

YEAR 8

STAND BY ME





postles' Creed

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son,
our Lord.*

*He was conceived by the power of the
Holy Spirit*

and born of the Virgin Mary.

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.*

*He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of
the Father.
He will come again to judge the living
and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.*

The word “creed” comes from the Latin *credo*, meaning “I believe.” The Creed is our public statement that we believe. This has been the faith of the Church down through the centuries. It is the faith of the Church throughout the world today.

Year 8



Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops





Contents

Unit 1:	We believe in the Holy Spirit
Theme 1:	What do they expect me to do now?
Theme 2:	Am I strong enough?
Theme 3:	How do I know I'm on the right track?
Theme 4:	What does it take to really win?
Unit 2:	We believe in the holy Church
Theme 1:	Who wants to be holy?
Theme 2:	How do I fit in?
Theme 3:	What can I do when my life seems to be falling apart?
Unit 3:	We believe in one catholic and apostolic Church
Theme 1:	Why bother with church?
Theme 2:	What can I hope for when I give?
Unit 4:	We believe in the communion of saints
Theme 1:	Does death destroy everything?
Theme 2:	What makes a person's life successful?

Unit 5: We believe in...the forgiveness of sins

Theme 1: We know these rules.	
Why do we have to learn them again?	94
Theme 2: What's right? What's wrong?	103
Theme 3: How can we work it out?	108
Theme 4: Why should I confess my sins to anyone but God?	112

Unit 6: We believe in...the resurrection of the body

Theme 1: Who wants this body?	120
Theme 2: What's sex worth?	128
Theme 3: Can suffering be meaningful?	134

Unit 7: We believe in...life everlasting

Theme 1: How is my life connected?	142
Theme 2: How can I make the world more peaceful?	157
Theme 3: Do I live justly?	162

Unit 8: Amen

Theme 1: So what difference does belief make?	174
Theme 2: Why go to Mass?	182
Theme 3: How shall we celebrate?	190



CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
CONFÉRENCE DES ÉVÊQUES CATHOLIQUES DU CANADA

Dear friends,

Welcome to your new program. The prayers of all of the Canadian Bishops are with you as you begin this exploration of our Catholic faith.

The Bishops care a lot about young people. We know that you don't always have an easy time. At the same time, we know that you have real hopes and dreams about what you want yourselves and your world to be. As best we can, we want to understand your problems and support you in your hopes. The Bishops, especially your own Bishop, want to stand by you as you learn more about yourselves, your world and God this year. That is one of the reasons that we called this book *Stand by Me*.

Deep in our hearts, "Stand by me" is a prayer that most of us pray a lot: "God stand by me, be with me, and help me...please." In our own way, too each of us says that we will try to stand by God. We believe that it is important to stand by God who made us and who made the world; God who sent Jesus to be with us and the Holy Spirit to give us strength. Just as we say to God "Stand by me", so we also want to say, "Yes I'll do my best, when God says the same to us.

This book talks about God and God's promise to stand by us always. It also speaks about how we can stand by God in what we believe and do, and in the choices we make. One of the things we think it makes especially clear is that God often stands by us through other people: friends, parents, grandparents, family, teachers, and clergy, people who are with us in our parish or in other groups or organizations that we belong to. It also helps us to remember that we stand by God more closely when we stand by others, especially when we help them. Whether God is standing by us, we are standing by God, or we are standing by each other, "standing by" is a sign of friendship and care.

We hope that you have a really good year. May the peace and happiness of God be always in your hearts, even when things go wrong. Remember God does stand by us!

With prayers and very good wishes for you,

The Episcopal Commission for Christian Education

Unit 1

We believe in the Holy Spirit

What do they expect me to do now?

Sept. 8

I can't decide if I'm excited or scared about starting this school year. My older friends have told me that this is one of the best grades, but....

Sometimes it seems like my whole future depends on this year. I can't believe how much is expected from me just because I'm one year older. My parents expect me to spend more time on schoolwork. They're always saying, "Senior high is just around the corner, Kris. It's time to start preparing for the future." Personally, I'm more interested in the present.

Some of my teachers expect me to become a top student. They say I have "a lot of potential" and it's time for it to blossom. Others think I missed my chance and spent too much time goofing off. They probably expect me to fail something. Coach expects me to be one of the star players on the team, since all of last year's stars have moved on. My older sister expects me to do some of the family babysitting, now that I'm "old enough."

The list goes on and on. Everyone expects me to start doing the things they think are important. But I have my own idea of what's really important and what I expect to change.

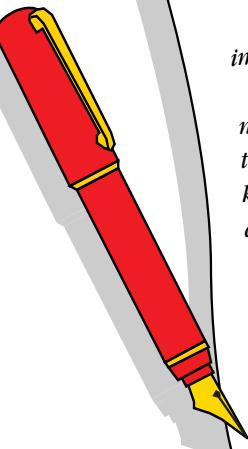
Number one on my list is my social life. I'm expecting it to change a lot. That's because my parents are finally allowing me to have a social life! They're actually going to let me do things on my own! This year I'll be able to party, or go places, or just hang out with other kids. That will make it a lot easier to make and keep friends - not to mention a lot easier to do the "dating thing." I expect I'll be part of the "in crowd" by the end of the year.

That reminds me of the other big thing I'm looking forward to this year - independence! This year I'm going to be the person I want to be, not some creation of my parents and other adults. I'm going to have a lot more say over what I do and when. I refuse to let my coach, my teachers, my parents and my sisters book every minute of my day. I may get into a fight or two over this, but in the long run I expect things will go my way.

Another thing I expect to change this year is my image. Before the year is over, I'll look more like a teenager and less like a kid. That's going to make a big difference in the way I'm treated in public. It should also improve my "love life."

This year I won't say and do as many stupid things as I've done before. I'll have more of my own money and I'll buy the things that are really in. This year I'm finally old enough to be cool.

*From the Diary of
Kris G. (age 13)*



Reflection questions

1. Is Kris typical of the kids you know? Why or why not?
2. How do you think the expectations of other people will affect what Kris does this year?
3. Are Kris's expectations realistic? Why or why not?
4. How might Kris's expectations lead to positive behaviour? How might they lead to negative behaviour?
5. When are expectations good? When can they cause problems?

Great Expectations

Many of us feel that expectations weigh us down. Sometimes we feel that way not because our expectations are too big, but because they are too small. Sometimes we expect too little from God and see too little of the potential in ourselves and in those around us. Sometimes we are like the author of the following imaginary journal written the year that Jesus was crucified.

Friday – the first day of Passover

I went to my first crucifixion today. It was gruesome. They executed that guy who's been attracting all the crowds: Jesus of Nazareth.

Some kids I know thought he was the Messiah. I bet they felt stupid today.

Mom and Dad were glad I wasn't taken in. They're always going on about the importance of work and the problem of expecting miracles. I think they let me go as a lesson that blessings come to those who work hard and study Torah and not to people who waste time with the poor and with sinners.

I saw a cute girl there. Maybe I'll ask her out when Passover's over.

Monday of Passover week

Heard some strange rumours about Jesus. People are saying he's still alive. Some people just can't admit they've been had.

Changed my mind about the girl. I may want to become an Essene. I hear they have some really cool caves, but they don't allow girlfriends.

Monday evening, five weeks after Passover

I haven't written in ages. Not much to talk about, just school and helping Dad in the shop. Zeb and I snuck into the Essene caves. They're not so hot. I've decided not to become an Essene, so I'm back on the lookout for a girlfriend.

Tuesday evening, five weeks after Passover

Who can figure out adults? They tell kids to be reasonable, then they go do unreasonable things themselves. I was talking to the girl who works in the shop across the street. She told me that a bunch of those guys who used to follow Jesus are still hanging out in the rooms over her shop. She says sometimes she hears them praying. And there are always poor and sick people coming to see them. I

Pentecost

Some Background Information

Long before Pentecost became a Christian feast, it was a Jewish feast. Pentecost was a harvest festival that was celebrated fifty days after Passover. (The name "pentecost" means "fiftieth day.") People from towns and villages would travel together to Jerusalem to offer the first-fruits of the wheat harvest in the Temple and to give thanks to God.

guess her Mom told them it was bad for business but they said Jesus expects them to take care of those in need.

How can a dead person expect anything?

Zeb was telling me about his brother the zealot. Maybe I'll become one.

• Thursday, five weeks after Passover

Mom and Dad were talking about the "Jesus group" at dinner. They think they're up to something. Everyone expected them to leave Jerusalem once Jesus was dead, but instead they started this rumour that he's really alive. What do they expect to gain? Jesus couldn't even make it in Jerusalem. Without him, their group has no chance.

Learned some hand-to-hand fighting techniques from Zeb. Becoming a zealot's looking better and better.

• Thursday, six weeks after Passover

Saw some of the Jesus group today. Something odd must have happened. They

kept staring at the sky like they thought something was going to fall from it.

I can't figure that group out. Don't they have lives? Why are they still here? You expect to see kids just hanging out together doing nothing. You don't expect it of adults! My parents expect them to leave after Pentecost. They say the festival provided an excuse for staying in Jerusalem, but once it's over the Jesus group will have to admit that whatever miracles they were expecting just aren't going to happen.

I can't wait for Pentecost! The city always fills up with people who come in to celebrate the grain harvest. There will be a lot going on. This year I'm old enough to go out on my own.

Zeb's brother is giving us real zealot training. It's hard, but I guess that's to be expected if we're going to overthrow the Romans. I threw some stones at a Roman soldier today. He's only a little older than me but he thinks he's so superior.

• Tuesday, seven weeks after Passover

The girl in the shop across the street says Jesus' followers are expecting some-



thing big to happen. I was going to ask her what a group that spends its time doing good works would think of as “big,” but I chickened out. She’s kind of cute. I wonder what she thinks of the zealots. I’ll bet she would have been impressed if she’d seen me spit on that stuck-up soldier and then escape over the rooftops.

• Pentecost (*I can’t believe it’s already 50 days since Passover!*)

What a day! I heard this huge noise across the street. I ran out to see what was going on. People were rushing in from all directions.

I couldn’t believe it. Since the crucifixion, the Jesus group has been afraid to talk to anyone who wasn’t either poor or sick or part of their group. All of a sudden they were yelling out to anyone and everyone, shouting praise to God and to Jesus, the crucified one.

They attracted a huge audience. Who would have expected it of a group of peasants from a rinky-dink place in the north? But this is the really weird part. Everyone who came to listen to them heard the words in their own language. I’m sure the Galileans were speaking Aramaic. How would they know anything else? Yet the man next to me said they were speaking the language of the Ethiopians. And I heard a woman insist they were speaking Greek. In the Torah I learned about the tower of Babel, when God confused all the languages. This was the tower of Babel in reverse. I thought the world was ending.

Then this one guy, Peter, started speaking over all the other noise. He was all fired up. His face was lit up as if he’d just seen the face of God. He started talking about how this great event was the work of God, and how we were seeing the outpouring of

Even Quip wouldn’t try to hike there! Why do we get instructions when we don’t need them and none when we do?

We always have the Holy Spirit when we need instructions. The Spirit is God’s love poured into us. Put that love into action and you won’t go far wrong.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #729,733)

the Spirit of God. He spoke from his heart about God and about the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. He sounded so smart and so sure. It was awesome.

I bet even Peter didn’t expect what happened next. His words seemed to hit people in the gut. Thousands of Jews came forward to be baptized and to join the Jesus group. Regular people like my parents, the shop girl and – can you believe it? – me promised to share all we had with the poor.

I’m giving up becoming a zealot. I’m going to work for peace.

• Monday after Pentecost

I talked with that Roman soldier. He’s not so bad once you know him. The shop girl was impressed. She said she never expected me to change. She didn’t think I had what it

takes to make peace with an enemy. I guess that's the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gave Peter and the others what they needed to understand and talk about Jesus' death and resurrection in spite of the risk; and now the Spirit's helping a zealot-in-training become a peaceful person.

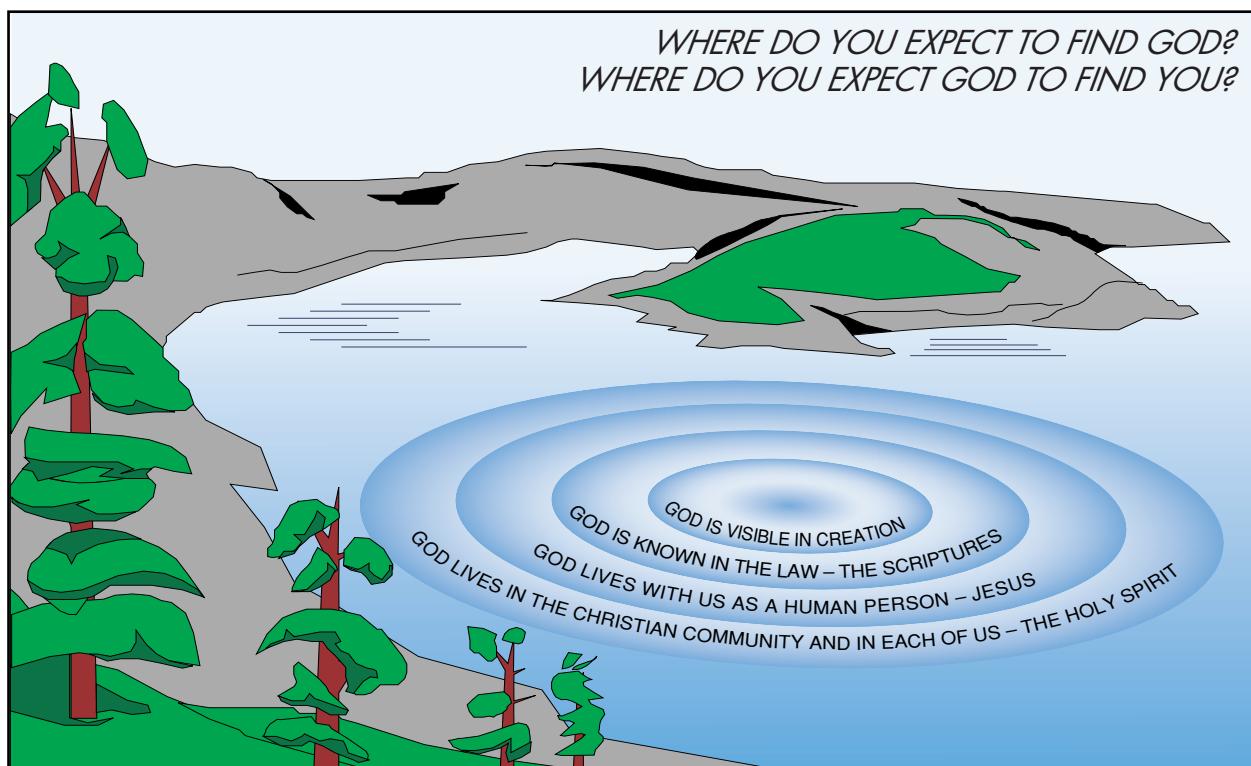
• Wednesday after Pentecost

Dad talked to my uncle. Now their whole family is going to be baptized, too. This thing is really growing! The Spirit's incredible!

Where Can We Find God?

As history has unfolded, God has revealed God's self to people in different ways. The community of believers has learned to expect to see God in different places. In

the earliest days God was known through creation. The rainbow was the first symbol of God's commitment to people. After the time of Moses, believers expected to find God in the Law (another name for the Scriptures). Jesus' followers expected to find and know God in the person of the Christ (the anointed one, the Messiah) and in the Law. With the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Christians learned that God is revealed not only in the person of Jesus and in the Law, but also in the person of the Holy Spirit, who lives in our community and in our hearts. Today Christians expect to see, find and know God in the person of Jesus, in the Law (which includes the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church), in creation and in the community of believers.



You Won't Like Me

I'll never forget David. I noticed him the minute he got off the bus. He was shorter than the other kids, he swaggered when he walked and he had a look in his eye. "Hi, David," I said. "I'm Kip. You're in my group this week. Let's get your stuff and you can meet the other kids."

