



INCARNATION

Session Background

Purpose

The Son of God enters into our human reality to show us God the Father through his actions and words. This session helps young people understand Jesus' Incarnation and its meaning for us as disciples.

Objectives

Learners will

- ▶ grow in their understanding of Jesus' humanity and divinity and the significance of both for our faith.
- ▶ explore the ways that Jesus reveals the Father.
- ▶ understand our call to imitate Jesus.
- ▶ explore the dimensions of living as a disciple.

Church Documents

For more background on session content, refer to *Catechism* paragraphs 460, 479, and 480.

"Through the Incarnation of God in Jesus, Christians are convinced that God is present within and through all of creation, and, in a special way, within humanity. Evangelization, therefore, enables young people to uncover and name the experience of a God already active and present in their lives."

—*Renewing the Vision*, page 36

Catechist Formation

Jesus is the Emanuel—God with us. He enters into the fullness of our human experience and calls us to live our humanity as a complete response to God's love. Jesus is fully human and fully divine, true God and true man. He is like us in all things, but sin. Jesus was born without the stain of original sin.

Jesus was tempted as all human beings are—in fact, he bore greater temptations than we can imagine—yet he never gave in to them. And all the while he lived a life of incredible joy, showing his disciples, and us, that the true path to happiness is to do God the Father's will. The Son of God chooses to become man, reveals God the Father and the Holy Spirit, and shows us the way!



*How do you relate to the humanity of Jesus?
How do you relate to his divinity?*



Catechist Prayer

Jesus, you come to us as a vulnerable infant, a wide-eyed child, an eager adolescent, and a passionate adult. Help me know your life and teach it. Stand with me and make me bold in sharing your way to the Father. Amen.

Young Adolescents Learning Faith

- ▶ Young adolescents are changing and growing. They are in between childhood and the broadened world of high school and older adolescence. Teaching youth about the Incarnation is an opportunity to help them know Jesus who shares their experience.
- ▶ Many young adolescents struggle to set reasonable expectations for themselves in terms of their achievements. The story in this session can help initiate dialogue about what it means to be human. We can introduce youth to a Jesus who wants to dialogue with them as they set their goals and choose their direction.

Preparing for the Session



For a session planning sheet, visit www.osvcurriculum.com.

Session at a Glance

WHAT'S the ISSUE?

10 minutes

- PRAY** the opening prayer.
- SHARE** a personal story about expectations.
- READ** the story about Calvin on **PAGES 2–3**.
- REFLECT** on questions and share in groups.

WHAT does FAITH SAY?

40 minutes

- READ** the **CONNECT** feature.
- PRESENT** an introduction to the Incarnation.
- READ** the text on **PAGES 4–5**.
- FACILITATE FAITH WALK ACTIVITY** on being human.
EXTEND THE SESSION with **CATHOLICS TODAY** and **Resource 1**, add 20 minutes.
- PRESENT** a summary about Jesus as the way to God.
- SHARE** a personal experience about Jesus revealing the Father.
EXTEND THE SESSION using the **FAITH WALK** on **PAGE 7**, add 10 minutes.
- READ** **BEING ALL YOU CAN BE** on **PAGES 8–9**.
- FACILITATE ACTIVITY** on being like Jesus.
EXTEND THE SESSION using **LIVE YOUR FAITH** on **PAGE 9**, add 10 minutes.
- REFLECT** on key ideas about Jesus presented in the session.
- PRESENT** summary of **CATHOLICS BELIEVE** from **PAGE 9**.

WHAT NOW?

10 minutes

- PRESENT** the **LIVE OUR FAITH** on **PAGE 10**.
- REFLECT** on **WHAT ABOUT IT?** questions.
EXTEND THE SESSION using the **PEOPLE OF FAITH** feature on Saint Joseph, add 10 minutes.
- PRAY** the guided meditation.

Getting Ready

- ▶ Read **Session 1** in the *Jesus Christ Faith Booklet*.
- ▶ Prepare a prayer space with a small table, a simple cloth, a Bible, candle, and cross. Be sure to have matches or a lighter for the candle. (Review the cautionary statement on candles on **PAGE 14**.)
- ▶ Write down the Scripture assignments on sticky notes or small slips of paper for the activities in What Does Faith Say?
- ▶ Create a newsprint sheet for use in What Does Faith Say? Divide the sheet into two columns. Write the word *Human* at the top of the left-hand column and *Divine* at the top of the right.
- ▶ Write a newsprint summary of **CATHOLICS BELIEVE** on **PAGE 9**.
- ▶ Identify young adolescents to help with prayer and to read aloud portions of the text.

