

Chapter 1

Featured Story

Every Baptized Person Is a Part of the Church
(1 Corinthians 12:12–27)

Lesson Goals

- to recognize that we are all an important part of the Church
- to identify the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation
- to name the Eucharist as the most important sacrament in the Church

Lesson at a Glance

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

Engage Activity

Seek (30 minutes)

Featured Story

Core Learning Activity

Find (20 minutes)

God's Treasure of the Eucharist

Lesson Wrap-Up

Closing Prayer

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and chapter 1 activity booklet
- long strips of paper with the phrase, "I can be a good member of the Church by . . ." on each

Music Suggestions

- "We Are the Body of Christ," by Rob Baker (Tate Music Group)
- "We Are One Body," by Monica's Joy Choir, Ed Archer conducting (GIA)

We Are Part of the Church



Background Focus

It is human to want to belong. We constantly look for reassurance among our family, friends, and interest groups (clubs, sports teams, and associations) that we are accepted, that we share a common goal with others, and that we are important contributors to something bigger than ourselves. This need to feel welcomed and part of something meaningful is felt at all ages.

Through our Baptism, we become an important part of a truly amazing community—the Church. We may find ourselves sometimes wondering what we have to contribute to the Church or if our presence really matters. But the Church relies on the fact that each and every individual member is an absolutely essential part of the ongoing mission and ministry of Jesus. We are all called to embrace an active and engaged role in spreading the Good News through word and deed. Simply put, the Church needs our unique gifts.

This chapter provides an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a baptized member of such an important mission. As you lead your child in this reflection, allow yourself to consider what being part of the Catholic Church means to you and how you respond to the Church's call that says: "You are an important member of this community. You belong here."

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite your child to turn to page 1 of the chapter 1 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by making the Sign of the Cross, then saying, "Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite your child to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross. Have your child put the activity booklet away for now.

Engage Activity

- Invite your child to brainstorm a list of groups that they belong to, and record their answers on a piece of paper. Give some examples if needed. (*Answers might include sports teams, family, friends, school, class, church, etc.*)
- Ask your child to think about what it means to be part of a group:
 - What are some of the rules of being part of this group?
 - What does it mean to be a good group member?
- Take some time to go through the brainstormed list and ask the different questions of each type of group. If *church* is on the list, leave that until later.
- Tell your child that today they are going to learn about what it means to be a part of a very important group that follows Jesus. Ask if your child knows what this group is called (*the Catholic Church*). If this has been listed, put a circle around the phrase.

Seek (30 minutes)

Featured Story

- Invite your child to find 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1807).
- Direct them to turn the page and place an "I found it!" sticker next to the Featured Story (page 1808).
- Tell them that the text between the leaves on page 1808 is a shortened version of the Scripture story on the previous page.
- Ask your child to look at the artwork on pages 1808–1809. Invite them to describe what they see in the artwork, and ask them to predict what the story might be about.
- Invite your child to read the title on page 1808, and ask them to share what it means to be baptized. If they have ever been to a Baptism, ask them to share what they remember about what happened. Then ask them if they remember their own Baptism.

- Read the Featured Story. Then ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as:
 - Is the body made up of one part or many parts? (*many*)
 - What are some of the different parts of the body mentioned in the Scripture verses? (*feet, hands, ears, eyes*)
 - What does the story say about us? (*We are parts of Christ's body.*)
- Have your child turn to page 2 in the activity booklet and complete the activity with their Bible open. Answer: "For the **body** is not made up of only one **part**, but of many parts. . . . As it is, however, **God** put every **different** part in the body just as he **wanted** it to be. . . . All of you are **Christ's** body, and each **one** is a part of it."

Understand It!

- Read Understand It! on page 1809 or have your child read it.
- Invite your child to summarize what they just heard, asking key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points:
 - Each part of our body does an important job for us.
 - The Bible teaches that the Church is Jesus' Body.
 - Each person in the Church is important and has different gifts.
 - God has a special job for us, which helps the Church.
- Explain how we use the terms *Christ's Body* and *Body of Christ*, using the following points:
 - When we say we are Christ's Body, it means that, together, we work as members of the Church to continue Jesus's mission of love that he started when he was on earth.
 - Sometimes we use the term *Body of Christ* as another name for all of the people in the Church. (You may also wish to explain that your child may hear *Body of Christ* used as another name for the Eucharist.)
 - The Church needs each of us, sharing our unique gifts together, just like a body needs many different parts to work well.