"Don't waste your time being nice to me," he answered. "In a few days you'll hate me. Everybody always does. Don't worry, I've learned to expect it." He wasn't joking. "Let's wait and see," I said. "It might be better than you expect."

It wasn't better than he'd expected. David lived by his expectations, and he made sure they came true. He didn't expect anyone to be nice to him, so whenever anyone was nice he thought they wanted something. When kids asked him to join them, he'd ask if they'd been bribed to include him. When they joked around, he thought they were making fun of him. The more he accused people of laughing at him or trying to make him look stupid, the more they did just that. Soon things were going exactly as he had expected. Kids and staff avoided him as much as possible.

All of this happened before Seth joined our staff. Seth was a great counsellor – warm and enthusiastic. We warned him about David, but he just laughed. "Don't worry, we'll get along fine. I expect that we'll be good friends in a week. I always get along well with the kids no one else likes." We didn't bother to argue. He'd learn soon enough.

When David met Seth and said, "In a few days you'll hate me. Everybody always does," Seth just laughed. "That's funny," he said. "Everybody always likes me, and I always like everybody. One of us is going to be surprised!"

David still expected the worst. When Seth did something kind, David asked why. When Seth laughed, David screamed, "Stop making fun of me!" But Seth didn't seem to mind. He'd say, "I'm not making fun of you, I like you." Or "I'm not trying to win the 'staff of the month award,' I just prefer to be around happy people so I'm trying to make you happy." When David did something good, Seth pointed it out and told David that it was a sign that their friendship was growing.

One night at supper, Seth stood up and made an announcement: "Today David taught me something no one else could ever teach me: how to roll a kayak. If you need to work on your kayaking skills, just go down to the water and watch David. He's amazing!" Everyone started to cheer. Then Seth paraded around the tables with David on his

shoulders, and all the counsellors stood on their chairs to give David a high five as he passed.

I learned a lot from watching Seth and David. I learned that we tend to get what we expect. I learned that we do the things we believe we can do, and we don't do the things we believe are too hard. I learned that situations become impossible when we expect them to be impossible, and they become manageable when we expect them to be manageable. Most of all, I learned that positive expectations can be stronger than negative ones, so there is always hope. If we expect the best of ourselves and others, the Holy Spirit will help us to make our expectations reality.

Reflection questions

1. When David got off the bus, what did he "want"? Where was his life headed?
2. When Seth arrived, what did he "want"? Where was his life headed?
3. What did David do to get where he expected to go?
4. What did Seth do to get where he expected to go?
5. If David wanted his life to go in another direction, what would he have to do?
6. If Seth keeps living and interacting with people the way he is now, where will he get in life?
7. What clues tell us where a person is going in life?

Send us, Lord, your Holy Spirit.
Renew the face of the earth.

*(refrain from "Expectations," song #1
on the Stand By Me music cassette)*

1.2

Am I strong enough?

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The tradition of the Catholic Church lists seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts sum up the ways God helps us relate to one another, to the world and to God. Each gift is a part of what St. Paul calls the greatest spiritual gift – the gift of love (see 1 Corinthians 13.13).

We are called to use the gifts we know we have and to develop the rest. Not everyone may be using every gift, but every gift is present in every person who works with the

Holy Spirit. When we have the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they help us know and do what God wants us to do.

Here are the seven traditional gifts of the Spirit and a short description of each one.

Wisdom

Wisdom means being able to see how God wants things to be. It means knowing what needs to be done or said to help God's plan happen. Wisdom also means being able to see the effects of various actions. A wise person knows what is really important and what is not.

Wise people can set aside their own desires, prejudices and fears of looking silly and say and do what is needed. They do not judge without hearing all sides of a story.

Wise people find joy in life because even in tough situations, they live the way God wants them to live and know that God is with them.

The Bible contains many examples of wisdom. Three stories that may help you understand wisdom a little better are 1 Kings 3.16-28 (Solomon judges between two women who are arguing over a baby), 2 Kings 5.1-14 (Naaman is cured of his leprosy) and Matthew 8.5-13 (a centurion realizes that Jesus' word is enough to cure his servant).

Understanding

Understanding means seeing why things are the way they are. It means seeing what needs to be done and responding the way God wants you to respond.

An understanding person knows when someone needs help and is quick to offer

help; knows when to help by doing something and when just to listen; makes time for people and makes sacrifices for the needs of others.

Three biblical stories where people show the gift of understanding are Mark 2.1-12 (friends of a paralyzed man lower him through the roof so he may be near Jesus), Ruth 1.3-18 (Ruth refuses to leave her mother-in-law, Naomi) and Luke 10.38-42 (Mary recognizes a deeper need than Martha does).

Counsel (Right Judgment)

Counsel means helping to change things to the way they should be. It means making good judgments and giving good advice.

A person with the gift of counsel says what is needed to change things from bad to good. A person with this gift knows how to lead others in doing what is right and

good and can listen for and hear the truth even when it is hidden.

Three stories in the Bible that can help you understand the gift of counsel are Acts 5.17, 27-39 (a pharisee convinces the council not to kill the apostles for preaching about Jesus), Acts 8.26-38 (Philip helps an Ethiopian understand the Scriptures) and Daniel – sometimes called Susanna – 13.15-62 (Daniel saves Susanna from being punished unfairly).

Knowledge

Knowledge means being aware of the world God has created. It means understanding how things work and fit together.

A person with the gift of knowledge is not easily fooled, is good at solving problems and can give the facts others need to make a good decision.

Three biblical stories that can help you understand the value of knowledge are Matthew 22.23-33 (Jesus uses the Scriptures to prove a point), Luke 10.25-28 (a lawyer knows what is necessary) and Genesis 41.15-36 (Joseph shares his knowledge of dreams and economic planning with Pharaoh).

Fortitude (Courage)

Fortitude means having courage and being able to keep going even when things get really hard. People with fortitude do not give up easily. They do what is needed even if it is hard, painful or scary.

People with this gift will do what they can to change things in their own lives and in the world, will take risks to do what is right, and will not give in to peer pressure.

There are many stories about fortitude in the Bible. Two of them are Acts 4.1-22 (Peter and John are unafraid when called

before the council – you might compare this story to the way Peter acted before Jesus was killed) and Acts 9.10-19 (Ananias gets over his fear and visits Saul).

Piety (Reverence)

Piety means loyalty and faithfulness to God. It means changing our behaviour because of our faith. It also means praying and trusting in prayer.

People with the gift of piety put their faith into action. They find time to pray for themselves and for others and serve others in the name of Jesus.

People with this gift do not lose their faith in hard times. They are not usually weighed down by doubt, despair or anxiety. They find joy and strength in God.

Two biblical stories that may help you to understand the gift of piety are Acts 16.16-34, especially verse 25 (Paul and Silas trust in God even in prison), and Acts 2.43-47 (the lives of the early Christians are shaped by their faith).

Fear of the Lord

Fear of the Lord, sometimes called “wonder and awe in God’s presence,” means knowing that God and only God deserves our absolute trust and commitment. It means believing that God’s plan is much bigger than anything we can see, and that even when we do not understand what is going on, God is working for good. It means believing that God is infinitely wiser, more loving and more powerful than we are.

A person with the gift of fear of the Lord stands in awe before God and does not forget to worship God. Such a person is not ashamed to ask humbly for God’s help and will admit that only God has a right to do,

decide or control certain things. A person like this puts God first.

Proverbs 19.23 says, “The fear of the LORD is life indeed; filled with it one rests secure and suffers no harm.” Three biblical stories that can help us understand the fear of the Lord are Job 1.13-22 (Job stays faithful to God even after losing everything), Exodus 3.4-6 (Moses before the burning bush) and Luke 5.12-14 (a leper knows that Jesus has the power to heal him).

Strong Enough

That night changed my whole understanding of how God acts. We were in the mountains, miles from anywhere. There were nine of us: two advisers and seven kids on a school wilderness trip. We were hiking

along a ridge trail, joking and laughing, when I sprained my ankle.

I rested for a little while, then we kept moving. I could walk, but not very fast, so we didn't make very good time. We were still on the ridge when the clouds rolled in. We could hardly see, but we had to keep going. The ridge was not a safe place to spend the night, especially in a storm.

Our advisers, Alan and Jen, tried to keep our spirits up, but it wasn't working. Everyone was scared. When we finally came to a trail leading down from the ridge, all of the kids let out a big cheer. Alan and Jen didn't seem too happy, but we took the trail anyway. It wasn't until the next morning that they told us we were lost. Because it was still stormy, we couldn't take the path back to the ridge. We'd have to stay put and hope the weather would clear by the next day.

That afternoon, a couple of hunters came down the trail near our campsite. Alan explained what had happened and asked for directions to the nearest road. "You folks have a bit of a hike ahead of you," the hunters said. "It's almost 25 kilometres from here. If you're desperate, the doctor staying in the cabin along the trail about 3 kilometres from here probably has a two-way radio you could use."

Then they drew a simple map showing how to get to the road and where to find the nearest phone. After they left, we spent the rest of the day in our tents sleeping, talking and playing cards. Things were looking up.

Things were looking up until about 10 p.m., that is. That's when Alison lost it. She was really jumpy. As we walked to her tent, she fell over and started to cry. "I just took all my epilepsy pills," she sobbed.

I called for help and everyone came running. Jen picked Alison up and carried her to her tent. I followed them. Two kids started to cry. I could see them hugging each other. A girl named Lisa hollered, "Those hunters said there's a doctor with a radio up the trail!" She grabbed Alan's arm and the two of them started to run. One boy knelt down and started to pray. It was an odd sight but somehow it made me feel better.

When we reached the tent, Jen tried to make Alison vomit. Nothing worked. I was holding Alison, trying to keep her from shaking. I could feel her heart pounding harder and faster than I thought a heart could go. I was terrified and I felt useless. I remember looking up at the sky, now clear and full of stars. "God," I said silently, "I don't know what to do. Please help." Then it hit me. "Tell her you love her." Love her! I had only known her for a few days. But I did love her. I loved her the way God wants

us to love all people. I wanted what was best for her. At that moment I would have done anything to make her okay. I felt a bit stupid but I said, “Alison, hang on. Please don’t die. I love you. God loves you and wants you to be here.”

Jen stopped what she was doing. “That’s right, Alison,” she said. “We all love you. You’re an important part of this group. You’re an important part of our lives now.” She kissed Alison on the top of the head. “We love you.”

“You can’t,” Alison cried. “When I’m around things go wrong. No one could love me.”

“We do!” Jen and I said together.

“Please help me,” Alison whispered.

I don’t know how long we sat just holding her and telling her that we loved her. Eventually Alan and Lisa came back with the doctor. A rescue team was on its way – we just had to get Alison back to the doctor’s cabin. Three kids offered to carry the



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #1830)

stretcher. They were scared – two of them had been through this before with someone who didn’t make it – but they did it anyway.

Alison went to the hospital in a helicopter. She’s going to be okay. Jen flew in with her and talked to her foster parents. They were upset, of course, but they were also happy. I guess she had overdosed before, but this was the first time she had asked for help. The psychologist said it might be a major breakthrough.

There was still something I didn’t understand. Just before Alison was put into the helicopter, she looked at me and mouthed “thank you.” Later, I told my mom about it. Mom said she was thanking me for my wisdom.

"What wisdom?" I asked.

"The wisdom God gave you to see what Alison really needed and to give it to her even if it made you feel silly. You know," Mom continued, "all of you showed real inner strength that night. The Holy Spirit was clearly with you."

Reflection questions

1. How did the members of the group help each other do what needed to be done?

2. What "gifts" did God give different people in this situation?
3. The narrator's mother said that the Holy Spirit was present that night. Where can you see the following gifts in this story?
 - Wisdom
 - Understanding
 - Counsel
 - Knowledge
 - Fortitude
 - Piety
 - Fear of the Lord

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and daughters from sin
and gave them new life.
Send your Holy Spirit upon them
to be their helper and guide.
Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(This is the prayer said by the bishop during the laying on of hands from the Rite of Confirmation, #25)

1.3

How do I know I'm on the right track?

Where Are You Going?

"Where am I going?"

"Am I going where I should be going?"

"How can I get where I want to go?"

These are questions we need to ask ourselves from time to time. By trying to find the answers, we take control of our lives and make responsible choices. Sometimes the answers to these questions are clear. Sometimes they're not. At times we know where we want to go and how to get there. At other times we're not sure, so every day we head in a new direction.

How Can We Know the Way?

Shortly before his death, Jesus told the disciples that he was leaving them but that they would join him soon. He did not tell them exactly where he was going, but he said they would know how to get there. Thomas responded as most of us would have: "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (John

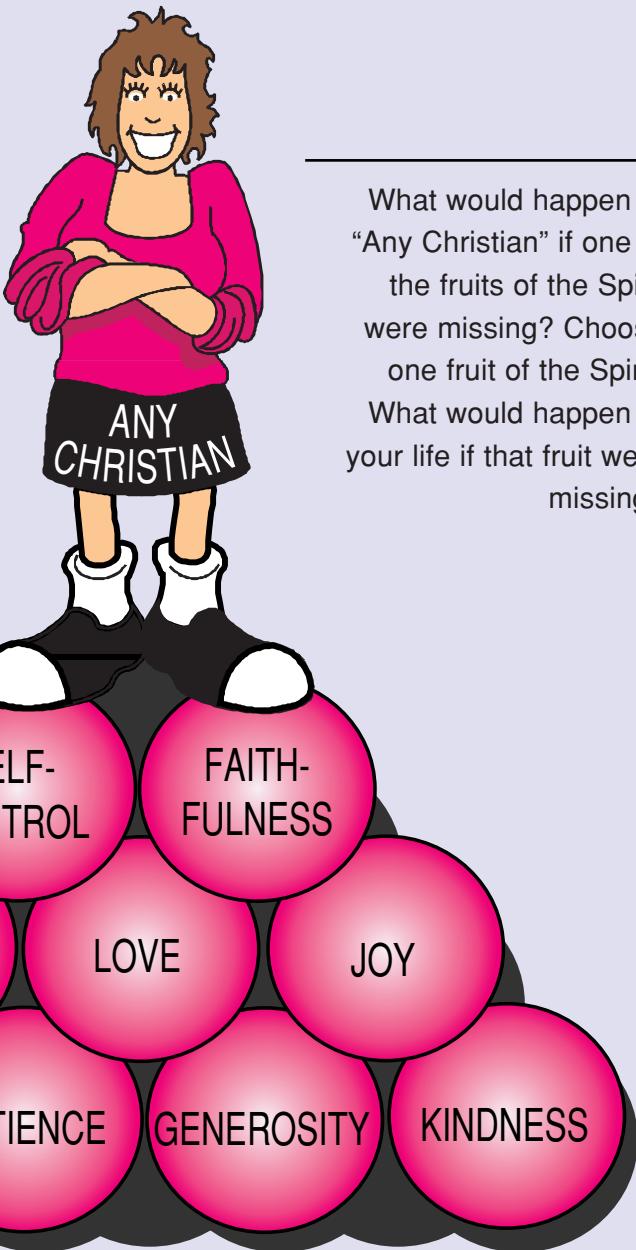
14.5). Jesus answered, "I am the way..." but the disciples did not know what he meant. Jesus then promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit. The Spirit would teach the disciples all they needed to know and would remind them of all Jesus had taught. The Holy Spirit would help them to understand where to go and how to get there.

One way the Holy Spirit helps us to do this is by letting us know whether we are acting with God or against God. When we are acting with God and using the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the "fruits of the Spirit" can be seen in our lives.¹ When we are acting against God, the fruits of the Spirit are hard to see. Galatians 5.22-26 tells us what the fruits of the Spirit are. When we can see them in our lives, we know that we are acting with God.

¹ When we talk about the "gifts of the Spirit," we are talking about the "tools" and attitudes which God gives us that make it possible for us to do God's will. When we talk about the *fruits* of the Holy Spirit, we are talking about the blessings which come to us because we have done God's will.