Supplies Needed

- *Jesus Christ Faith Booklets*—one per participant
- Bibles—preferably one per participant
- pens or pencils
- 5 × 8 cards—approximately two per participant
- markers
- masking tape
- copies of **Resource 1**—one per participant
- *Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8* Music CDs

Personal Sharing Preparation

- Prepare for personal sharing and faith sharing.
- ▶ In *What's the Issue?*, you will share about a time when you struggled with expectations, and when you wondered if you were good enough to achieve your goal. 2 minutes
 - ▶ In *What Does Faith Say?*, you will share things you know about God the Father because of Jesus. 3 minutes



JESUS

Model of Wisdom

Session Background

Purpose

Jesus is our model of wisdom. We follow his way to know true happiness and salvation. This session helps young people understand the qualities of Jesus as teacher.

Objectives

Learners will

- ▶ know and rely on Jesus as our source of wisdom.
- ▶ understand that Jesus' wisdom came from being the Son of God.
- ▶ explore the way that Jesus taught through words and actions.
- ▶ explore the challenge of living by the values of God's kingdom as presented in the Beatitudes.

Church Documents

For more background on session content, refer to *Catechism* paragraphs 561, 1725, 1726, 1983, and 2556.

"Ministry with adolescents helps young people learn what it means to follow Jesus Christ . . . empowering them to serve others and to work toward a world built on the vision and values of the reign of God."

—*Renewing the Vision*, page 29

Catechist Formation

Jesus provides a voice of wisdom amidst the clamor of society's many pressures and norms. Jesus did not accept the status quo. He did not follow the norm just because it seemed the acceptable thing to do. He healed, forgave, and spent time with people most rejected. Jesus offered a way of acting toward others based upon divine values: peace, love, and justice.

Jesus shared his wisdom through the things he said and did. He was an amazing teacher, who taught wherever he went. Jesus' quintessential teaching is the Beatitudes. The word *beatitude* means "blessed or happy." The Beatitudes are about the present and the future to which we are called by God: a share in the divine nature, eternal life, and rest in him.



What values of Jesus and the kingdom do you most need to embrace at this time in your life?



Catechist Prayer

Jesus, my teacher, I am fascinated by your life and your teachings. I need your wisdom to live faithfully. Help me to share your Good News with the young people whom you entrust to my care. Amen.

Young Adolescents Learning Faith

- ▶ Young adolescents are looking for heroes and engaging in more complex decisions because of expanding social and personal roles. In the midst of these changes, we have an opportunity to present Jesus as their guide and model.
- ▶ To believe this message, youth need to experience your enthusiasm for Jesus and his teachings. They want to see why people choose Jesus as their model of wisdom.
- ▶ Many of the teachings identified in this session are opposite to the messages that we experience in our culture, especially those about wealth, power, fame, and physical beauty. Engage youth in wrestling with these challenging messages.

Preparing for the Session



For a session planning sheet, visit www.osvcurriculum.com.

Session at a Glance

WHAT'S the ISSUE?

10 minutes

PRAY the opening prayer.

SHARE a personal story about fascination.

REFLECT on fascination using questions on **PAGE 13**.

WHAT does FAITH SAY?

40 minutes

PRESENT an introduction of Jesus as teacher.

READ the first two paragraphs on **PAGE 14** and **FAITH WALK** on **PAGE 15**.

FACILITATE FAITH WALK ACTIVITY on the qualities of Jesus the teacher.

READ remaining text on **PAGES 14–15**.

PRESENT a summary on the Sermon on the Mount, **PAGES 16–17**.

EXTEND THE SESSION Resource 2: Living the Message, add 20 minutes.

READ the text on **PAGES 18–19**.

PRESENT thoughts on the Beatitudes.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY on Rewriting Beatitudes.

EXTEND THE SESSION with Beatitude Drama, add 20 minutes.

REFLECT on ideas about Jesus and his teachings.

SHARE personal insights about following Jesus.

PRESENT summary of **CATHOLICS BELIEVE** from **PAGE 19**.

WHAT NOW?