Live It!

- Read Live It! on page 1809 or read it aloud together.
- Ask your child if they understood the puzzle.
- Point out the significance and importance of each person in the Church and what a gift the Church is in that we can join with other people who are trying to use their gifts to follow Jesus. Encourage your child to pray to God to be the best member of the Church possible and to use their gifts to help the Church.

Tell It!

- Ask your child to look at the images in the Tell It! cartoon on page 1809.
- Invite your child to use the images to retell the Bible reading the best that they can.
- Have your child use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story (pages 1808–1809) that capture their interest. Remind them to save enough stickers to use on the remaining chapters.

Core Learning Activity**Being a Part of the Church**

- Encourage your child to think of different ways that they can be a good member of the Church, and invite them to write these ways on the different slips of paper.
- Make links from the strips by joining the ends of one strip of paper together and gluing or stapling them and then connecting the rest of the strips together to create a chain. When you are finished, you will have connected links of all of the different ways your child thought of how to be a good member of the Church.
- Hang the chain somewhere in your home where your child will see them and be reminded that, as a Church, we work together to spread Jesus' message of love.

✕ Find (20 minutes)**God's Treasure of the Eucharist**

- Explain to your child that Jesus gave the Church seven **sacraments** to bring us closer to him and to help us answer his call to be his followers. Invite your child to name as many sacraments as they can, and list all of the sacraments on a piece of paper. If your child has witnessed any of the sacraments, encourage them to share briefly.
- Tell your child that there are really three sacraments that begin our life in the Church, and that these three sacraments, together, are called the **Sacraments of Christian Initiation**. Circle, or write, *Baptism*, *Confirmation*, and *Eucharist* on a piece of paper, and write "Sacraments of Christian Initiation" near them. Explain that *initiation* is another word for *beginning*.
- Explain some basic information about the Sacraments of Christian Initiation, using the following as possible points to cover:
 - The Sacrament of **Baptism** gives us new life and unites us with Jesus.
 - This is a sacrament you have already received and probably don't remember.
 - In the Sacrament of **Confirmation**, a bishop or priest anoints us with holy oil, which is a sign that we are strengthened as Christians.
 - Confirmation makes our relationship with Jesus and the Church even stronger.
 - The Sacrament of the **Eucharist** is the Sacrament of Christian Initiation that you are preparing for now, as you have already been baptized. This sacrament prepares us for a lifetime of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ at the **Mass**, which helps us be the best members of the Church and followers of Jesus we can be.
 - The Sacrament of the Eucharist is the Church's most important sacrament and is why it is important to spend some time preparing and learning about this sacrament.
- Ask some of the following questions to check for comprehension:
 - How many sacraments are there? (*seven*)
 - What is the first sacrament we celebrate? (*Baptism*)

- Which three sacraments are also called the Sacraments of Christian Initiation and help us become a full part of the Church? (*Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist*)
- Which Sacrament of Christian Initiation do we celebrate again and again, all throughout our lives? (*Eucharist*)
- Invite your child to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. Give your child a few minutes to look at each symbol and then choose the one that suggests the sacrament they are preparing for now. Make sure your child puts a check mark next to the symbol for First Eucharist.

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite your child to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and have them share some of the key things they learned.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on a piece of paper, and circle them:
 - We are all an important part of the Church.
 - The three Sacraments of Christian Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.
 - The Eucharist is the most important sacrament in the Church.
- Have your child place the chapter 1 sticker in the correct circle on the treasure map.



Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by making the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Read the prayer from page 1 of the activity booklet.
- Make the Sign of the Cross on your child's forehead as you say: "____, you are an important part of the Church. Spread the love of Jesus in everything that you do." Encourage your child to respond, "Amen."
- Play a piece of music, if time allows, that speaks about being part of the Church, the Body of Christ.
- End by saying: "May God bless us as we continue to learn and grow as followers of Jesus. Amen." Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Family Suggestions

For additional ideas, activities, and prayers that can be used by your family for this chapter, please refer to the Family Page on page 4 of this chapter's activity booklet.