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Jesus came so that we might “have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10.10). When the fruits of the Spirit are in our lives, we experience life “in abundance.” When one or more of the fruits of the Spirit are missing from our lives, we are out of balance and unable to live as fully as God wants us to live.



What would happen to “Any Christian” if one of the fruits of the Spirit were missing? Choose one fruit of the Spirit. What would happen to your life if that fruit were missing?

The Fruits of the Spirit

(This is a choral reading to be performed by nine groups of students. Each group decides how it will perform its section. Pay attention to the tone and volume of the chanted words.)

Group 1

The fruit of the Spirit is love.

*(chanting) Love, Love, Love, Love, Love,
Love, Love, Love ... (dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak)*

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.
(1 John 4.16)

Let us love not in word or speech, but in truth and action. *(1 John 3.18)*

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

(1 Corinthians 13.4-7)

(Background voices increase in volume)
Love, Love, Love.

Group 2

The fruit of the Spirit is joy.

*(chanting) Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy,
Joy, Joy ... (dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak)*

O God ... you show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy.
(Psalm 16.11)

You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sack-cloth and clothed me with joy, so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. *(Psalm 30.11-12)*

Jesus said: I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. *(John 15.11)*

(Background voices increase in volume)
Joy, Joy, Joy.

Group 3

The fruit of the Spirit is peace.

*(chanting) Peace, Peace, Peace, Peace,
Peace, Peace, Peace, Peace ... (dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak)*

They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full

of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. (*Isaiah 11.9*)

It is to peace that God has called you. (*1 Corinthians 7.15*)

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. (*Colossians 3.15*)

(*Background voices increase in volume*)
Peace, Peace, Peace.

Group 4

The fruit of the Spirit is patience.

(*chanting*) Patience, Patience, Patience, Patience, Patience, Patience, Patience, Patience... (*dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak*)

We urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help

the weak, be patient with all of them.
(*1 Thessalonians 5.14*)

Be patient with someone in humble circumstances, and do not keep him waiting for your alms. (*Sirach 29.8*)

The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. (*James 5.7-8*)

(*Background voices increase in volume*)
Patience, Patience, Patience.

Group 5

The fruit of the Spirit is kindness.

(*chanting*) Kindness, Kindness, Kindness, Kindness, Kindness, Kindness, Kindness... (*dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak*)

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another. (*Zechariah 7.9-10*)

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you... for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” (*Matthew 25.34-36*)

Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life and honour.
(*Proverbs 21.21*)

(Background voices increase in volume)
Kindness, Kindness, Kindness.

Group 6

The fruit of the Spirit is generosity.

(chanting) Generosity, Generosity, Generosity, Generosity, Generosity, Generosity...

(dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak)

Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you. *(Matthew 5.42)*

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back. *(Luke 6.38)*

You received without payment; give without payment. *(Matthew 10.8)*

(Background voices increase in volume)
Generosity, Generosity, Generosity.

Group 7

The fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness.

(chanting) Faithfulness, Faithfulness, Faithfulness, Faithfulness, Faithfulness, Faithfulness, Faithfulness, Faithfulness... *(dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak)*

Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. *(Luke 16.10)*

The faithful will abound with blessings, but one who is in a hurry to be rich will not go unpunished. *(Proverbs 28.20)*

Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter; whoever finds one has found a treasure. Faithful friends are beyond price; no amount can balance their worth. *(Sirach 6.14-15)*

(Background voices increase in volume)
Faithfulness, Faithfulness, Faithfulness.

Group 8

The fruit of the Spirit is gentleness.

(chanting) Gentleness, Gentleness, Gentleness, Gentleness, Gentleness, Gentleness...

(dropping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak)

Let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight. *(1 Peter 3.4)*

A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.

(*Proverbs 15.4*)

Jesus took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.”

(*Mark 9.36-37*)

(*Background voices increase in volume*)
Gentleness, Gentleness, Gentleness.

Group 9

The fruit of the Spirit is self-control.

(*chanting*) Self-control, Self-control, Self-control, Self-control, Self-control, Self-control, Self-control, Self-control... (*drop-*

ping to a background whisper but continuing as the next three speakers speak)

Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one.

(*1 Corinthians 9.25*)

Like a city breached, without walls, is one who lacks self-control. (*Proverbs 25.28*)

As pressing milk produces curds, and pressing the nose produces blood, so pressing anger produces strife. (*Proverbs 30.33*)

(*Background voices increase in volume*)
Self-control, Self-control, Self-control.

Group 1

The fruit of the Spirit is love.

Group 2

The fruit of the Spirit is joy.

Group 3

The fruit of the Spirit is peace.

Group 4

The fruit of the Spirit is patience.

Group 5

The fruit of the Spirit is kindness.

Group 6

The fruit of the Spirit is generosity.

Group 7

The fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness.

Group 8

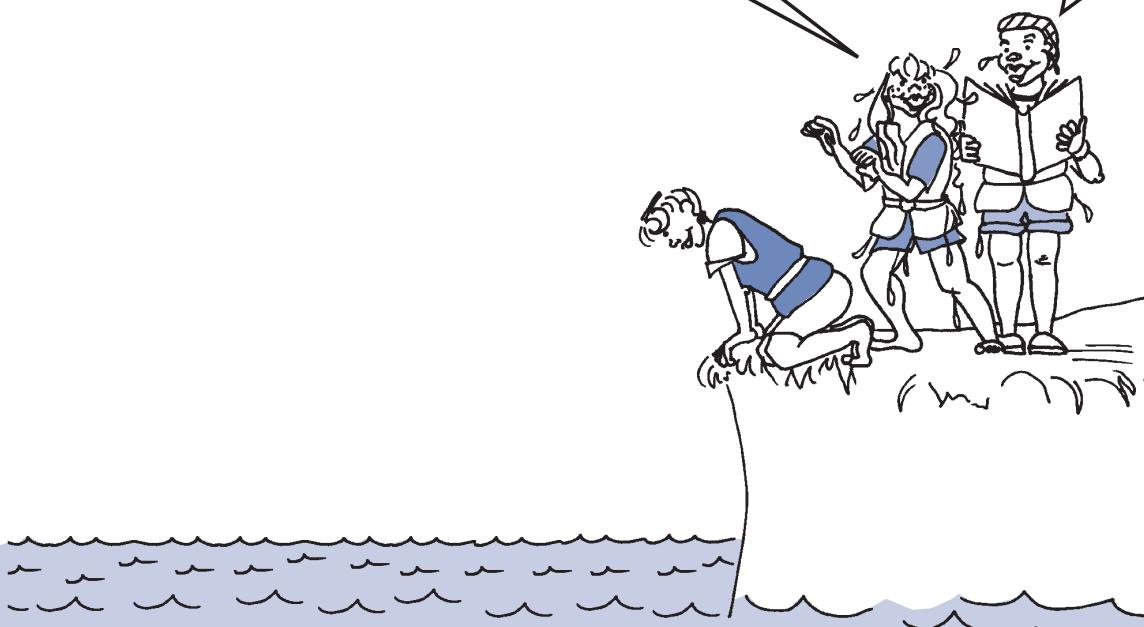
The fruit of the Spirit is gentleness.

Group 9

The fruit of the Spirit is self-control.

Doogie, how can you pass up an opportunity like this?

It's tempting, but it says here, "the more we renounce ourselves, the more we 'walk by the Spirit.'" Plus, Quip runs faster than me.



***Doogie Dogma* (Catechism #736)**

What does it take to really win?

A Place for God's Temple

An old legend says that God spent a lot of time trying to find the perfect spot for the Temple before Solomon could build it. God wanted a spot that people would look upon as truly "holy," a spot that would remind people of the nature of the One who lived there. It would need to be a place where something truly wonderful had happened.

As God watched the world, God noticed two brothers. These two brothers had inherited a wheat farm and a mill. They grew the finest wheat around and ground it into the best flour.

At the end of each day, the brothers shared the flour equally. The older brother was married and had four children, while the younger brother was single and lived alone. One day the younger brother said to himself, "Every night, my brother and I each take home the same number of sacks of flour. But my brother has a wife and four

children to care for, while I only need to support myself. But I know my brother. He will never agree to take more. I will have to do something on my own." He decided that every night, after everyone was asleep, he would take some of his flour over to his brother's storehouse.

Around this same time, the older brother said to himself, "Every night, my brother and I each take home the same number of sacks of flour. But I have a wife and four children, while my brother is all alone. When I am old, my children will make sure I have enough to eat and a warm place to live. When my brother is old, he may have to pay someone to care for him. His only guarantee against hunger and cold is the money he saves now. He should get more flour than me. But if I tell him to take more, I know he will refuse. I will have to do something on my own." The older brother decided that every night, after his brother was fast asleep, he would take some of his flour to his brother's storehouse.

Every night for several months, each brother would sneak some of his flour over to the other's storehouse. Then one night, the two brothers, each carrying a large sack of flour, met halfway between their homes. Each one realized what the other was doing. They dropped their sacks and rushed to embrace one another, smiling and laughing because of the great love they shared.

God, too, was smiling as the brothers embraced. "At last," God said, "I have found the perfect place to build my temple – here, where these brothers live in solidarity; here, where each brother believes that the other's needs are more important than his own. In this place people will come to know me."

Reflection questions

1. What is noteworthy about the way the two brothers acted?
2. You could say that in this story, each brother ended up "winning." Why?
3. Why did God decide to build the Temple on the spot where the brothers met?
4. God chooses to build the Temple in the place where two brothers live in solidarity with each other. Based on this story, how would you define solidarity?

Solidarity

We live in solidarity with others when we see their needs as our own needs and their hopes as our hopes. We live in solidarity with others when helping make their dreams come true is as important to us as helping make our own dreams come true. We live in solidarity with others when their successes are our successes and our successes are their successes, and when their

failures are our failures and our failures are theirs. Solidarity leads to win-win situations. Solidarity means "being as one."

The Trinity is the perfect model of solidarity. The Trinity also reminds us that life lived in solidarity with others is life lived God's way.

Who Is the Trinity?

When we say the Creed, we say we believe in God the Father almighty, in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, and in the Holy Spirit. At other times we say we believe in one God who is the Holy Trinity. How do these two statements of our faith fit together? Who is the Father? Who is the Son? Who is the Holy Spirit? Who is the God we believe in?

Listen to the following conversation, which was overheard by the caretaker in an old church.

Cross: That's it. They've turned off the lights in the church for the weekend. We're on our own until next Sunday.

Holy Water: It's been so peaceful here since they built the small chapel for weekday Masses.

Candle: It would be even more peaceful if we didn't always have to listen to the two of you arguing over who's more important.

Cross: I keep telling old Holy Water that arguing is pointless. It's quite obvious that I'm the most important symbol in the church. After all, a cross represents Jesus and all that he did. I am a symbol of Christ's death and resurrection. What could be more important than that?

Holy Water: What indeed? The answer is obvious – *I* could be more important

than that. Holy water is a reminder of Baptism and of the Holy Spirit who comes to people in Baptism. Everyone knows that in the ongoing life of the Church, it is the Holy Spirit who is most important. After all, Jesus told the disciples that they should be glad that he was going back to the Father since the Spirit would only come after he left. He clearly thought that it was better to have the Spirit.

Candle: Look, I'm far more important than either of you. Even before Christian churches existed, candles were used in Jewish services. The candles served as a reminder of God the Father, the creator of everything, the one who sent the Son and the Spirit.

Clearly, I'm the most important since I'm a symbol of the Father's presence.

Stained Glass Window (SGW): Will all of you stop!

Candle: Who was that?

Holy Water: I'm not sure. I don't think I've ever heard her voice before.

Cross: I think it was the stained glass window above me. But I'm not sure. She almost never talks.

SGW: You're right. It was me. I'm getting quite tired of this ridiculous argument. None of you is more important than the others.

Cross: But I represent Jesus!

Candle: I am a reminder of ...

SGW: Of the Father. Yes, I know. And the Holy Water represents the Spirit. But the point is that the Father, Son and Spirit are One. It is absurd to say that one is more important.

Candle: What do you mean, they're one? They're three distinct persons!

SGW: Yes – three distinct persons who are one God. That's why we call God the Holy Trinity.

Cross: So what you're saying is that the Father, Son and Spirit are each a part of God?

SGW: No, each of them is fully God. Anything that God can do, any one of them can do.

Holy Water: Then "Father," "Son," and "Spirit" are just different roles that God has, kind of like the choir director is also a mother and a taxi driver.

SGW: No, Father, Son and Spirit are not just roles. The Father, Son and Spirit are three distinct persons; but they work together in everything.

Candle: But everyone knows that God the Father is the creator.

Cross: And God the Son saved the world.

SGW: The Father, Son and Spirit worked together to create and to save the world. And they work together in the Church today. The Trinity is the perfect model of solidarity. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are distinct and yet they are one.

Cross: This all seems very complicated.

SGW: That's why it's called a mystery of faith.

Candle: If it's so hard to understand, then why do people make such a big deal of it?

I love looking at the stars and thinking that some of the light I see tonight left those stars millions of years ago.

I love thinking that even before it left, God – Father, Son and Spirit – existed in perfect love and unity. And now, they're inviting us to be part of that unity! It's like being invited to visit the stars.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #257, 260)

SGW: Belief in the Trinity is the central mystery and the most important truth of our faith. Belief in the Trinity shapes all our other beliefs about God.

Cross: How?

SGW: Well, for one thing, belief in the Trinity keeps us from playing one of the members of the Trinity off against another. There are some people who would like to say that God the Father is really strict but Jesus is loving and forgiving. Those people say Christians don't have to worry about the rules given in the Old Testament.

Cross: But if you believe in the Trinity, you know that the rules come from Jesus *and* the Father, so followers of Jesus do have to pay attention to them.

Cross: So when Jesus was crucified, it was as if death tried to take on God?

SGW: And, not surprisingly, death lost. So the power of death was destroyed and everlasting life became possible.

Candle: I still don't quite get it.

SGW: That's why we say it's a mystery.

Holy Water: Wait. If Jesus was God even when he was dying, why did he say, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

SGW: Jesus said those words because he is also human, and he felt what humans feel. So now God understands us when we cry out in loneliness – not only because God created us and knows us completely, but also because God has felt what we feel. Belief in the Trinity gives a lot of hope to people who are suffering.

Holy Water: You haven't said anything about the Holy Spirit.

SGW: When people are baptized, they receive the Holy Spirit. God comes to live in them. God knows what is going on inside them because God *is* inside them. If we believe in the Trinity, we know that God is in us and therefore God is never too far away to really understand or help.

Candle: I think I'm starting to understand. It's like the gospel story when Philip says to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied."

Cross: Jesus said, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

Candle: Jesus was telling Philip and the other disciples that anyone who knows Jesus knows the Father. Jesus then

SGW: Exactly.

Cross: Okay, so if you believe in the Trinity, you know that the Father, Son and Spirit agree about what's really important. Why not just say that and be done with it?

SGW: It's far more than just agreement. Think about this. Jesus is God. So, when Jesus died, God experienced death.

Holy Water: You mean there was a time when God was dead?

SGW: No. The Father and the Spirit did not die. They experienced death because they are one with Jesus. But because Jesus is one with them, death was not strong enough to hold him. He rose from the dead.

says that the Holy Spirit will soon come to live in them. When this happens, Jesus will live in his followers and will be known through his followers.

SGW: Sometimes we're like Philip. We ask to be shown God. Jesus tells us that we must learn to see the Holy Spirit in ourselves and in those around us. When we do, we will know and see Jesus and the Father.

Now perhaps we can have a little less arguing in here.

Cross: (*whispering*) That stained glass window sure is smart. I can't really get a good view of her from here. What does she look like?

Holy Water: She's an icon of the Trinity.

How Is God Present?

The three persons of the Trinity are one God. Whatever one does, God does.

Whenever one is present, God is present.

When Jesus spent time with the outcasts of society, they knew that God had not abandoned them. When Jesus touched lepers, they knew that God did not think they were untouchable. When Jesus healed the sick, they knew that God cared about their suffering. In Jesus, God was with everyone who had felt cut off from God.