10 minutes

REFLECT on how to live by Jesus' wisdom.

PRESENT the **LIVE OUR FAITH** text.

EXTEND THE SESSION with a discussion of **PEOPLE OF FAITH**, Oscar Romero, add 10 minutes.

PRAY the closing prayer.

Getting Ready

- ▶ Read **Session 2** in the *Jesus Christ Faith Booklet*.
- ▶ Prepare a prayer space with a small table, a simple cloth, a Bible, candle, and cross. Be sure to have matches or a lighter for the candle.
- ▶ Write this question on a 5 x 8 card: *What was Jesus like as a teacher?* Post this card on a blank wall with room for other cards.
- ▶ Write down the Scripture assignments on sticky notes or small slips of paper for the two activities in What Does Faith Say?
- ▶ Write a newsprint summary of **CATHOLICS BELIEVE** on **PAGE 19**.
- ▶ Create a newsprint list of **LIVE OUR FAITH** on **PAGE 20**.
- ▶ Identify young adolescents to help with prayer and read aloud text.

Supplies Needed

- *Jesus Christ Faith Booklets*—one per participant
- Bibles—preferably one per participant
- 5 x 8 cards—approximately one per participant
- markers
- 11 x 17 paper or 1/3 of newsprint sheet—one for every three to five youth
- masking tape
- sheets of newsprint
- copies of Resource 1—one per participant
- *Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8* Music CDs

Personal Sharing Preparation

Prepare for personal sharing and faith sharing.

- ▶ In What's the Issue?, you will share about someone whom you find fascinating. Choose someone that is famous or someone that you know personally. 2 minutes
- ▶ In What Does Faith Say?, you will begin the session summary by sharing why and how you follow Jesus' wisdom in your own life. 2 minutes



JESUS' Relationships

Session Background

Purpose

Jesus' relationships demonstrate commitment to compassion, forgiveness, and honesty. Through his relationships, Jesus shows us what it means to be true. This session helps young people understand Jesus' followers and how they kept his message alive.

Objectives

Learners will

- ▶ look to Jesus as an example of respect for others and of friendship.
- ▶ discover that in his relationships, Jesus showed love, care, and forgiveness.
- ▶ explore how Jesus' closest friendships show us what the nature of our relationships should be.
- ▶ learn how the first Church members demonstrated Christian friendship.

Church Documents

For more background on session content, refer to *Catechism* paragraphs 543, 551–553, 561, and 1948.

Evangelization is central to the life of the Church because without it people cannot come to know Jesus Christ, personally and intimately, as a vital presence in their lives.

—See *National Directory for Catechesis*, 22

Catechist Formation

Have you ever wondered about the Jesus who relaxed, laughed, played, and spent time with his friends? In a sense Jesus was never “off duty” because his ministry wasn’t a “job.” It was a mission. Even in his most intimate moments with those closest to him, we see Jesus teaching how good it is to be alive when one lives a life of obedience to God.

We see Jesus' commitment to the service of others and to the simple things. Some religious leaders of his day accused Jesus of gluttony, hanging out with the less reputable, and working on the Sabbath. Their criticism didn't bother Jesus; he knew that he was in right relationship with his Father and others. He showed his friends how to live this way as well.



What do Jesus' relationships show you about enjoying life's blessings and those with whom you share them?



Catechist Prayer

Jesus, my companion, help me to follow the examples of your first disciples and friends. Like Mary Magdalene, help me be steadfast and loyal. Like Simon Peter, help me to rise up when I fail. And, like Martha, may I always place my trust in you. I ask this in your holy name. Amen.

Young Adolescents Learning Faith

- ▶ Young adolescence is a time of exploring relationships, of defining what friendship is, and of finding out what it means to belong to a group.
- ▶ At this age, young people may be highly critical and even cruel to each other. This behavior typically stems from their insecurities as they work on how to be in relationship with others. Challenge the young people to remember the values of kindness and charity toward one another.

Preparing for the Session



For a session planning sheet, visit www.osvcurriculum.com.

Session at a Glance

WHAT'S the ISSUE?

10 minutes

PRAY the opening prayer.

READ about Anna and Luisa on **PAGES 22–23**.

REFLECT on questions about good friends.

SHARE a personal story about a clique or time when you didn't fit in.

EXTEND THE SESSION with Relationship Role-Plays, add 20 minutes.

