

# WALKING by FAITH

## Grade 5 / Home Lesson

### CHAPTER 21 GATHERED AROUND THE ALTAR

#### Objectives

- Connect the experience of gathering for important events to celebrating the Eucharist.
- Recognize our responsibility to participate actively in the Eucharist.
- Identify different liturgical roles.
- Discover how to prepare for Mass.

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

Invite your child to share memories of special gatherings such as birthday parties, or a family reunion. Remind him or her that we are called together every Sunday to worship God. Then lead your child in praying the opening **Prayer** on page 156.

Read the chapter title: **Gathered Around the Altar**. As you read and discuss the text on the page, tell your child that Dorothy Day and a friend founded the Catholic Worker Movement in New York City. Members practiced voluntary poverty in their own lives and worked for social and economic change. Dorothy also established a farm commune and started a newspaper, the *Catholic Worker*, to spread the gospel message of justice and peace.

Make sure your child understands that *papal* means “of the pope” and that the *papal flag* is not only the flag of the pope but also the official flag of Vatican City State, which at 108.7 acres is the smallest independent state in the world.

After reading **Together in One Place**, page 157, ask your child: How is the liturgy like the assembly in the story? (We gather with others for a purpose; we all have roles to play.)

As your child examines the photograph on these two pages, have him or her think about possible special events in the lives of the family in the picture. Ask: What special event might this family be attending? (Possible answers: Mass, a concert, a school play, a church bazaar.) What roles do you think the family members might have in the event? (Possible answers: assembly or audience, cast members, speakers, participants, set-up or clean-up crew.)

Discuss the **Activity** found on the bottom of page 157.

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

Read the **Scripture Story: Building Up God’s Church** on pages 158–159; compare with 1 Corinthians 14:20–28 to get a fuller picture. Explain to your child that when the Corinthians assembled for Eucharist, they gathered in private houses, probably none of which had a room big enough to hold everyone. Although all were supposed to share a common meal and participate as one in the Eucharist, members were treated unequally. The people who were rich arrived early and ate all the food; the people who were poor arrived later and were given little or nothing to eat. People who could speak in tongues were given better places than those who could not. Paul condemned such practices because they were contrary to the Eucharist, which is a sign of love and unity. Paul did not discourage an authentic speaking in tongues, which is a spiritual gift; he did, however, prefer communication that helped build understanding and community.

Clarify that speaking in tongues as the apostles did on Pentecost is different from speaking another language. Most likely the apostles spoke their own language, but the listeners miraculously heard them according to the languages they spoke.

Direct your child’s attention to the map. Point out the distances between Jerusalem, Rome, and Corinth—three centers of the early Church. Help him or her see that without modern technology, communication was poor. Keeping widely separated communities united would have been difficult. Read the **Landmark** and explain that in present-day Corinth one can see the remnants of both the Greek civilization and the first Christian communities.

Continue reading the text on page 159 and refer to the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook for further clarification of the highlighted term.

Invite your child to examine the photograph. Ask him or her how this church is different from their parish church. Ask: How might the shape of this church encourage people to feel more a part of the community and to participate in liturgy? (Because the seating is more in the round, everyone can see everyone else; everyone is close to the altar.) Art background: Some of the first church buildings were oblong, with the altar at one end.

This allowed the faithful to gather as one, but the assembly space was separate from the sanctuary. Later churches were built in the shape of a cross. The addition of transepts—the arms of the cross—meant that all the faithful were no longer gathered together in the same space. Present-day churches tend to be circular, with the altar centrally located. The faithful gather close to one another around the altar, emphasizing the assembly's unity and role in liturgy.

Read **Scripture Signpost** and discuss the question. (Each member of the community, like a part of the body, has a separate function but is needed for the whole.)

Spend some time on the **Activity**.

Read aloud or summarize **All Have a Role** on page 160. Refer to the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook for clarification of the highlighted terms.

Emphasize that it is not the priest alone who celebrates Mass. He has the unique role of acting in the person of Christ, but as presider he leads everyone in celebrating the Eucharist. Make sure your child understands that *testify* means “to give witness.”

Ask your child to identify members of the liturgical ministry in each photograph. (Eucharistic minister, lector, musicians, assembly) Point out the diversity of people who serve as ministers—young and old, men and women, boys and girls. Then invite a response to the caption question.

Read **Our Moral Guide** and help your child understand that the term *obligation* refers to a responsibility—something we are bound or required to do. Some of the obligations of Catholics are summarized in the precepts of the Church found on page 222. Answer the question. (the third commandment: Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.) Refer to the Language of Faith section at the back of the textbook for further clarification of the term *obligation*.

Read together **Stepping Stones: Preparing for Mass**, and discuss each step. Emphasize the value of preparing for and participating actively in the Mass. Lead your child to see that becoming a more active participant is a growth process; our participation should increase as our understanding deepens.

Use a missalette to find out what the readings for the coming Sunday will be. Give your child a Bible, and work with him or her to read passages and identify a common theme.

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

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

Review the material 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 the **Faith Journal**.

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

Give one or two examples of music used to begin a special event, such as the national anthem at a ball game. Have your child recall that we also begin Mass with music, a song of gathering.

Explain that the background photo on page 163 is a model of the Temple in Jerusalem, historically an important gathering place for Jewish people, especially at Passover. Explain that songs of gathering are part of both Jewish and Catholic tradition.

Ask your child to read aloud **A Song of Gathering** on page 163. As you work with the text, be sure your child knows the meaning of the word *hymn*. Point out that the text of a hymn may be drawn from the Bible or may express some truth of our faith in poetic language.

Close the lesson by praying together the **Prayer** from Psalm 95.