After Jesus ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit came to live in the apostles. They began to heal sick people, to talk with outcasts, and to touch people who were "untouchable." In the apostles, God was with all those who had felt separated from God.

Today, it is in us that God is with people who feel separated from God. Our relationships can bring God to others if we let them. When our relationships are built on

solidarity instead of power, they reflect the Trinity and God is present.

Sonia: A Story of Solidarity

The rainy season in El Salvador had just begun. We had been walking for three hours along a muddy road to reach the village. We were starting to wonder why we had bothered.

As soon as we got to the village, about two dozen children came to meet us. We noticed two things right away: their huge smiles and their rotting teeth.

Sonia stood in the middle of the children, only a few centimetres taller than most of

them even though she was 19 years old. She greeted each of us with a hug and invited us to follow her to her parents' home. We would be staying with her family since they had the largest house in the village.

Their house turned out to be one room about 3 metres by 4 metres, and 14 people lived in it! Two people slept in each of four cots and the others slept in hammocks strung over the cots. That left plenty of room for the chickens and the rooster on the floor. The family borrowed hammocks for us and said there was lots of room.

Sonia and her mother made us dinner – beans, tortillas and scrambled eggs. (We had the same thing for breakfast and lunch the next day. In fact, it is rare for Sonia's family to have any other food.)

After dinner we sat and talked with Sonia. We learned that since she was 18, she had been the village teacher and doctor. She told us that it was not unusual for doctors and teachers to be so young. Most of the people between ages 16 and 35 had been killed in the years of fighting between the FMLN¹ and the government. Most of the towns and villages in the area had been destroyed, and the people had fled. Now that peace seemed possible, people were returning to the area, but new communities had to be built from scratch.

Sonia had gone to the capital to learn about basic health care, about how to make medicines to cure common diseases, and about how to teach. Many of the young people who went to the city to learn did not return to the country. The city had running water, different foods, electricity, a bed for

¹ The FMLN is a popular national liberation movement in El Salvador. The full Spanish name of the movement is Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional.

every person, jobs, education.... The list went on and on.

Some of her teachers invited Sonia to stay in the city and go to university. "I was tempted," Sonia told us. "So many things happen in the city. Here it's just a struggle to survive. But I knew that if I stayed in the city, the children here would not have a teacher for several more years. No one would know how to treat the water so that babies would not always be sick. No one would learn how to care for their teeth so that all of the young children would not have rotten teeth."

"I was tempted to stay in the city for myself, but my community needed me at home. Maybe in a few years others will be old enough to teach. Then maybe I will go and study some more. But until then, how could I be happy if I knew that the children here were ill and I was too selfish to help?"

Reflection questions

1. How does Sonia's life reflect God?
2. How does Sonia live in solidarity with others?
3. Do you think Sonia would think of herself as a "holy" person? Why or why not?
4. Could you do the kind of thing Sonia did? Why or why not?

For more information about people like Sonia and the ways that Canadians can help them, contact the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) at 10 St. Mary Street, Suite 420 Toronto, Ontario CANADA M4Y 1P9 or visit www.devp.org.

The sign of the cross and the Doxology

The sign of the cross and the Doxology ("Glory be") are two ancient prayers that acknowledge our faith in the Trinity: God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The sign of the cross was used from the earliest times in Baptism and Confirmation. Later it was used to bless people and things. The Doxology is an ancient prayer of praise to God.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

Unit 1 Summary Statements

- The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost made it possible for the disciples to respond to and share the full wonder of the resurrection. The Holy Spirit also helps us to recognize God and to believe.
- God reveals God's self in many different ways. Christians have learned to expect to see, find and know God in the person of Jesus, in the Law (which includes the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church), and in the community of believers.
- The Holy Spirit helps us to deal with changing expectations, and helps us to change our expectations to be more in line with the teaching of Jesus.
- The fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. They are present when we do God's will. These signals help us to know when we are on the right track in the decisions we make.
- Because God has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are able to live and love the way Christ calls us to do.
- Central to our faith is the belief that there is only one God. This one God has been revealed to us in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son – Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit. This is the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.
- The Trinity reveals God's nature as always relating in love.
- “Really winning” means being able to stand in solidarity with others.

Key Terms

Holy Spirit

the “Law”

discernment

Pentecost

fruits of the Holy Spirit

Trinity

community of believers

gifts of the Holy Spirit

solidarity

Unit 2

We believe in the holy Church

2.1

Who wants to be holy?

Messages from God

Too often we think that God only belongs in church or is only involved in “religious” things. In fact, God is everywhere in our lives, and is involved in everything we do. If we find it hard to see and hear God, maybe the words of the poet Walt Whitman can help us.

*I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four,
and each moment then:*

*In the faces of men and women I see God, and
in my own face in the glass:*

*I find letters from God dropped in the street,
and every one is sign'd by God's name;*

*And I leave them where they are, for I know
that wheresoever I go,*

Others will punctually come forever and ever.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Reflection questions

1. The poet says he meets God every day in other people. How do you think he recognizes God in them?
2. He also says that he finds letters from God dropped in the street. What do you think he means by “letters from God”?
3. In what ways have you encountered God?
4. Do you think Walt Whitman sounds like a “holy” man? Why or why not?

Holiness Is...

What does it mean to be holy? A holy person sees and responds to God in both big and small ways. A holy person sees the possibilities for good in every situation. When we are holy, we feel fully alive. When we are not holy, something in us is either dead or asleep.

In biblical times, something or someone that was holy was given a special purpose by God. Holy people lived the way God wanted them to live.

Each of us has also been given a special purpose by God. When God created us, God gave us a combination of gifts and talents that make us different from everyone else. We can choose to be holy by doing certain things: using our unique gifts and talents to do the good that God wants us to do; living up to our potential; and being fully ourselves. Sometimes we think that to be holy we have to try and become someone else; the truth is, we can only be holy if we are ourselves.

Holiness Is Being Called and Calling Others

After his Baptism, Jesus went out into the desert to fast and pray. When he returned, he called the first disciples. Luke 5.1-11 tells us that Jesus got into Simon Peter's boat and asked Peter to row out a little way from the shore. From there Jesus was able to speak to the large crowd of people gathered on the shore. The water and the surrounding hills amplified his voice so even those who were standing at the back of the crowd could hear him.

When he had finished speaking, Jesus told Peter to lower his net and try one last time to catch some fish. Peter had already cleaned his nets and was ready to go home, and now Jesus wanted him to try fishing one more time. Peter probably wasn't too excited about putting out the nets one last time, but he did it anyway.

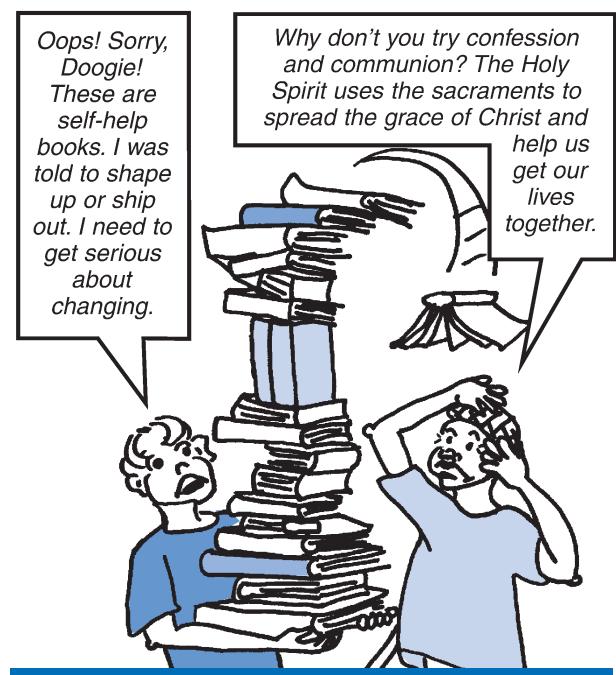
When the nets were hauled in, the catch was enormous. Peter knew right away that Jesus was no ordinary man. That's when

Jesus called Peter to come and follow him, saying, "From now on you will be catching people."

This encounter with Jesus was the beginning of Peter's new life. He went from being an unknown fisherman to a man who would change the lives of millions of people throughout the centuries. Jesus called Peter to reach his full potential. Peter began to do this only after Jesus' ascension, when Peter called people to unite their hearts to Jesus and reach their potential. (See Acts 2.14-42.)

Stop and Think

- If being holy means seeing that you can make a difference in the world, and actually making a difference, do you want to be holy?



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #774)

among God's people and to help all people see that they belonged to one family.

Every time Jesus healed someone, forgave someone, or talked or ate with someone who had been an outcast, he was helping them understand that they belonged to God and that there was a place for them in God's plan. When Jesus sent his disciples out to forgive and heal, he was asking them to help build a single community where all people would feel that they belonged with each other and to God. (See 1 Corinthians 3.21-23.)

When we feel that we belong, we are more likely to share our gifts and talents, reach out to others and give our best. When we do this, we begin to reach our potential.

Stop and Think _____

- If being holy means seeing that you can make a difference in the world, and actually making a difference, what helps you to be holy?
- If being holy means knowing that you belong and inviting others to belong, what helps you to be holy?

-
- If being holy means seeing that you can make a difference in the world, and actually making a difference, what helps you to be holy?

Holiness Is Belonging and Inviting Others to Belong

A tax collector named Levi gave a banquet for Jesus (see Luke 5.29-32). He invited many other tax collectors to attend. The pharisees were angry with Jesus for eating with these people. Tax collectors were seen as sinners who had given up their right to belong to Jewish society.

By reaching out to the tax collectors, Jesus was trying to make them feel better about themselves so that they would see why they should live as God wanted them to live. He was trying to end the divisions

Holiness Is Being Nourished and Nourishing Others

A large crowd had been following Jesus, listening to his teaching. When he saw that they were hungry (see John 6.1-14), he told his disciples to give the people some food. The disciples reminded Jesus that the crowd was huge and they had very little money or food. There was nothing they could do. Jesus told them to have the people sit down and to bring him the food they had – five barley loaves and two fish. Jesus then gave thanks for the food and shared it among the 5000 people. The people were

astonished when they saw that there was more than enough for all.

Jesus' actions remind us of two things. First, it is not always possible or good to depend only on ourselves. We must all rely on one another and on God. Second, no matter how impossible a situation seems, there is always something we can do to work with God.

When we see what we can do and do it, and when we see what we cannot do and place our trust in God, we will begin to live up to our potential. When we accept the nourishment and support we need from God and from others, and when we give the nourishment and support we are able to give, we will live up to our potential.

Stop and Think

- If being holy means getting the strength and support you need to live life to the full, do you want to be holy?
 - If being holy means getting the strength and support you need to live life to the full, what helps you to be holy?
-

Holiness Is Being Freed and Freeing Others

Mark 5.1-20 tells us about a time when Jesus helped a man who was possessed by many evil spirits. The man was living among the tombs because he was violent – a danger to himself and maybe to others. When Jesus ordered the demons to leave him, he became calm and rational. He joined the many people who wished to listen to and learn from Jesus.

As Jesus got ready to leave the region, the man who had been possessed wanted to follow him. But Jesus told him that instead he should go and tell his friends of

God's great mercy. He should help his friends to understand that God offers freedom to all who are enslaved.

This man became holy when he accepted the gift of freedom Jesus offered him and when he agreed to share the joy of his freedom with others so that they might have hope. He found holiness when he turned away from his destructive behaviour and lived up to his potential.

Many stories in the gospels speak of Jesus freeing people from destructive behaviour and sin and giving them a chance to start life again. (Another story you might look at now is John 8.1-11, the woman caught in adultery.) In each story, the people who accepted the invitation to begin again were accepting the invitation to holiness. They were agreeing to try again to

Holiness Is Being Healed and Offering Healing to Others

Jesus spent much of his public ministry healing people. He reached out in compassion to those who were suffering and who came to him for help. In Luke 14.1-6, Jesus healed a man who was suffering from dropsy, which made his arms and legs very swollen. Jesus met the man on the Sabbath, a day when no work was to be done, but healed him anyway. Jesus told the pharisees who were there that helping a person in need was following the spirit (the true meaning) of the sabbath laws even if it was not following the letter (the exact words) of the law.

The man with dropsy set himself on the path to holiness when he admitted his own need and asked for help. Jesus gave him the help he needed and then sent him away to use his health and talents and to live life fully, as God wanted him to do.

At different times in our lives, we will need help to reach our potential and do the things God created us to do. We will need physical, emotional or spiritual help and healing. The story of the man with dropsy, like the many other stories of healing in the Bible, reminds us that God will give us the healing we need when we ask for it.

It is important to remember that God does not always heal us in the ways we wish to be healed. God heals us in the ways we *need* to be healed. To be holy means knowing when we need help, asking for help, and accepting it when it is offered. To be holy is to keep going once we have gotten help.

To be holy also means helping and healing others when they need it. We can reach our potential only when we see our own

live up to their potential and be the people God had created them to be.

Jesus offers people freedom. He also asks people to share that freedom with others. He told those who had been forgiven to go and forgive others, and he tells us that if we wish to be forgiven we must be willing to forgive. (See Matthew 6.14.)

Stop and Think

- If being holy is accepting the offer to begin again when we have failed and allowing others to begin again when they have failed, do you want to be holy?
 - If being holy is accepting the offer to begin again when we have failed and allowing others to begin again when they have failed, what helps you to be holy?
-

need and ask for help, and when we see others' needs and offer help.

Stop and Think

- If holiness means accepting help and healing when we need it, and offering help and healing when we can, do you want to be holy?
- If holiness means accepting help and healing when we need it, and offering help and healing when we can, what helps you to be holy?

Holiness Is Being Faithful and Encouraging Faithfulness in Others

Jesus' whole life helps us to understand the value of being faithful. In all that he said and did, Jesus was faithful to the Father. Even when he was praying in the garden the night he was arrested, and when he was dying on the cross, Jesus trusted the Father. Jesus never tried to get out of the commitment he had made to God. He never decided that things were getting too hard. He never tried to forget about his relationship with the Father and look for something easier.

Jesus stayed faithful to his friends, too. Even when his friends betrayed and left him, he did not stop loving them. Each time his friends failed him, Jesus gave them another chance. When Thomas doubted that Jesus had risen, Jesus let Thomas touch his wounds. After Peter denied Jesus, Jesus gave him a special task: to care for Jesus' followers.

Jesus calls us to show this same kind of love for our friends. He tells us to love one another as he loved us (John 13:34). He says to be faithful to each other just as he was faithful to his friends.

The story of the ten bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1-13) talks about being faithful and not giving up or taking the easy way out. The five foolish bridesmaids didn't do anything extra, such as carry more oil, to do their job. This meant they couldn't do their job: light the procession and the celebration when the bridegroom finally arrived. The story reminds us that only when we try to keep our commitments can we do the things we are meant to do. Only then can we live up to our potential.

It is also important to encourage others to keep their commitments. Jesus tells us not to cause anyone else to stumble. He also tells us to offer guidance to anyone who is in danger of stumbling or anyone who has already stumbled (see Luke 17:1-4). By helping others keep their commitments, we can help them become the best people they can be.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #826)

Stop and Think

- If holiness is trying to keep our commitments and helping others to do the same, do you want to be holy? If holiness is not giving up when things get hard, do you want to be holy? If holiness means doing what it takes to become the very best people we can be, do you want to be holy?
 - What helps you to be holy?
-

So Who Wants to Be Holy?