WHAT does FAITH SAY?

40 minutes

PRESENT an introduction to the people Jesus met and how he treated them.

EXTEND THE SESSION using Lives Changed on **PAGE 25**, add 20 minutes.

READ JESUS' CLOSEST FRIENDS and the Who Were They? graphic organizer on **PAGES 26–27**.

SHARE about a time you had to say goodbye to a close friend.

PRESENT a brief introduction on the early Church community.

READ about the early Church on **PAGE 28**.

FACILITATE FAITH WALK ACTIVITY on being a friend of Jesus, **PAGE 27**.

REFLECT on true Christian friendship.

EXTEND THE SESSION by inviting Jesus into relationships and using **Resource 3: Strengthening My Friendships**, add 20 minutes.

PRESENT CATHOLICS BELIEVE on **PAGE 28**.

WHAT NOW?

10 minutes

REFLECT on key insights on Jesus' relationships.

PRESENT WHAT ABOUT IT? and the ideas in **LIVE OUR FAITH** on **PAGE 29**.

PRAY the closing prayer.

Getting Ready

- ▶ Read **Session 3** in the *Jesus Christ Faith Booklet*.
- ▶ Prepare a prayer space with a small table, simple cloth, a Bible, candle, and cross. Be sure to have matches or a lighter for the candle.
- ▶ Write the words *Good Friend* at the top of a sheet of newsprint.
- ▶ Write the words *Christian Friendship* at the top of another sheet of newsprint.
- ▶ Identify young adolescents to help with prayer and to read aloud portions of the text. See option suggestion on *Guide PAGE 34*.

See individual **EXTEND THE SESSION** activities for other preparation work needed.

Supplies Needed

- *Jesus Christ Faith Booklets*—one per participant
- Bibles—preferably one per participant
- pens or pencils
- newsprint sheets
- markers, masking tape
- copies of **Resource 3**—one per participant
- *Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8 Music CDs*

Personal Sharing Preparation

Prepare for personal sharing and faith sharing.

- ▶ In *What's the Issue?*, you will share about a time you experienced a clique, or a time when you didn't fit in. You will also share about how you would describe a "good friend." 3 minutes
- ▶ In *What Does Faith Say?*, you will share about a time you had to say goodbye to a close friend. Why was it difficult? 3 minutes



CHRIST Our Savior

Session Background

Purpose

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross redeems us from sin. His love for us makes it possible for us to live as God the Father intended: in perfect peace with him and others. In this session, young people learn about Christ who saves us, reconciles us to the Father, and redeems all of creation.

Objectives

Learners will

- ▶ grow in understanding of Jesus as Savior, Redeemer, and Messiah.
- ▶ understand the origins and effects of original sin in their lives.
- ▶ explore the Paschal Mystery.
- ▶ understand the sacraments as a path to new life.

Church Documents

For more background on session content, refer to *Catechism* paragraphs 384, 415–419, 453, 621, 985, and 1393.

One of the central tasks of catechesis is to instill in learners an appreciation of the sacraments, in particular the Sacrament of Eucharist, through which we enter into the Paschal Mystery of Jesus.

—See *National Directory for Catechesis*, 20

Catechist Formation

The Paschal Mystery—Jesus' suffering, death, Resurrection, and Ascension—is at the very core of Christian faith. It is the central reality around which all of salvation history revolves. Everything that came before was leading up to it; everything that came after was defined by it. This is why we can't separate Jesus' death from his teaching, miracles, healings, Resurrection, and sending of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' act of incredible love and self-sacrifice, he repairs the breach of original sin and reconciles humanity with God the Father.

Life and death are an ongoing part of human experience. We live and we die, and part of being human is our awareness of those realities. We place our hope in Jesus, who unnecessarily took on death and transformed it into new life, sharing with us the same potential.

 *How does your faith in the Paschal Mystery influence how you feel about the dying and risings you experience in life?*



Catechist Prayer

Loving God, thank you for sending Jesus to redeem me and show me the way. You send me to share your Word. Transform my heart and help me to seek you and teach you in all that I do. Amen.

Young Adolescents Learning Faith

- ▶ The changes that accompany adolescence can cause changes and even disruptions in friendships and family relationships. Young adolescents understand the pain and separation of broken relationships. They often feel unworthy and can become critical of themselves. Connecting to these experiences helps young people better appreciate salvation and redemption.
- ▶ To appreciate Jesus as Savior and Redeemer, we need to be in touch with our need to be saved. This session can help spur conversations about the things that bog us down and the things from which we need to be saved.

