there is something very special about Scott’s achievement? (The applause went on for a long time; his friends were really surprised; his teacher made him take a second bow; his family was proud.) How might you have felt if you were in Scott’s place? (scared, proud, excited, amazed, apprehensive) Lead your child to understand that meeting challenges successfully can help us think of ourselves and our abilities in a new way.

Finish reading the story of Scott on page 157. Discuss why this was such a special experience for Scott. (He had always has speech problems, which made him shy and made him feel alone.) Ask: What might have happened if he didn’t have the courage to sing (He might not have discovered his talent; would have remained shy and alone; others kids wouldn’t have changed their minds about him.)

Point out that it took courage for Scott to sing. Ask: How do you think Scott found the courage to sing? (He was encouraged by his family; he knew he had the talent, and that gave him the courage to use it; he wanted to succeed so much that he found the courage to try.)

Read the caption for the pictures on these pages, and discuss them with your child.

Step 2: We Explore (Doctrine), pages 158–161

Read **Baptism** on page 158 and refer to the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook to clarify the highlighted term. Ask: How are we different after our Baptism? (We are members of the Christian community, the Body of Christ; we are freed from original sin and all personal sin. Explain that babies and very young children, who are unable to distinguish right from wrong, cannot commit personal sins.)

Read **Catholics Believe** and explain that in Baptism we become the adopted children of God; we are invited to share in the life of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We also gain a new responsibility—to follow Jesus' teaching and example.

Have your child study the photograph as you read the caption. Explain that in immersion the head—and sometimes the whole body—goes underwater. Ask: How is Baptism by immersion a sign of our sharing in Jesus' death and rising? (Possible answer: Through immersion we symbolically enter into the tomb with Jesus. Reemerging symbolizes the new life we receive in Baptism.)

Read **Confirmation** on page 159, and refer to the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook to clarify the highlighted term. Explain to your child that *chrism* is the holy oil (traditionally perfumed olive oil) used in Baptism and Confirmation. Water is the special sign of Baptism. Ask: What are the special signs of Confirmation? (the laying on of hands and the anointing with chrism) What do these signs tell us about this sacrament? (Possible answers: We are chosen for a special purpose; we share in Jesus' ministry; the Holy Spirit strengthens us to live our faith.)

Point out to your child that the pictures show two examples of anointing—celebration of Holy Orders and the anointing of King David. Read the Landmark and ask: What special purpose do a priest and king have? (A priest serves the people of God in the name of Christ; a king serves his subjects with wise and just leadership.)

Read the **Scripture Signpost** and share the following background information with your child. In Ephesians 2:22 the author uses the metaphor of a building to describe the Church: the prophets and apostles are the foundation stones, Christ the cornerstone, and every member of the Church a living stone that builds up God's dwelling place. The author is telling the Ephesians that God dwells not in a building but in the community of the faithful.

Read the **Scripture Story: Stephen the Witness** on page 160. Review the ministry of deacons found in chapter 14. Ask: Why do you think people described Stephen as “filled with the Holy Spirit”? (Possible answer: because the great strength of Stephen’s faith showed in what he said and how he acted.)

Explain that the word *angel* comes from Greek word meaning “messenger.”

Have your child study the picture as you read the caption. Explain that according to Jewish law, stoning was the punishment for serious sins like blasphemy, in which one shows contempt for God or something sacred. Ask: Why is December 26 a good choice for Stephen’s feast day? (Possible answer: because he was the first to die for Jesus, whose birth we celebrate the day before.)

Read **Our Moral Guide**. Discuss how Stephen’s words and actions showed his faith in Jesus. Name some things that prevent us from sharing our faith as courageously as Stephen did. (Help your child identify some of the factors that stand in the way of proclaiming the gospel, including the fact that the gospel message is a challenge to how we live.)

Ask your child to retell the story of Stephen; remind him or her that we, too, are called to act on our faith.

Read **Stepping Stones: Following Jesus** on page 161. By virtue of our Baptism, we are all called to follow Jesus as priest, prophet, and king. Ask: Which title do you think is most difficult to live up to? (Encourage your child to give reasons for his or her choices.)

Have your child tell how the people in each photograph are sharing in Jesus’ ministry. (Possible answers: A family is praying together at mealtime, nurturing its spiritual life; the girls are following Jesus’ example of responding with love to others.)

Have your child write three statements, using specific examples from his or her life: I act as a (priest, prophet, king) when I . . .

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

Step 3: We Reflect (Integration of Faith into Everyday Life), page 162

Review the material taught in this lesson by completing the sections: **Recall, Think and Share, and Continue the Journey.**

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

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

Complete pages 41–42 in your **Faith Journal.**

Step 4: We Celebrate (Prayer and Conclusion), page 163

Read aloud the title on page 163: **One in Faith**. Ask: How are we one in faith? (All Christians are united in one Baptism.)

Draw your child's attention to the photograph of the baptismal celebration. Ask: How are these candidates called to live out the promises of Baptism? (They must speak and act in ways that show they are followers of Jesus and share in his ministry of priest, prophet, and king.)

Explain that the background image of the three fish symbolizes the Holy Trinity. The early Christians used the letters of the Greek word for fish, *ichthys*, to form an acrostic—Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. The fish symbolized Baptism for the early Christians because they believed that just as a fish can not exist out of water, humans cannot share fully in God's life unless they are baptized. Occasionally three fish are used to symbolize the Trinity, as in this stained glass. Ask: How do we come to share in the life of the Trinity? (Through Baptism we become adopted children of God and share in the life and love of the Father, the Son, the and Holy Spirit.)

Pray together the closing **Prayer**.