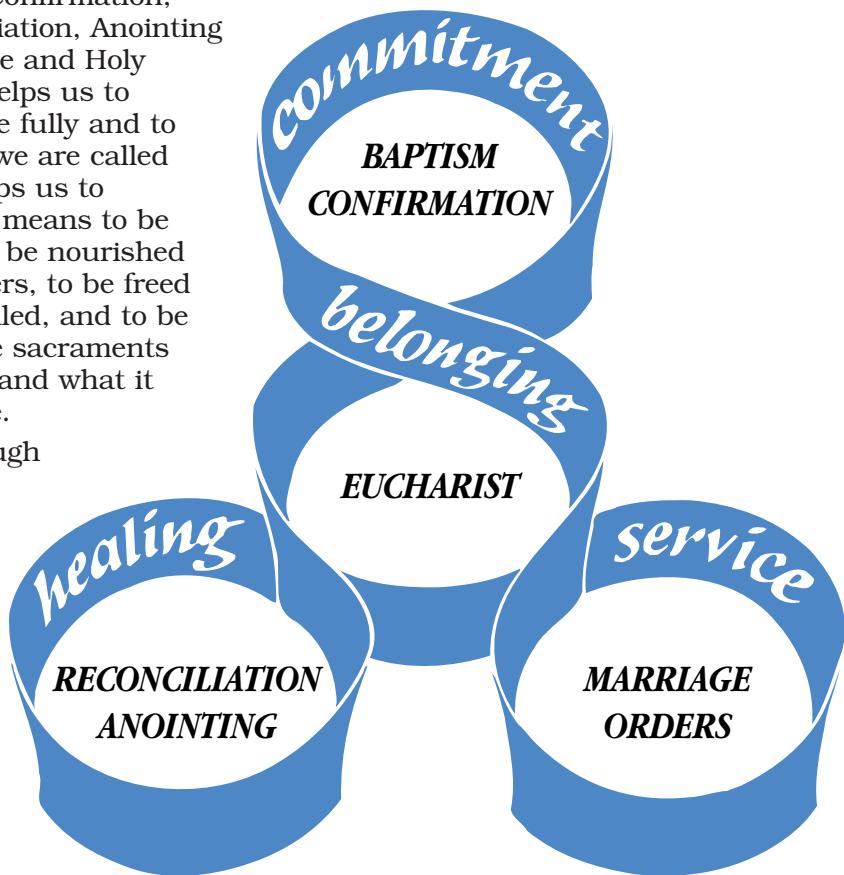
Being holy means making a difference in the world. It means belonging and inviting others to belong. It means getting the strength and support you need to live life to the full. It means being freed and healed and offering freedom and healing to others. It means trying to keep our commitments and helping others to do the same. Above all, being holy means being loved and loving others. Love is the soul of all holiness. Anyone who wants to love and be loved wants to be holy.

Celebrating Holiness

The Catholic Church celebrates seven events that show the different aspects of holiness. These events, called *sacraments*, give us strength and courage as we try to become holy. Every important moment and every stage of Christian life is touched by one of the seven sacraments. It is easier to understand our faith life if we understand the sacraments.

Here are the seven sacraments of the Church: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage and Holy Orders. Each one helps us to encounter God more fully and to become the people we are called to be. Each one helps us to understand what it means to be called, to belong, to be nourished and to nourish others, to be freed and helped and healed, and to be faithful. Each of the sacraments helps us to understand what it means to really love.

As we move through the other themes in this unit, we will look at the sacraments and what each one tells us about holiness.



God, you promised that wherever there are two or three gathered in your name, you are there in their midst. We welcome you, we open ourselves to you, we seek you in the lives of our friends, our families, and in everyone we meet every day.

2.2

How do I fit in?

May We Join You?

Imagine that you are standing outside, all by yourself, on a cold, rainy day. You are wet, tired and lonely. Now imagine that you see a building. Through a big glass window, you can see a group of kids your age. They are talking, laughing, eating, playing games and listening to music. You wish that you could join them, but you know that you don't belong because....

What kinds of things keep people from feeling that they belong? In what situations are people most likely to wish they could belong?

Most of us wish we belonged when we see people who have something we don't have or who can do things we can't do.

The Acts of the Apostles tells us that people wanted to belong to the early Christian community because the Christians had a sense of joy and purpose that no one else had. The Christians faced

fears with confidence and got through hard times with hope and faith.

Many people asked the disciples how they could become part of this remarkable community. The disciples helped them see that joining the Christian community meant entering into a covenant with God through Jesus. Part of the covenant was a commitment to love others no matter what, and to be generous with those who were in need. Another part of the covenant was a commitment to be forgiving and to accept forgiveness.

All who chose to enter into this covenant were baptized. After their Baptism they were sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. They were then invited to join other Christians in the "breaking of the bread" (the Eucharist). Filled with the Holy Spirit and nourished by the body and blood of Christ, they were able to live the way the Christians they had admired did. They truly belonged to the community that was known for its faith, courage and love.

Today, the faith, love, hope and joy of believers still attracts many people to the Church. These people want to belong to this group, which believes that

- people are more valuable than things
- all people deserve to be loved and treated with dignity
- forgiveness is more important than revenge
- long-term commitments are more important than the pleasure of the moment.

Many adults want to be part of a community where God is clearly present. Many parents want their children to grow up in this kind of community, too.

Today, just as in the early church, people ask if they and their children might join this community. Today, as in the early church, they hear that to belong, they must

enter into a covenant with God and with the community. They must promise to love God and God's people. They must accept forgiveness and try to be forgiving. They must reach out to all who are in need. If a child is too young to promise to live this way, the parents or godparents promise that the child will be taught these values as he or she grows.

People who choose to make these promises before God and the Christian community are baptized by water in the name of the persons of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. After their Baptism they are sealed (or confirmed) by the gift of the Spirit. Their sealing is an anointing with oil by which God gives them strength to live the way they have promised. Their entrance into the Christian community is complete when they take part fully in the Eucharist and share the body

and blood of the Lord. Those who have been filled with the Holy Spirit are welcomed to take their place in the community gathered around the table of the Lord. All who share at the table of the Lord become part of the one body of Christ on earth. In other words, they truly belong.

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are called the sacraments of initiation because they are the starting points (the points of initiation) for our life as Christians. In many cases they are celebrated together when a person is baptized (for example, in the Eastern rites and with adults). When people are baptized as children, these sacraments are spread out over a number of years. These three sacraments make us a part of the community of Christ. They make it possible for us to live out our commitments as members of the community.

All who have been baptized – infants, children and adults – belong to the Christian community and have a special relationship with God and with the other members of that community. That is why we still have a real unity with Christians of other churches who are baptized but who do not share full membership in our church with us. We hope and pray that they will someday join us in one community where we will all be baptized by the one Baptism, sealed by the one Spirit in Confirmation, and share the one table of the Lord in the Eucharist. Then, as full members of the one body of Christ, all of us will truly be one as Jesus wanted us to be when he said: “That they may all be one: as you, Father are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us” (John 17.21). For we cannot be one with Father, Son and Spirit without being one also with others who share that same life of God.

The Signs and Symbols of the Sacraments of Initiation

• Water

Water is the main symbol of Baptism. Immersion in water or the pouring of water is the key action. Without water, there is no life. It is a sign of cleansing, renewal, death and rebirth. Above all, it is the sign of our immersion into God’s life as expressed in Jesus.

• White Garment

The white garment that is given to a person after he or she comes out of the waters of baptism means that the person is now “clothed in Christ.” It is a sign of our sharing in Christ’s resurrection.

stiffness and to increase flexibility. Oil is a sign of abundance and joy. Old Testament kings were anointed with oil as a sign of being chosen by God. Likewise, “Christ” means “the anointed one.” The richness of oil represents the fullness of sacramental grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Oil (called chrism) is used in both Baptism and Confirmation. A person who is anointed receives the mark or the seal of the Holy Spirit. A seal is a symbol of belonging. The anointed person belongs to the Spirit.

• Bread and Wine

Bread and wine are the ordinary food and drink of many countries. They are gifts of the Creator and symbols of human work. Since the time of the Old Covenant, bread and wine have been offered to God as a sign of our thanks and of our wish to offer ourselves to God. After the Exodus, bread and wine also came to be signs of God’s faithfulness. When Jesus multiplied the loaves and turned the water into wine, bread and wine again took on another meaning. They became signs of the super-abundance of the Eucharist.

The sharing of the bread and wine is a sign that we want to share all that we have with one another. The sharing of a meal shows unity and acceptance. In many cultures, sharing a meal means committing yourselves to a peaceful relationship.

When we take part in the Eucharist, we do three important things. We celebrate God’s abundant love and faithfulness. We offer all that we are and all that we do to God. We commit ourselves to care for and be at peace with one another.

• Light

The candle, which is lit from the Easter candle, is a sign that Christ brings light to the life of the baptized person. Jesus is “the light of the world which darkness will not overcome.” All who are baptized are called to carry Jesus’ light to others.

• The Laying on of Hands

Since the time of the apostles, the laying on of hands has been a sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The placing of a hand on the head or on the shoulders represents the sharing of love, strength, support and encouragement.

• Oil

Oil is a sign of strength, beauty, health and healing. Oil is used to cleanse, to ease

A Journey to Belong

I grew up in a family where religion just didn't matter. I never thought I was missing anything until I started going out with Janet. Being a Catholic was such an important part of her life. Her faith seemed to give her extra strength during hard times. It also seemed to make it easier for her to forgive people who had hurt her and to focus on the good things in life. She was a lot more at peace with herself than most people I knew.

Before I met Janet, I wondered why anyone would want to be a Catholic and put up with all those rules. After we had been going out for a while, I started to see that Catholicism had a lot more to offer than just rules. I found myself wanting to know more about the Catholic Church.

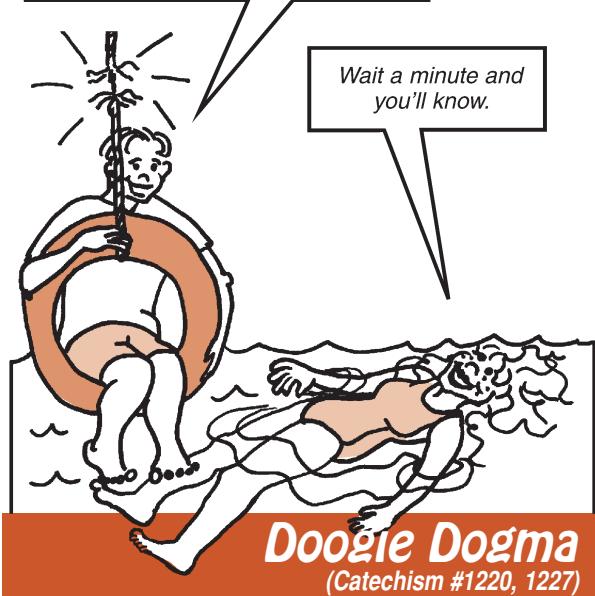
Easter of my second year at university was very special. Janet had convinced me to come with her to the Easter Vigil service. Four people were baptized that night. The look of joy on their faces as they came out of the water almost made me cry. As I watched, I wished I were one of them. This wish stayed with me.

Finally I went to see Father Tim, the university chaplain. "I want to be baptized. I want to belong to this community," I said. He explained how I would have to prepare for Baptism. It was a long process, but I was ready to start. That January, I was accepted into the Church as a catechumen, someone who is preparing to become a Christian. During the ceremony, I was asked to tell the assembly what I wanted from them as I began my faith journey. I remember saying, "Please help me." After the ceremony, many people came up to me and said they would pray for me and help me.

The next 15 months seemed to fly by. We learned about the Church not so much by studying its teachings, but by becoming caught up in the life of the community. We spent a lot of time listening to the word of God. We received the Creed and the Our Father. We were anointed and prayed over in front of the community several times. At last, Easter arrived.

Three things stand out about that night. The first is the good dunking I got. After I made my baptismal promises, I was called forward to the baptismal font. As I leaned over the water, the priest said, "I baptize you in the name of the Father." He pushed my head under water. For a moment I panicked. I was brought up out of the water to hear the priest say, "And of the Son," only to be dunked again, and a third time, "And

Doogie says Baptism is a sharing in Christ's death. The water's supposed to remind us of death so we really appreciate the life Christ gives. But how can water remind us of death?



Doogie Dogma
(Catechism #1220, 1227)

of the Holy Spirit.” Baptism as “going into the tomb with Jesus” took on a new and very real meaning! In those few long seconds when my head was under water, I knew that my old life was passing away and a new life was beginning.

The second highlight was my Confirmation. The priest, along with the whole assembly, prayed that I would be filled with the Holy Spirit. He laid his hands on my head. Then he traced the sign of the cross on my forehead with oil, saying, “Stephen, be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” The assembly was singing, “The Spirit of God is upon me. He has anointed me.” Those words kept echoing in my head: “He has anointed *me!* God has chosen *me!* God has promised to walk with *me!*” As I took my place next to Janet and my sponsor, I felt a sense of joy and hope I’d never felt before.

The third high point was being welcomed to communion. For months I had been coming to Mass, but I wasn’t ready to receive communion. Finally, I too could receive the body and blood of Christ. Finally, I too would be part of this community that promised to be the body and blood of Christ for each other. When Father Tim said, “The body of Christ,” I knew God had brought me into a new family. Now I must learn how to give my best to this family.

Reflection questions

1. Why did Stephen want to become a Catholic?
2. What did Stephen remember most about his Baptism?
3. What did Stephen remember most about his Confirmation?
4. Why was receiving the Eucharist important for Stephen?
5. What challenge does Stephen’s story offer to those of us who have been Catholic all our lives?
6. What does Stephen mean when he says, “Now I must learn how to give my best to this family”?

The Experience of a Lifetime

During the March break, I had the experience of a lifetime. Fifteen of us from St. Joseph’s High School in Cornwall, Ontario, went to San Jose de Ocoa, a small city in the mountains of the Dominican Republic. The trip was part of a missionary program for Catholic high schools. We were to spend two weeks working with the people there, filling in irrigation ditches and helping to build houses.

All of us expected to work hard and to share a lot with the people. None of us guessed how much the people would share with and teach *us*. And none of us thought we would learn so much from the people about God and about our faith.

The faith of the people we met was amazing. We could feel the presence of God everywhere we went. It was both moving and energizing and it coloured everything we did.

One aspect of the people’s faith that struck us was their enthusiasm for Mass. We were in a mountain community that is very spread out. It is hard for people to get to Mass. We met some families who had to walk for two or three hours up the mountain just to celebrate with the community. Not only did they walk all that way without complaining, they seemed glad to do it!

In fact, everyone in the community was happy for the chance to celebrate Mass together. They would stand crowded together.



er for two hours in the small church, hugging one another, singing, talking about the readings and sharing the Eucharist.

Everything we had seen as we worked with the people – their friendliness, cheerfulness and willingness to help us – came together during the Mass. The Mass was a celebration of their unity. It also nourished that unity.

The Masses we went to in the Dominican Republic were some of the most powerful moments of the trip. I only wish that a lot of other people could see and feel what I did. The experience has made me a better person and has helped me to appreciate the Catholic community much more.

*Kim Fry, St. Joseph's High School,
Cornwall, Ontario*

Reflection questions

1. Why do you think the Masses were some of the most powerful moments of Kim's trip?
2. Why do you think the people of San Jose de Ocoa were willing to put so much effort into getting to Mass?
3. In what ways do you think that Mass is a celebration of who we are as a community?
4. In what ways does Mass help us to become a stronger community?

Belonging Means Giving as Well as Receiving

When you belong to a community, you are expected to give something to it. Stephen saw this when he said that he must learn how to give his best to his new church family. Kim saw this when

she named the Mass as the source of the community's willingness to help and support each other. You belong to the Catholic community. It has promised to love, accept and support you. What have you promised to give in return?

Think about the words of St. Teresa's prayer:

YOU ARE CHRIST'S BODY

Christ has no body now on earth but yours,
yours are the only hands with which he can do his work.
Yours are the only feet with which he can go about the world.
Yours are the only eyes through which his compassion can look upon the world.
Christ has no body now on earth, but yours.

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)

What can I do when my life seems to be falling apart?

When the Going Gets Tough...

It is hard to be the best people we can be when our lives are filled with brokenness. God calls us to be loving and generous. But it is hard to be loving when we feel that we have failed and are unlovable. It is hard to be generous when we are lonely, afraid or in pain. It is hard to be the people God created us to be when sin or sickness controls our lives.