Preparing for the Session



For a session planning sheet, visit www.osvcurriculum.com.

Session at a Glance

WHAT'S the ISSUE?

10 minutes

PRAY the opening prayer.

READ the opening sentences on **PAGE 30**.

SHARE a personal story about a broken relationship.

READ about making things right.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY on key words.

REFLECT on the questions on **PAGE 31**.

WHAT does FAITH SAY?

40 minutes

READ sections of **PAGE 32**.

EXTEND THE SESSION about Adam and Eve using **Resource 4**, add 10 minutes.

REFLECT on the question from **PAGE 33**.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY by making a mural.

PRESENT a summary of **PAGES 33–34**.

SHARE a personal experience about Jesus' role as Savior.

EXTEND THE SESSION using the **FAITH WALK** on **PAGE 35**, add 10 minutes.

READ **JESUS BRINGS NEW LIFE** on **PAGE 36**

FACILITATE ACTIVITY about making things right.

EXTEND THE SESSION by acting out dramas, add 20 minutes.

PRESENT a summary of **CATHOLICS BELIEVE** from **PAGE 37**.

WHAT NOW?

10 minutes

REFLECT on summary and sharing.

PRESENT the **LIVE OUR FAITH** and **WHAT ABOUT IT?** on **PAGE 38**.

EXTEND THE SESSION using the **PEOPLE OF FAITH** feature on Saint Madeline Sophie Barat, add 10 minutes.

PRAY the closing prayer.

Getting Ready

- ▶ Read **Session 4** in the *Jesus Christ Faith Booklet*.
- ▶ Prepare a prayer space with a small table, a clear glass bowl filled with water, a simple cloth, a Bible, candle, and cross. Be sure to have matches or a lighter for the candle.
- ▶ Prepare a newsprint list of **LIVE OUR FAITH** on **PAGE 38**.
- ▶ Identify young adolescents to help with prayer and to read aloud portions of the text.

Supplies Needed

- *Jesus Christ Faith Booklets*—one per participant
- Bible
- news magazines and newspapers, preferably from the previous few weeks
- scissors and glue sticks for each group
- newsprint
- masking tape
- markers—one pack for every three to five participants
- pens or pencils
- two or three strips of paper per participant
- *Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8 Music CDs*

Personal Sharing Preparation

Prepare for personal sharing and faith sharing.

- ▶ In *What's the Issue?*, you may choose to share a personal story about a time when you experienced brokenness or strain in a relationship. Note: This should be a simple friendship situation that is now resolved. Sharing about an irreconcilable family relationship or a situation regarding abuse is not appropriate. 3 minutes
- ▶ In *What Does Faith Say?*, share about the ways that you personally experience Jesus as Savior in your life. 3 minutes



CHRIST Offers Life

Session Background

Purpose

We come to know Jesus in the Gospels, where we learn about his love for us, and his desire that we know his Father. We meet him in the sacraments where he offers us new life. This session helps young people understand the free gift of eternal life God offers us through Jesus.

Objectives

Learners will

- ▶ know that Jesus is the source of life and he offers us love and forgiveness.
- ▶ understand that to know Jesus, we must spend time with the Scriptures.
- ▶ explore the concept of justification.
- ▶ consider the call to conversion and how we can respond by living in the Light.

Church Documents

For more background on session content, refer to *Catechism* paragraphs 1490, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2025, and 2027.

“The ministry of evangelization witnesses to our faith in Jesus Christ in all aspects of our lives. Young people need to see that we are authentic and that our faith in Jesus guides our lives.”

—*Renewing the Vision*, page 37

Catechist Formation

A personal relationship with Jesus Christ is essential for Catholics. We find keys to this personal relationship in the Mass. There we meet Christ in the sacred assembly—the Mystical Body of Christ—and in Sacred Scripture, where we meet Jesus as the Word of God. We meet him in the person of the priest who is ordained as a servant of the People of God to represent Christ. We most especially meet Jesus in Holy Communion, sharing in his Body and Blood.

Outside of Mass, we come to know him by living in community with other believers, by reading the Bible and following his example, through the work of Church leaders, and in those people most in need whom we are called to serve as Jesus did.



