

# WALKING by FAITH

## Grade 5 / Home Lesson

### CHAPTER 26 DEATH AND RESURRECTION

#### Objectives

- Realize that faith in God gives us hope when we are faced with death.
- Relate the resurrection of Jesus to the resurrection of our own bodies.
- Explain the purpose of the last rites and the Mass of Christian burial.

#### Step 1: *We Are Invited* (Life Experience), pages 194–195

Ask your child to think about how important family and friends are and how your child might feel if one of them died. Explain that this chapter is about death bringing new life through the sacrifice Jesus made; note the chapter title: **Death and Resurrection**, on page 194. Then pray together the opening Prayer.

Read T.J.'s letter and point out that it is like a prayer, a personal conversation with God. Ask: Why do you think T.J. feels sad and angry at the same time? (Possible answers: T.J. misses his or her friend, he or she doesn't think it's fair that a young person should die.) Why do you think T.J. wrote this letter to God? Responses should reflect T.J.'s attempt to understand death and the desire to keep on trusting in God. Discuss with your child the importance of sharing our feelings when someone we love dies. Assure your child that at such times family, community, and God are there to support us.

Ask your child to speculate about who the two people in the photograph might be and what they are doing. (It could be T.J. and a friend. One girl seems sad; the other is comforting her.)

Continue reading the text on the page 195. Remind your child of the Beatitude: Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Point out that as followers of Jesus, we are called upon to live out this beatitude.

Ask: Why do you think Jesus included people who mourn? (As your child responds, point out that we mourn because we love, which is a sign of God's life in us. Jesus wants us to know that God will not abandon those who live in his love.)

Have your child do the **Activity** and help him or her to understand that there is no formula for writing letters of comfort; they may consist of only one or two sentences. Encourage your child to send his or her letter.

Read the **Scripture Signpost** and share the following information with your child. These words from *John* 11:25–26 are taken from the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Jesus is deeply moved by Lazarus’s death and by the grieving of Lazarus’s sisters, Martha and Mary. His presence alone fills Martha with hope. She reveals her faith in Jesus by answering his question in these words, “Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” The author of this story is very careful to mention that Lazarus has already been dead for four days. He is not in a coma, and Jesus does not simply revive him; Lazarus is truly dead. And Jesus brings him back to life so that we will believe God sent him, the Son of God, into the world. The whole story can be read in *John* 11:1–44.

Then invite your child to respond to the question. (Jesus is speaking to Martha. The question, however, is addressed to all who listen to the word of God. Saying yes—as Martha did—shows that we trust God’s promises.)

## **Step 2: We Explore** (Doctrine), pages 196–199

Turn to page 218 and find the sections of the creed that talk about death and resurrection. Tell your child that this Creed is used at Baptism. Even at the beginning of life, the community looks toward the resurrection of the body or the resurrection of the dead.

Read the **Scripture Story: Our Faith Is Not in Vain!** on page 196. Have your child listen carefully to how Paul argues that as Christians we must believe in the resurrection of the body.

At the time **1 Corinthians** 15:12–19, 32, 57 was written, Corinth was an exciting place to live. It was the most prosperous Greek city of its day. Traders from both East and West often stopped there, bringing their own religious ideas and practices with them. Many Corinthian Christians were influenced by these and other ideas. They looked up on the spirit as superior to the body, which was a very Greek belief. As a result they saw the resurrection as a spiritual experience that had nothing to do with the body. Paul argues that without belief in the resurrection of the body, there is no basis for belief in the forgiveness of sins or life everlasting. Their faith would mean nothing. Paul insists: If Jesus died and rose from the dead, so will we. Paul goes on to address another question he thought the Corinthians might ask—What will the resurrected body look like? To explain, Paul compares the human body to a seed—a seed looks nothing like the plant, but both are real “bodies”; the old form of the seed “dies,” giving way to the new form of the plant (*1 Corinthians* 15: 37–38).

Read **Catholics Believe** and point out to your child that believing in the resurrection of the body makes us optimists—we live in hope, knowing that one day life will be better. We may experience normal human feelings of deep sadness, regret, anger, and even guilt, but, if we live in hope, these feelings of despair or hopelessness cannot overwhelm us. Not even disaster will have the last word.

Provide art materials for your child to do the **Activity**.

Have your child examine the illustration of the ascension on page 197 and read the caption. Ask your child to imagine he or she is among the apostles and to ponder these questions: How would you have felt if you saw Jesus alive after he had died? How would it have changed your opinion of Jesus? Do you think your view of death would have changed? Would you have been less likely to fear death? How would you have felt when you saw Jesus return to heaven?

Read **We Believe in Life Now and Forever** on page 197. Point out that, although we haven't seen the risen Jesus as his first disciples did, we know he is among us. Ask: How is the risen Jesus present to us today? (in the sacraments of his Church) You might add that even though we cannot see Jesus as his first disciples did, our discipleship is special. Remind your child of the story of Doubting Thomas. Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Read **The Journey Home**, page 198. Refer to the **Language of Faith** section at the back of the textbook to clarify the highlighted words. Your child may be familiar with what is called the *Vigil for the Deceased*. Explain that the vigil, also called a wake, may take place in the home of the person who died, at the funeral home, or at the church. The vigil includes introductory rites (for example, an opening song), the Liturgy of the Word, prayers of intercession, and a concluding rite (for example, a blessing). Whenever possible, a musician or song leader leads the assembly in singing.

Draw your child's attention to the photograph, and ask him or her to read the caption. Ask: What do these reminders of Baptism symbolize? (The Easter candle stands for Christ, the Light of the World, and is a symbol of his victory over darkness and death; the pall reminds us of the white garment we received in Baptism as a symbol of new life.)

As your child reads the text on page 199, focus on the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Be sure that your child understands the meaning of the words *consolation* and *commends*. Ask: What words of consolation do you think are included in the homily? (Your child's answer should reflect an understanding of the purpose behind the Mass of Christian Burial—to celebrate what Christ made possible for us in the Paschal mystery—passing over from death into eternal life.)

Point out that the funeral rites normally take the form of the Vigil of the Deceased, the Mass of Christian Burial, and Committal (burial). Ensure that your child does not confuse the final farewell, which is part of the Mass of Christian Burial, with the Committal (burial) of the deceased person.

Call your child's attention to the photograph, and offer then the opportunity to describe and discuss experiences he or she may have had attending a Committal service. Read the caption on the bottom of page 199. What do we hope for the person who has died? (that he or she will enjoy eternal life with God)

### **Step 3: We Reflect** (Integration of Faith into Everyday Life), page 200

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 in the back of the textbook for clarification and review of all highlighted words.

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

### **Step 4: We Celebrate** (Prayer and Conclusion), page 201

Remind your child that there are seven Spiritual Works of Mercy and that two apply directly to those who mourn: comfort the sorrowful and pray for the living and the dead.

Direct your child's attention to the photographs on page 201. Ask him or her to tell how he or she reflects the theme of this chapter. (Death causes sorrow, but in Christ it is also a source of hope and joy. It is the entrance to eternal life because of Jesus' death and resurrection.)

Read **For Those Who Mourn** to find out how we can help those who are grieving. Remind your child that we are never alone in our grief.

- God is a gentle God of compassion (*2 Corinthians 1:3*).
- The ever-present Holy Spirit is our comforter (*John 14:16–17*).
- The entire Church is with us, feeling our pain, caring for us, and supporting us (*1 Corinthians 12:26*).

Bring the chapter to a close by praying for those who mourn. Take a moment for silence to reflect on how your words and actions can bring comfort to those who grieve. Then pray together the closing **Prayer**.