It is hard, but it's not impossible. In the Christian community, God can help us, even if we have sinned or are suffering. The Christian community can guide us to God to ask for physical and emotional healing. It can help us to find the love, forgiveness, comfort and support we need. One way the community can do this is through the sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation and Anointing.

God offers us healing and forgiveness first through the Eucharist. Holy Communion nourishes and strengthens us each time we receive it. It also cleanses us of all our less serious (or venial) sins and unites us more

firmly with God and with the Christian community. God also offers us healing and forgiveness through the sacraments of Anointing and Reconciliation. When we are seriously ill or are in special need of forgiveness for our sins, these sacraments meet our more specific needs for God's grace.

Jesus Offers Healing

Jesus cared about the well-being of the whole person and the whole community. Sickness and pain are evils because they hurt the body, but especially because they can hurt the human spirit. Sickness cuts a person off from normal relationships and everyday rhythms. It can make people depressed, lonely and angry. One of the worst things about suffering is that it seems to have no meaning.

When Jesus healed people, he never just cured the body. He always tried to help them become whole again – in their hearts, in their relationships, and in their bodies.

Anointing of the Sick

Are any of you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven (James 5.14-15).

The Church offers the sacrament of Anointing to those who are seriously ill. For a long time, the sacrament was only celebrated for people who were dying. It was meant to give them strength to face death. But today, as in the early church, it is offered to all those who are seriously sick to help heal them not only of their physical sickness, but also of the things that hurt them “on the inside” when they suffer.

The sacrament helps sick people to find God even in their suffering. It helps them use their suffering to enter more deeply into Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection. It also helps people who are seriously ill to grow spiritually through their illness. It helps give them courage and hope. The sacrament of Anointing is celebrated in the community – the sick are joined by their brothers and sisters in Christ, who offer encouragement and meaning. The sacrament is also for healthy people. It gives the sick person a chance to show us that the death and resurrection of Jesus is the key to understanding our own fragile existence.

Spring Training – Part 1

Baseball was back! The Blue Jays had just finished spring training. A lot of people thought they might win the World Series this year. Michael’s dad had season’s tickets for the home games, but today, the day before the home opener, there was no joy in Michael’s heart.

Two days before, the doctor had told Michael he had leukemia. (Leukemia is cancer of the blood; people often die of it.) Michael had always been a good athlete and a team player; everyone wanted to be on his team. Now he was lying in a hospital bed with tubes in his arm, a lump stuck in his throat as he thought of his friends tossing a baseball out in the street. Would he ever be able to join them again? Would he ever go to another ball game with his dad? Why did this have to happen to him? Why did it happen now?

Michael counted the long minutes as they passed. “Dad won’t be coming for another two hours,” he thought. “But where are Terrel and Matthew? They promised to come right after school. It’s hard to be alone....”

Reflection questions

1. List words that describe what it’s like to be sick.
2. Put yourself in Michael’s place. How are you feeling? What thoughts are crossing your mind? What is your greatest hope? your greatest fear?
3. How do you think society sees illness? How does it see people who are sick?
4. How does Michael’s illness affect his relationships with people?
5. How could his illness affect how he feels about himself?

The Christian community is called to carry God's healing touch to all who are suffering. The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick celebrates and brings together all of the other healing that takes place in the Christian community. It offers extra grace and strength to people who are seriously ill.

Spring Training – Part 2

Just then, Michael heard a gentle knock. The door opened.

“Father Barry!” he exclaimed. “What are you doing here?”

“I wanted to see you!” Michael and Father Barry talked about a lot of things, but baseball was at the top of the list.

After that, Father Barry and other people from his parish visited Michael often. They came just to talk and to be with him, and to let him know that he was in their prayers. On Sunday a eucharistic minister brought him Holy Communion.

The following week, Father Barry offered to celebrate the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick during his next visit. Michael’s parents called together all of his friends and relatives for the occasion.

The group gathered with Michael in the hospital chapel. Father Barry began by wishing everyone the peace of Christ. Then he explained why they had gathered. They began the celebration of the sacrament by recalling that all of us need healing and by asking God for pardon and strength. When it came time for the reading from Scripture, Michael’s sister read the story of the cure of the paralyzed man (Luke 5.17-26).

After everyone prayed for Michael and all the sick, Father Barry laid his hands on Michael’s head in silence. He invited Michael’s family and friends to do the same thing. Then Father Barry took a small silver container of blessed oil and anointed Michael on the forehead and hands. He said this prayer:

Father in heaven, through this holy anointing grant Michael comfort in his suffering. When he is afraid, give him

courage, when afflicted, give him patience, when dejected, afford him hope, and when alone, assure him of the support of your holy people.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Then they continued with the celebration of the Eucharist. After everyone received Holy Communion, there was another special prayer for healing and a final blessing; the rite of anointing was complete.

Later that evening, after everyone had gone home, Michael felt a great peace and strength in his heart. He knew that he was not alone.

Reflection questions

1. How do you think the sacrament of Anointing helped Michael?
2. How do you think the sacrament affected Michael’s family and friends?

Jesus Offers Forgiveness

Jesus did not want people to be separated from God or from the rest of the community for any reason. He spent a lot of his time helping people renew connections that had been broken. One of the most common causes of broken relationships was sin. People who had hurt one another did not know how to begin again. They didn’t even know if they would be *allowed* to begin again. Small divisions grew bigger and bigger until they seemed out of control.

Jesus forgave people’s sins. He invited them to come back into the community and work on relationships that had been destroyed or damaged. He told people that they could begin again, and he gave them the strength and courage they needed.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

John 20.19-23 tells us that after Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to the disciples. He showed them his hands and his side. Then he breathed on them and said, *“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”* Jesus gave the Church the power to forgive sins. Through the sacrament of Reconciliation, the priest offers Jesus' forgiveness to those who have sinned and repented. This sacrament also offers the repentant sinner the strength and courage to rebuild old relationships that have been broken and to build more positive new relationships.

The sacrament of Reconciliation does not just affect people who have sinned. It affects the entire Catholic community. Through the priest, the Catholic community tells the person who has sinned and repented, “We would be happy to restore and renew our relationship with you.”

A Wish Made in Anger

Paula and her family were on vacation when their neighbours got a dog. When Paula's family returned, the neighbour's dog, Shamu, had taken over their yard. Before they knew it, Shamu was in their yard growling and snapping at their dog, Basil.

David, one of the neighbour kids, who was in Paula's class at school, came running out of the house to get Shamu. “Sorry about that,” he said to Paula. “He is a friendly dog when you get to know him.”

Shamu was friendly around people, but he hated other dogs. He was always starting fights with Basil, who wasn't much of a fighter.

Paula was mad. This wasn't fair! Basil had been protecting both houses for years. Once he'd even scared away a group of kids who were trying to break into David's house. But now he couldn't even go outside without being attacked. What was worse, David's family didn't seem to care.

Paula and David used to be friends, but now she could barely look at him without getting angry. More than once she said, “I hate David and his stupid dog! I wish that dog would die.”



Doogie Dogma (*Catechism #1514, 1520*)

The Christian community is called to carry God's forgiveness to all who are suffering.

The sacrament of Reconciliation celebrates and brings together all of the forgiving and rebuilding of broken relationships that takes place in the Christian community. The sacrament restores people's relationship with God that has been broken by sin. The sacrament also offers the grace needed to turn back to God, to mend past hurts and avoid future ones.

Then one day Shamu ran away. He was hit and killed by a car. David and his brother were really upset. Paula felt awful.

She had gotten her wish, but she wasn't happy. Now whenever she saw David, she didn't feel angry, she felt guilty. She longed to say something to him, to tell him she was sorry, to offer a word of comfort, but how could she? Instead she avoided him.

Paula's parish was having a communal reconciliation service for Lent. Paula's mother suggested that she go. Paula knew that she had to do something with her guilt before it overwhelmed her completely, so she agreed.

The service began with some music, followed by the reading from Ezekiel in which God promises to cleanse the people and give them a new heart – a heart of flesh to replace their heart of stone (Ezekiel 36.25-27). Paula knew that a new heart was exactly what she needed. During the communal examination of conscience, she thought about all the times when she had hardened her heart and refused to be loving. When she went to Father Adrian for individual confession, she told him about Shamu and about the anger she had allowed to come between her and David over his dog. She said

she was very sorry and she wanted to be friends with David again but she didn't know how.

Father Adrian assured Paula that God was with her and that God would forgive her for her anger and her selfishness. He suggested that she try to say hello to David each time she saw him and to pray for him each day. Father Adrian also told Paula that God would help her find the strength and courage to rebuild her friendship with David. All she had to do was watch for the right moment.

Holding his hands out over Paula, Father Adrian absolved her of her sins, making the sign of the cross as he spoke of the forgiveness of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As she went to join the rest of the assembly in prayer, Paula was filled with hope and peace.

As she was leaving the church after the service, Paula saw David. "Hi, David," she said quietly. "How's it going?"

Reflection questions

1. Why did Paula go to the communal reconciliation service?
2. Why did Paula need forgiveness and healing?
3. How do you think the sacrament of Reconciliation helped Paula?

SERENITY PRAYER

Lord, give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

Unit 2 Summary Statements

- God makes things holy by giving them a special purpose in God's plan. We are holy when we live according to our purpose. The sacraments show God's loving action and enable us to take part in that action.
- A holy person is someone who sees and responds to God in both big and small things. Love is the "soul" of holiness. The Church leads us to holiness as it enables us to love more fully and to encounter God more fully.
- The Holy Spirit is the source and giver of all holiness. (Catechism #749)
- A sacrament is a sign of God's grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church. Divine life is given to us through the sacraments.
- The seven sacraments of the Church are Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage and Holy Orders.
- Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist connect us to God and the Christian community, give us purpose and offer us strength and support.
- The sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing bring God's healing touch through the Christian community.

Key Terms

holiness

sacrament

seven sacraments

sacraments of initiation

sign

symbol

anointing

healing

reconciliation

Unit 3

We believe in one catholic
and apostolic Church

3.1

Why bother with church?

What's a Bother?

Susan's mom bakes lots of cakes.
My mom says baking's a bother.
My mom plants tulips and pulls weeds
and rakes.
Susan's mom cannot be bothered.

My dad goes biking in sunshine and rain.
Tim's dad says he wouldn't bother.
Tim's dad can fix things like bad pipes
and drains.
Mine thinks a plumber's less bother.

Many Ways of Seeing

Each of us thinks that certain things are worth doing while others are just too much bother. That doesn't mean one person is right and the other is wrong. Our tastes and enthusiasms reflect our personalities.

These differences do not just affect our attitude toward household chores and our work; they also affect our understanding of

and relationship to the Church. Consider the five people below. They have five very different personalities with different values and different strengths and weaknesses. They expect and need different things from the Church. Each one has a different understanding of the Church's role and a different way of "seeing" the ideal church.

The Church Is an Institution

Talia likes things to be well organized. She likes to know exactly what is expected of her and when. If we get a writing assignment in school, Talia always asks how many pages the teacher wants and when it is due. She really likes to do research, but she worries if we have to write a creative story with no guidelines.

Talia likes things to be the way they've always been. She gets really excited about holiday traditions and hates it when people suggest that we do something different this year. When our music teacher said that this year's Christmas concert wouldn't end

with “Silent Night,” Talia said that it wouldn’t seem like a Christmas concert at all.

One weekend Talia came up to our cottage. The church we go to there doesn’t have any stained glass windows or statues and everyone sits in chairs in a circle. It’s very informal. Talia hated it. She said it didn’t feel like a church and she didn’t feel prayerful when she went in. That was surprising because Talia is a very prayerful person. When things are not going well for me, Talia’s strong faith and prayers help pull me through.

Talia likes the institutional aspect of the Church, where everyone knows who’s in charge, who makes the rules and what the rules are. She finds it comforting that the Church is stable when everything else is changing.

Like others who value the institutional side of church, Talia thinks that church teachings and rules are very important. To her, anyone who disobeys them is not really a member of the Church. The Church’s traditions and symbols help her to feel God’s presence. She gets upset when people talk about changing the symbols and traditions; it seems as if they are trying to change God. The institutional Church helps Talia and others like her keep their lives in good order.

The Church Is a Sacrament of Christ

Kyle is a great person to have on the planning committee for a party or a dance. He makes sure that everyone will have a good time and feel like a part of the celebration.

Kyle likes to celebrate – not just the big moments in life, but the little ones, too. He always knows what will make someone feel better.

Kyle likes going to church more than most teenagers I know. One day I asked him why he went instead of just talking to God alone without all that ritual.

He said he thought the ritual was important: “Sometimes things and ceremonies can express what words can’t express. When people feel bad, sometimes it helps to give them a little something to show that you care. A hug from my mom when I’m really down can make me feel loved in a way that no words ever could. The song “Happy Birthday” makes me feel like my birthday really is a special day. People need visible signs and symbols to help them experience and believe in the things that can’t be seen.”

For Kyle, the Church is a visible sign of God’s presence. When he goes to Mass, he can feel God’s presence in a way that he can’t always feel it when he’s alone. He thinks that if a person’s relationship with God is just a private thing, not connected to a community or to any particular practices, it will fade away when the rest of the person’s private life is not going well or is too busy.

Kyle likes the sacramental aspect of church. He thinks that the Church needs to encourage people to sense God's awesome presence. Kyle gets upset when the main purpose of a Mass seems to be to make people feel good rather than to make them think about God.

The Church Is the Body of Christ

Whenever we have to work on a group project in school, I hope I'll be in Shauna's group. She is really good at dividing up the jobs for a project so that we can all do what we do best. She makes everyone in the group feel important.

Sometimes in a group, some people don't do their fair share of the work. Other people like to look more important than everyone else. When Shauna is there, everyone works hard and everyone works together.

Because Shauna can usually see the good in everyone, she's a lot more understanding than most kids our age. She always tries to see the other person's point of view.

Shauna thinks of the Church as the body of Christ. She thinks that God has a special plan for everyone, and that each person is needed in God's plan for the world. She says that the most important thing that Christians do is to help people feel valuable and loved.

When I asked her why she thinks people should go to church, she said that when people are missing there is an emptiness. Shauna compares Mass to a holiday dinner. She says it just doesn't feel right when people are missing. She thinks everyone should try to go to Mass so that the community is complete. She says we need to

pray with each other and support each other in our faith. Mass is the ideal place to do that.

“Besides,” Shauna said, “there’s so much that needs to be done in the world that no one person can do it alone. One of us alone can’t be Christ’s hands and feet, eyes and ears, but all of us together can be the body of Christ. We go to church to encourage each other to do our part, and to remind each other that all of our little efforts together can do a lot. We begin to see that with all of us working together, God’s will can be done.”

Shauna and others who prefer the “body of Christ” aspect of church think that a good church is one where everyone feels welcome and can take part. They often get upset when they think that some people are being left out.

The Church Is a Servant

Jason is our class activist. He’s always trying to get us to do something about the environment, raise money for the homeless, or join a march against racism. He really cares about the world and thinks that it’s our job to make it a better place.

Jason practises what he preaches. He volunteers at the local soup kitchen every week; he helps kids from refugee families feel welcome in our school; he picks up garbage that other people have left in the park. He does his part to leave the world in better shape than he found it in.

Jason has a bit of a love–hate relationship with the Church. He says that Christ’s central message was to love one another as he loved us. He says that the Church should spend more time helping the poor and working for justice and less time wor-

rying about which is the best translation of the Bible or which prayers should be said when. Jason thinks that what God really cares about is how we treat each other.

For Jason, the Church should encourage people to reach out to those in need. He believes that Jesus set up the Church to be a community of people to serve the world. Jason’s favourite part of the Mass is the dismissal: “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.” Like others who are most comfortable with this aspect of church, he thinks that anyone who is actively involved in loving service is doing the work of the Church. To him, people who are not involved in service are not really members of Christ’s church, even if they say or do other worthwhile things.

would rather not think about. He says that the Church is the world's conscience.