What are the ways that you continue to come to know Jesus?



Catechist Prayer

Jesus, Light for the World, you show me the way to life with God. I pray that your Light will be ever present in my life, to guide me along the right path as I share my faith. Bless the young people and me abundantly as we learn about you. Amen.

Young Adolescents Learning Faith

- ▶ Young people need to see you as a person who makes choices to live the Good News. By example, demonstrate how important it is to nurture a relationship with Jesus.
- ▶ Young adolescents are experiencing more freedom as they get older. With new freedom comes responsibility. Remind them that Jesus is their guide as they explore new horizons and are faced with challenging choices.

Preparing for the Session



For a session planning sheet, visit www.osvcurriculum.com.

Session at a Glance

WHAT'S the ISSUE?

10 minutes

PRAY the opening prayer.

SHARE a story about ignoring good advice.

READ the story about Good News on **PAGES 40–41**.

EXTEND THE SESSION by naming the Good News, add 10 minutes.

REFLECT on struggles to explain beliefs.

WHAT does FAITH SAY?

40 minutes

PRESENT teaching on the life Jesus offers.

READ the text on **PAGE 42**.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY about images of Jesus' relationship with us, **PAGE 43**.

PRESENT responses on images of Jesus.

PRESENT justification and righteousness, **PAGES 44–45**.

EXTEND THE SESSION by making collages, add 20 minutes.

SHARE about a time you made things right.

READ about conversion, **PAGES 46–47**.

PRESENT the topic of conversion, use mind mapping.

FACILITATE FAITH WALK ACTIVITY on a spiritual makeover, **PAGE 47**.

REFLECT on challenges to accepting Jesus' offer of life.

SHARE what helps you follow Jesus more closely.

PRESENT key concepts from the session using **CATHOLICS BELIEVE**, **PAGE 47**.

WHAT NOW?

10 minutes

REFLECT on new insights.

EXTEND THE SESSION with **WHAT ABOUT IT?** and **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**, add 10 minutes.

EXTEND THE SESSION with **PEOPLE OF FAITH**, add 10 minutes.

PRAY the closing prayer using **Resource 5**.

Getting Ready

- ▶ Read **Session 5** in the *Jesus Christ Faith Booklet*.
- ▶ Prepare a prayer space with a small table, simple cloth, a Bible, candle, and cross. Add a vine and a loaf of bread to the table. Be sure to have matches or a lighter for the candle.
- ▶ Write the terms *Vine*, *Shepherd*, *Bread of Life*, *Light for the World* on sheets of newsprint and post them around the room.
- ▶ Cut strips of paper for images activity.
- ▶ Prepare two newsprint sheets, one labeled *Our Reflection* and the other, *Our Action*.
- ▶ Identify young adolescents to help with prayer and to read aloud portions of the text.
- ▶ Choose volunteers to dramatize the What's the Issue? story. Allow them to rehearse and even create props to bring the story to life.

See individual **EXTEND THE SESSION** activities for other preparation work needed.

Supplies Needed

- *Jesus Christ Faith Booklets*—one per participant
- Bibles—preferably one per participant
- strips of paper and newsprint
- markers and tape
- pens or pencils
- copies of **Resource 5**—one per participant
- *Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8 Music CDs*

See individual **EXTEND THE SESSION** activities for additional supplies needed.

Personal Sharing Preparation

Prepare for personal sharing and faith sharing.

- ▶ In *What's the Issue?*, you will share observations about someone who has ignored good advice and hurt himself or herself because of it. 3 minutes
- ▶ In *What Does Faith Say?*, you will share about a time when you have "blown it" but made things right again. You will also be able to share about some of your own struggles to follow Jesus. 3 minutes



THE CHURCH **One in Christ**

Session Background

Purpose

The Catholic Church is the Body of Christ, united by common beliefs and practices. Young people will learn that the Church is diverse yet unified, our common faith can be expressed in different ways, and Christ calls all baptized Christians to full unity in him.

Objectives

Learners will

- ▶ know that a diversity of peoples and cultures make up the Church.
- ▶ identify some of the common beliefs and practices that unite Catholics.
- ▶ explore similarities and differences between Eastern and Roman Catholic Traditions.
- ▶ consider the challenge of ecumenism and identify what all Christians have in common.