Ethan judges every Mass and every church activity by asking if it will inspire people to change their lives. One of his favourite lines is, "If a person doesn't leave Mass ready to do at least one thing differently, it wasn't a good liturgy."

So Who's Really a Catholic?

The word "catholic" means universal – for everyone. Believing in one holy catholic Church means believing that there is one church that can include everyone – people of every age group, social status, nation, race, colour and way of life. The Church is a *community of disciples*. Each member has a unique personality and a unique set of preferences and priorities.

The Church is made up of people like Talia, Kyle, Shauna, Jason and Ethan. Some think the Church should be a voice for change; others think it should be a sign of stability. Some think that the Church's job is to send people out to serve the world; others think it should make people feel welcomed, loved and accepted. Some think that the Church is a visible sign of God's presence that helps people communicate with God, while others think it helps us relate to each other. All of these people are trying to be faithful disciples of Jesus. All of their points of view are acceptable "Catholic" points of view.

Each point of view is rooted in faith in God and a desire to follow Jesus. Each is nourished and supported by the Holy Spirit. Each of these viewpoints has its source in the Trinity; therefore, all of the viewpoints are part of "one" faith.

The main mission of the Church is to help people to be caught up in the love of

The Church Is a Prophet

Ethan makes me mad at least once a week. He's always challenging me to do things differently. A lot of what he says makes sense, but I wish he'd let me be once in a while. I know that Canadians use more than their share of the world's resources, but once in a while I like to buy something new and enjoy it without feeling guilty. Ethan says we need to think about the effect of everything we do. He says it's wrong to avoid talking about something just because it makes us feel uncomfortable.

I suppose part of me thinks Ethan is right. I'm sure that if it weren't for people like him, a lot of things that need to be changed would never get changed.

Ethan thinks of the Church as a prophet in the world. He says that the Church's main job is to make people think about things they

the Trinity: God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. St. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, reminds the people that God's love is bigger than we can imagine, and it can accomplish much more than we can imagine:

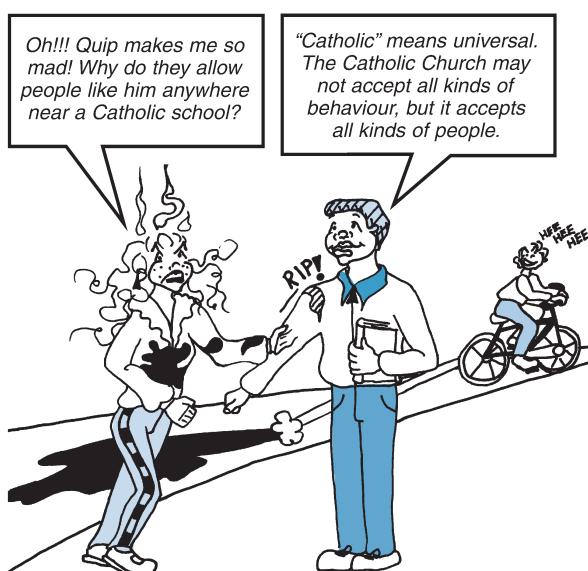
For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly

far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3.14-21)

All people can be caught up in the love of God that is so vast that it goes beyond human knowledge. The Church must never become the instrument of only one culture, one generation or one way of thinking. God's love is present in every race and culture, every generation, and every person.

Sometimes believers forget or are unaware of the vastness of God's love. If conflicts arise among members of the Church, it is often because they lose sight of the immensity of God's love and the mission of the Church to open doors to that love for people.

At the very centre of the Church is the Eucharist. Jesus offered his body and blood as the sacrament of salvation for everyone. When we share the body and blood of Christ, we are united in Christ. It is this communion of the faithful with Christ that is the Church. This unity in God's love is what being "Catholic" is all about.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #830-831, 836)



One Church, Many Rites

Jesus told his disciples: "Go...and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." (Matthew 28.19).

Following Christ's command, the followers of Jesus proclaimed the Good News throughout the world. Church communities took root among believers of every race and nation. The people of these local churches all professed the same creed and celebrated the same sacraments. However, the ways in which these churches expressed their faith became varied, coloured by the culture and times of the people. These different ways of expressing faith are called rites. Here are some examples of these differences: the Byzantine Ukrainian Church has married priests, it confirms children as infants (and the sacrament is called chrismation), and many parts of the Divine Liturgy (what members of the Latin rite call the Mass) are sung or chanted.

Even though the ways in which people celebrate and live their faith

vary from one rite to the next, the unity of the Catholic Church is ensured not only by faith in Jesus Christ, but also in recognizing the Pope as their leader.

There are over 12 million Roman Catholics in Canada. Most belong to the Latin rite. Of the Eastern rite churches, the largest is the Byzantine Ukrainian with approximately 130,000 members. While the Roman Catholic Church is divided geographically into dioceses with each diocese led by a bishop, the Byzantine Ukrainian Church is divided into eparchies, and each is led by an eparch.

Other Eastern rite churches in Canada are the Maronites with about 80,000 members, the Greek-Melkites with 38,000 members, and the Slovak Byzantine with 30,000 members.

As Catholics we share communion with churches of every rite that recognizes the authority of the Pope. We cannot share communion with people from other churches until our differences have been healed.



The Creed is our common profession of faith, no matter from which perspective we see the Church and her mission. At the Eucharist, we recite the Creed after we have heard the call of God's one word and before we come together around the one table of the Lord. The Nicene Creed is recited not only by all Catholics, but also by the main-line Christian churches. Pray the Nicene Creed together – it is found on the inside back cover of this book.

What can I hope for when I give?

What Is Love?

St. Paul tells us that the most important quality we can have is to be able to love (see 1 Corinthians 13). True love is the only thing that can really make a difference in the world, Paul says. Then he describes true love:

“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.” (1 Corinthians 13.4-8)

True love is self-giving love. Good things we do to improve our own comfort and popularity are not really acts of love. When we act out of love, we care about the other person as much as or more than we do about ourselves. True love is also faithful love. If we only love and care for someone because it is fun and exciting, that is not true love. When we truly love others, we show our care for them even when it is inconvenient or when there is something else we'd rather be doing. Finally, true love is unconditional love. If we care about others only as much as, and as long as, they care about us,

that is not true love. When we truly love other people, we care about them and want what is best for them no matter what they have done.

Jesus gave us an example of perfect and true love when he gave his life out of love for us. He asked us to try and follow his example when he said, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.”

Sent to Love

The word “apostle” means “one who is sent.” When we say that we believe in an “apostolic church,” we are saying that we believe that the Church has been sent by Jesus into the world. One of the main tasks Jesus has given us is to love one another and to change the world into a better place by teaching it the meaning of true love.

This is not easy to do. Learning to love generously, faithfully and unconditionally is a lifelong task. None of us can do it all the time. Jesus gave the Church two special signs to help us remember what it means to love generously and to help us teach the world about love: the sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders.

Marriage and Holy Orders: Signs and Teachers of Love

Let's think about Paul's description of true love as we look at these two sacraments.

Paul says that love is patient. The promise of a married couple to always be there for each other is a promise of patience. The promise to serve God's people as a priest or deacon is also a promise of patience; it means reaching out to people even when they don't want to be reached out to or don't appreciate it. Bishops, priests and deacons and married men and women teach the world the value of patience.

Paul also says that love is not envious or boastful or arrogant. When people enter into a marriage or receive the sacrament of Holy Orders, they link their success with the success and well-being of their spouse or their community. So there is no point in envying someone if your success and happiness are linked with theirs. There is no point in boast-

ing that you are better than someone if their talent reflects on you.

The sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders remind us that co-operation is better than competition. When married or ordained people co-operate, their joy spreads to those around them. They become teachers of love. When they compete, the damage is easy to see. Their negative example can teach others what true love is not.

True love tries to help the spouse or community become the best that they can be – truly wonderful. Marriage and Holy Orders are commitments to offer the best of oneself and to search for and bring out the best in a spouse or community, no matter how long it takes.

As Paul says, love bears all things, believes all things, endures all things, and never ends. The commitment to Marriage or to Holy Orders is for life. The love which these sacraments celebrate does not give up or walk away when things get tough.¹ Marriage and Holy Orders are signs of the type of love that always tries to work things out. As long as these two

¹ Sometimes it is necessary to get away from a situation in order to try and work it out. Abuse cannot be part of true love. Abuse hurts both the abuser and the abused. When one person is abusing another person, the most loving thing to do may be to separate until a way of changing the situation can be found.



sacraments exist, we know that faithful and self-giving love are possible, even if they are hard. Even when the people who enter into these sacraments are selfish or unloving, the sacraments are still signs of true love.

What do Marriage and Holy Orders have to do with my life now?

You are not ready to make a lifelong commitment to a spouse or to Holy Orders, but these two sacraments still affect your life. As we said

earlier, these sacraments teach us about true love. No matter how old you are, and no matter what you plan to do with your life, you are called to learn to love truly.

Ask yourself what qualities and skills a good spouse or a good priest or deacon needs. They are probably the same ones you need to love the way Jesus wants us to love. It is never too early to develop those skills and to apply them to all of our relationships.

The Sacrament of Marriage

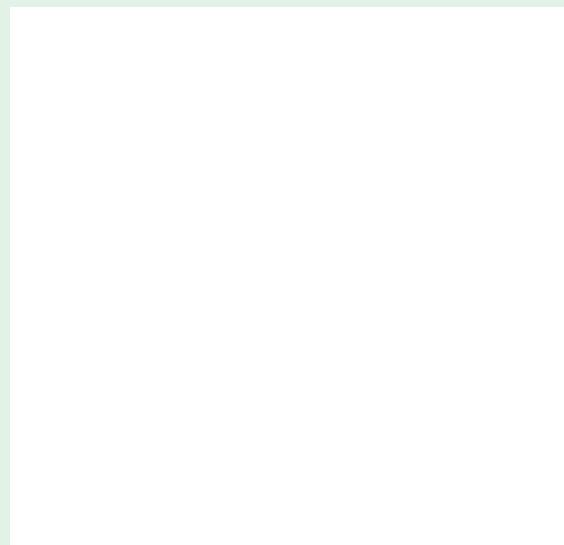
Because man and woman are created in the image of God, who is love, the love of a husband and wife for each other is an image (even if it's a cloudy image) of the absolute and unfailing love of God.

In the sacrament of marriage, a man and a woman make a covenant – a lifelong commitment. There are two equally important reasons for this commitment: to bring together a man and a woman as “one flesh” (Genesis 2.24) and so to enrich their lives together, and to establish the best possible atmosphere for having children and raising them.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders

After the resurrection, Jesus commissioned the apostles to proclaim his message. He promised to be with them in the power of the Holy Spirit as they guided the Church. Today, this task is carried out in a structured way by the bishops (the successors of the apostles), and by the priests and deacons who share in the work of bishops. In a less structured way, the task of building up the body of Christ and sharing God's love with others belongs to all the baptized.

Priests who are ordained in the Latin rite take a vow of celibacy (they promise not to have intimate sexual relations). This allows them to devote themselves entirely to God and to the Christian



community. Celibacy is a sign of selfless service to God's people. In the Eastern churches, married men can be ordained as priests and deacons, but celibacy is held in great honour and many priests freely choose it for the sake of the kingdom of God.

In the sacrament of Holy Orders, the bishop ordains members of the Christian community to minister to the people of God and to build up the body of Christ through faithful and loving service. The three orders in the Catholic community are the order of bishops, the order of presbyters, and the order of deacons. (The word "presbyter" means "elder." It is used to speak of the specific order that we often just call "priests." We use the word "presbyter" because "priest" can mean either a bishop or a priest.)

Other Vocations

Since the first century of Christianity, men and women have chosen to dedicate their entire lives to God. Many have made public commitments to serve God and God's people as religious sisters and brothers.

Religious sisters and brothers take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They promise that God and God's people will always come first in their lives. Their vows are reminders to us all that if we really want to love God and our neighbour, we must learn to place God and other people ahead of our desire for material possessions, ahead of our desire for physical pleasure, and ahead of our desire for personal power.

A vocation is a call from God to give of one's self for the sake of others. Each one of us is called by God to use our



gifts and talents for the benefit of others. Each one of us has a vocation. For some that vocation involves marriage; for others, Holy Orders or religious life. Others may never make a permanent public commitment to a particular way of life and a particular way of sharing love, but they may still make a personal commitment to serve God and God's people in love.

Marriage and Holy Orders are the two signs given to us by Christ to help us understand and live out the call to loving and faithful service. Because Jesus himself taught us about their significance, they are sacraments. Many other vocations chosen by Christians also teach us about love and fidelity. These are also very important to the life of the Church. They are not considered sacraments because their place in the Church was not specifically defined by Jesus.

TAKE, LORD, AND RECEIVE

Take, Lord, and receive
all my liberty,
my memory,
my understanding,
and my entire will,
all I have and possess.

You have given all to me.
To You, O Lord, I return it.
All is Yours,
dispose of it wholly according to Your will.
Give me Your love and Your grace,
for this is sufficient for me.

*From The Spiritual Exercises
of St. Ignatius*

Unit 3 Summary Statements

- “Catholic” means universal. The Church is universal because it has a mission to the whole world. The task of the Church and all its members is to do the work of Christ by making the love of God available to all.
- God has created great variety not only in the natural world, but also in the Church. A church that calls itself “Catholic” must reflect that variety and still stay one, rooted in the one Lord Jesus Christ.
- A variety of models help us to understand the complexity of the Church and to accept others who are different from us.
- The Creed is our common profession of faith.
- Christians are called to be apostolic servants of Christ. We are called to serve others in love. This makes us agents of the reign of God for all peoples.
- Marriage and Holy Orders are sacraments that model faithful service. They help us to understand what it means to love fully and to give freely. They reveal Christ, who loves us completely and freely and who even gave his life for us.

Key Terms

Catholic
universal

apostle
mission

love
service

Unit 4

We believe in the communion of saints

Does death destroy everything?

We Had Quite a Crowd for Dinner

Christmas dinner had always been a big celebration in our house. But this year was different. There would only be eight of us. It just wouldn't be the same.

I had always liked to set the table for holiday meals, but setting the table for so few people just wasn't the same. I opened the kitchen cupboard to take out the dinner plates.

"Magil, what are you doing?" Mom asked me. "You know we don't use those dishes for Christmas."

"But Mom, there are only eight of us. Why bother getting out the good china?"

"Those dishes belonged to your great-grandmother. When I was little, she always used those dishes at Christmas. When she was putting them on the table she would sing in German. I loved the sound of her voice. Every time those dishes are on the table, it's as if Grandma were in the kitchen with me, singing away. It wouldn't be Christmas without her."

As I put the dishes on the table I thought about my great-grandmother. She always kept "a little something" in the house, just in case someone dropped by. We always keep "a little something" in our house, too. People we know always stop by when they're in the area. My great-grandmother's love of company has shaped our family.

As I was thinking about these things, my brother Sebastian came into the kitchen. "Mom, why are we having brussels sprouts? Nobody likes them."