Church Documents

For more background on session content, refer to *Catechism* paragraphs 810, 816–819, 838, 1208, and 1318.

As we reach out to those outside the Catholic Church, it is important that we know the essential Catholic faith. Then we can enter into fruitful dialogue with others.

—See *National Directory for Catechesis*, 51

Catechist Formation

The first Christians were blessed with having known Jesus personally. They shared an intimate community, knew what was expected of them, and worked tirelessly to spread the Gospel. Their efforts bore great fruit, but not without great challenges. As the Church grew through the early centuries, it became more difficult to maintain the integrity of the faith. The more distant the Church became from the original disciples, the greater the potential for the Gospel message to be distorted.

Through the twenty centuries of being Church, we have grown and struggled, but the Holy Spirit has helped us maintain our central message and integrity. We have stayed true to the Gospel, and found new ways to spread it throughout the world. We have done this in unity with the pope and bishops, whose authority was handed down from Christ himself.



How have you witnessed the Church staying true to the Gospel? What challenges do you face maintaining the integrity of faith?



Catechist Prayer

God our loving Father, thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus, and of his Church. Send the Holy Spirit to help me see all that unites those who belong to the Church. Help me be an example to these young people of what it means to be Catholic. Amen.

Young Adolescents Learning Faith

- ▶ For young adolescents, this is a time of discovering gifts and of beginning to figure out how those gifts might be shared. You have an opportunity to present the Church as a place where everyone can bring his or her unique gifts to share as members of Christ's Body.
- ▶ Young adolescence is a time of finding where one fits in, of looking for places to belong. Young people need to realize that membership in the Church involves their participation. Help them find ways to participate.

Preparing for the Session



For a session planning sheet, visit www.osvcurriculum.com.

Session at a Glance

WHAT'S the ISSUE?

10 minutes

PRAY the opening prayer.

SHARE how a friend is alike and different.

READ about Juanita, **PAGES 50–51**.

REFLECT and discuss the story.

WHAT does FAITH SAY?

40 minutes

PRESENT the concept of being different but the same.

READ DIFFERENT BUT THE SAME and **EXPRESSING THE SAME BELIEFS**, **PAGES 52–53**.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY on expressing beliefs.

EXTEND THE SESSION about the Body of Christ by using **Resource 6**, add 10 minutes.

PRESENT the two main Traditions of the Church, **PAGES 54–55**.

FACILITATE ACTIVITY by making Reaching Out slogans.

PRESENT the relationship between Catholics and Christians.

READ about Christians, **PAGES 56–57**.

REFLECT on what all Christians hold in common.

EXTEND THE SESSION by having an ecumenical guest speaker, add 20 minutes.

PRESENT summary of key ideas using **CATHOLICS BELIEVE**, **PAGE 57**.

WHAT NOW?

10 minutes

READ the **LIVE OUR FAITH**, **PAGE 58**.

REFLECT on Christian unity using **WHAT ABOUT IT?** activity.

EXTEND THE SESSION with the **PEOPLE OF FAITH** feature, add 10 minutes.

PRAY the closing prayer.

Getting Ready

- ▶ Read **Session 6** in the *Jesus Christ Faith Booklet*.
- ▶ Prepare a prayer space with a small table, simple cloth, a Bible, candle, and cross. Be sure to have matches or a lighter for the candle.
- ▶ Prepare newsprint with two columns labeled *Different but the Same*.
- ▶ Copy onto newsprint the graphic organizer on *Guide PAGE 58* showing Catholic-Christian relationship.
- ▶ Write the slogans of CRS, “Giving Hope to a World of Need,” and Catholic Charities, “Providing Help, Creating Hope,” on newsprint.
- ▶ Create a newsprint sheet with a large, empty cross outlined on it, or tape together two pieces of newsprint to form the shape of a cross.
- ▶ Identify young adolescents to help with prayer and to read aloud portions of the text.

Supplies Needed

- *Jesus Christ Faith Booklets*—one per participant
- Bibles—preferably one per participant
- newsprint
- markers
- tape
- copies of **Resource 6**—one per participant
- *Call to Faith Grade 7 & 8* Music CDs

Personal Sharing Preparation

Prepare for personal sharing and faith sharing.

- ▶ In *What’s the Issue?*, you will share how one of your friends or family members is both alike and different from you. 2 minutes