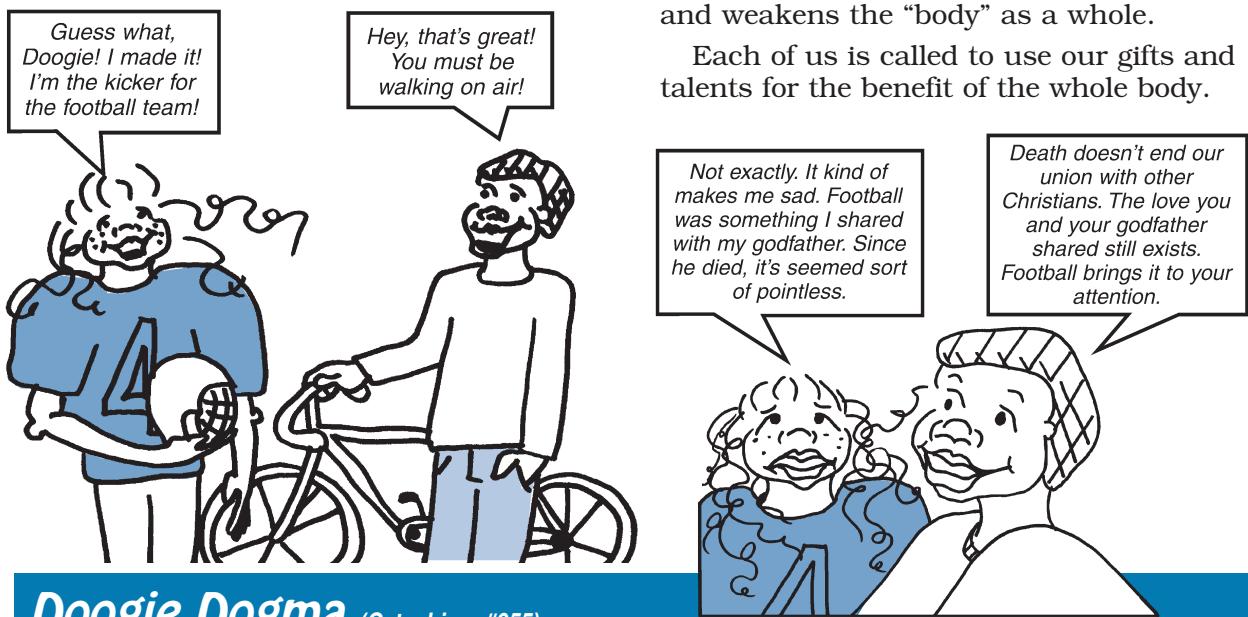
I knew the answer before Mom said a word. Brussels sprouts were Uncle Gene's favourite vegetable. Uncle Gene, my dad's brother, had celebrated Christmas with us every year until he died. Every time he saw brussels sprouts, Uncle Gene would tell us about the time he picked all of the brussels sprouts from the neighbour's garden because he thought they were golf balls. He had put them all in his father's golf bag as a surprise. Unfortunately, my grandfather didn't find them until they had rotted. One day, when Granddad was out

golfing with some important people from work, he reached in for a ball and his fingers sank into muck. He swore and pulled out a hand covered in green and brown slime.

By the time Uncle Gene finished the story, tears of laughter would be streaming down his face. No matter how many times the rest of us heard the story, we would all end up laughing with him. Soon everyone around the table had a story to tell, and the party would be in full swing.

Maybe we wouldn't be able to see Uncle Gene at our Christmas party this year, but as long as the brussels sprouts were there, he would be there with his story and the laughter was sure to follow.

We put Sarah's music box angel in the middle of the table. Sarah was a foster child who lived with us for a while. She loved the little porcelain Christmas angel that played "Away in a Manger." She said it



made her believe that no matter how bad things got, God would be with her. Three years ago, she was sent back to her own home. Then she ran away. That angel gave Sarah hope; now it's a sign for us of the hope that Jesus brings at Christmas, a hope for Sarah and for everyone who is sad.

I set the table for eight people, but I knew a lot more would be there: my great-grandmother, Uncle Gene, Sarah and her friends, and countless others whose lives have shaped and keep shaping our lives and the way we celebrate Christmas.

The Communion of Saints

All of the faithful make up one body in Christ. All of us, living or dead, are part of the body of Christ. When we act in a loving way, that love spreads and grows and brings blessings on the whole "body." When we act in a sinful way, our sin hurts and weakens the "body" as a whole.

Each of us is called to use our gifts and talents for the benefit of the whole body.

believe that our prayers affect those who are living, so too we believe that our prayers can affect those who have died and that the prayers of those who have died can affect us. Among other things, prayer strengthens the bond of love between all of the members of the Christian community. When we pray for those who have died and ask for their prayers, the bonds between the community on earth and the community in heaven are strengthened. For this reason we especially ask for the prayers of those we believe are most fully united with Christ.

When we say that we believe in the communion of saints, we are saying that we believe that we are all connected to each other in Christ, and that our connections cannot be destroyed by death or distance.

What Is Death?

God created human beings for eternal life. Death was not part of God's original plan for creation. Death entered the world because human beings turned away from God, the source of all life. Jesus came to destroy death and make it possible for us to turn back to God and to share in the eternal life that God offers.

When we are baptized, our future death is united with Christ's death. We say that in Baptism, we die with Christ. If we die with Christ, then we will also share in Christ's resurrection. Our physical death is not just an end to earthly life. It is also the beginning of everlasting life, when we will become closer to God and to all those who are one with God.

We may call upon the other members of the body to help us when we are weak. The gift of ourselves that we share with others touches them even when we are no longer there. We should never take that gift lightly.

As Christians, we celebrate that even death cannot destroy our relationships with one another. Death changes the way we interact, but those who have died are still a part of the community that shapes us and our choices. A phrase from the preface for the dead recited at a funeral Mass states our belief: "Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not ended...."

2 Maccabees 12.44-45 tells us that it is good to pray for those who have died because such prayers are a sign and reminder of our faith in the resurrection. We believe that death cannot destroy the bonds of our community. Just as we

The Kiss of Farewell to the Deceased

In the Byzantine tradition, the final prayer at a funeral service, said as the body is kissed farewell, expresses the Christian belief in the communion of the saints. As you pray these words, think about people you have known or who have shaped your life who have died.

We sing for their departure from this life and separation from us, but also because there is a communion and a reunion. For even dead, we are not at all separated from one another, because we all run the same course and we will find one another again in the same place. We shall never be separated, for we live for Christ, and now we are united with Christ as we go toward him... we shall all be together in Christ.

*(St. Simeon of Thessalonica quoted in
the Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1690)*

What makes a person's life successful?

Happiness Is Not in Wild Living

by Janaan Manternach

Long ago in Africa lived one of the most famous men of all time, a man named Augustine. He died almost exactly 400 years after Jesus died on the cross.

Augustine's father was a violent man who believed in little. His mother, Monica, was a strong, gentle Christian woman. She saw to it that her three children were educated as Christians.

At first Augustine did not like school and studying. He was much more interested in sports and in girls. As a teenager he began to love to study and learn. He wanted to become a teacher. But he did not let his studies interfere with his after-school fun.

When he was 17, Augustine went to the great African city of Carthage on the Mediterranean Sea. There he enjoyed all the city's pleasures. And he fell in love with a young woman, with whom he lived for many years. They had a son named Adeodatus.

During these years in Carthage, Augustine joined a group of bright young teachers who taught strange ideas. They taught that the world around us and even our bodies were bad. Slowly Augustine realized how wrong these ideas were. So he left that group of teachers and moved to Italy.

In the city of Milan, Augustine went out of curiosity to hear Ambrose, a famous preacher who was the bishop of that city. Augustine was very impressed by Ambrose's words and ideas. He was even more impressed with the man and how he lived.

Augustine now felt pulled in two directions. He was drawn to become a great and good man like Ambrose. Yet Augustine did not want to give up the life he had been living.

One day he was sitting in a garden thinking and praying. It was a quiet afternoon. He heard a child singing from a neighbouring yard, "Take and read. Take and read." He noticed one of his friends sitting nearby reading the Bible.

Augustine went over and asked if he could look at the Bible for a moment. He opened it and the first words he saw were those of St. Paul saying that you cannot find happiness in pleasure and wild living, but only by knowing and loving Jesus Christ.

Augustine decided then to change his whole life. He and his friend went in and told his mother, Monica. She was overjoyed.

Now Augustine began seriously to live like a Christian.

He was to move back to Africa, to the city of Hippo. He kept nothing that he called his own, but shared everything he had with others, especially the poor. He spent much time praying and writing.

The bishop of Hippo ordained Augustine a priest. When the bishop died, Augustine became bishop of Hippo.

People still admire him and read his books. The Church celebrates his feast each August 28.

"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you." *St. Augustine*

Marguerite d'Youville: A Pioneer for Our Times

Marguerite was born in 1701 in Varennes, Quebec. She is known for her work with the poor of Montreal. When a small group of women joined her, they formed the Grey Sisters of Montreal, who still serve in Canada and in other parts of the world. In 1969, Pope Paul VI gave Marguerite the title "Mother of Universal Charity."

"Don't go to Two Mountains, Mother D'Youville!" pleaded Jean-Paul. "It's the worst smallpox epidemic in the country."

People are dying there every day. What good will you be to us dead?" Marguerite felt a surge of panic but kept packing supplies.

"Aren't you afraid to go to that village?" asked the boatman as he steered up the St. Lawrence. "What good will come of it?"

"All I know is that people are dying and they need help," replied Marguerite.





When they arrived in the village, a man invited them to leave their cloaks and supplies in a longhouse. Then they went to be with the sick people.

The sick were in a longhouse on the edge of the village. The air inside it was heavy and stale. Twenty hollow-eyed men, women and children lay under filthy blankets, weak with fever.

Marguerite and her sisters soon brought food, warmth and hope. While one made soup, the others bathed the sick. They replaced the smelly blankets with clean ones. They opened the doors to freshen the air and tended the longhouse fires.

By midnight of the first day, the longhouse had become a clean, warm hospital. Some men helped the sisters make a second longhouse ready for the sickest people. The sisters spent long days and many sleepless nights caring for the sick until the epidemic ended three weeks later. Exhausted but happy, Marguerite and her companions went home.

It wasn't long before Marguerite was busy running the General Hospital in Montreal. One day her friend, Thérèse, asked her, "How can you keep on giving and caring for others, Marguerite?"

"It's quite simple," Marguerite answered. "The more you care about others, the more alive you become." She was silent for a few moments. "Try to imagine a world without caring, Thérèse," she said. "Nothing has much meaning if we take caring out of life! Just think how lucky we are that the world is full of people who go quietly through life doing countless unremembered acts of kindness and love."

As Marguerite spoke, Thérèse began to understand how Marguerite and her sisters were able to carry on with such enthusi-

asm, not hoping for any reward. They did not feel alone in their caring. They were part of something much bigger than their little acts of charity. "Our caring,"

Marguerite pointed out, "multiplied by millions of others who care keeps the human family moving toward God." Looking gently at Thérèse she said, "You know, each of us has the power to care."

"You make it look so easy, Marguerite. Sometimes I would like to care more, but nothing comes of it."

"Sometimes caring is blocked, Thérèse. You might not like some people or decide that they are getting just what they deserve."

"Like, if some people would just go out and find work they would not have to be poor," said Thérèse.

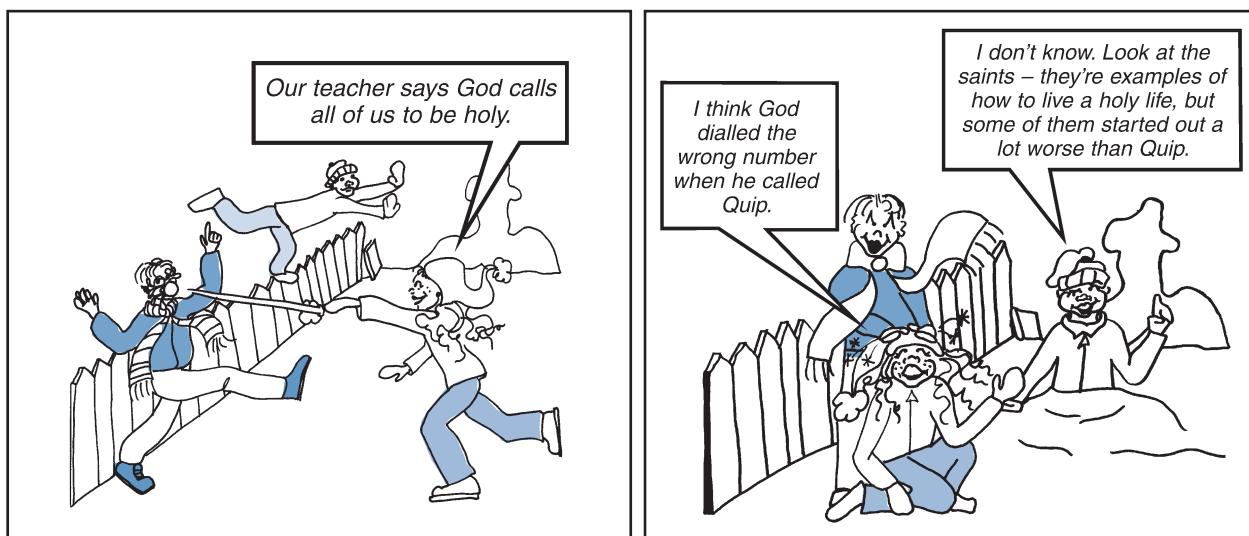
"That's right," smiled Marguerite. "Sometimes people grow up in families that find it hard to care for one another, or are

not given a chance to help others. But once people begin to care, it becomes easier and easier, and their whole attitude toward life changes. Eventually, we learn to care for people we don't even know. Once that happens, life takes on new meaning." She added, "Sometimes even I have trouble caring! Then I need to pray and somehow that helps."

"What is that prayer?" asked Thérèse.

"It goes like this: 'Help me to love you more and more. Teach me to love and be good to all the people I know. There are many people I do not know yet, but help me to be good to them when I meet them. Help me, Jesus, to smile at them and make them happy just as you did when you lived here on earth.'"

The feast day of Marguerite d'Youville is celebrated on October 16.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #2030)

Turn Your Energy to Something Productive: The Story of Saint John of God

John was a bit of a dreamer. He was born in Portugal in 1495. In 1503 he was sent to live with the family of a steward (manager of a large household) in Toledo, Spain.

John worked as a shepherd, but his heart was not with his sheep. It was with the steward's daughter. A steward's daughter and a shepherd were an unlikely match, but that did not stop John from dreaming. When he asked to marry her and was refused, he enlisted in the Spanish army.

He was captured by the French and held as a prisoner for a time. After he was set free, he went back to the Spanish army, but he was beginning to wonder whether this was what he should be doing with his life.

"God is calling me. I feel it in my heart," John said to himself. "God expects great things from me and I will not disappoint him! I have heard that there are Christians who are held as slaves in Africa. They are surely the poorest of God's poor. I will go and care for them. Perhaps God will even choose me to die for them! The gospel says, 'A man has no greater love than this, that he lay down his life...' I will lay down my life in service to my God."

John resigned from the army and headed for Africa. He was full of grand and glorious ideas. He pictured himself becoming a martyr to the faith, a person honoured by all. After three years of working for a poor Portuguese family, he saw that he would never become a martyr this way. He went back to Spain and opened a bookstore. "I will deal in holy books and religious pic-

tures," he said. "When customers come to me I will speak to them about God and about heaven. I will inspire people to change."

John's business grew quickly, but he did not stay in the book trade for very long. He was restless.

One day, he went to hear a famous preacher speak. The preacher's words convinced him that he must change his life right away. He decided to become a preacher. He began to go about the town crying out in a loud voice, "I am a sinner. I have sinned against God and my fellow humans." He confessed his sinfulness to all who could hear and did acts of public penance.

John may have hoped that he would inspire others to turn from their evil ways, but his actions only made the people around him decide that he was crazy. They locked him up in the Royal Hospital.

The preacher who had inspired him heard about what John had done and went to visit him in the hospital. "John, John, why must you do things in such a dramatic way? You are like the pharisees Jesus spoke about who stood on the street corners and yelled their prayers so that all might see their holiness. Don't waste your time, your faith and your energy making a public display. Turn your talents to more productive and less theatrical work. God is more concerned with day-to-day displays of love and compassion than with great public displays that do not touch those who are in need."

When John was let out of the hospital, he began serving the sick and the poor. He went into the streets and found those who were in need. He gathered them together in a house so that he could care for them. He

went out again and begged money to buy a larger house so that he could care for even more people. Several bishops noticed his work. One of them helped him to enlarge his “hospital” even more, since so many people in need of help were arriving each day. Another bishop suggested that he change his name from just “John” to “John of God,” so that all would know that he was doing God’s work.

John of God was one of the first people to believe that each patient deserved his or her own bed. After all, he believed that whatever he did for any patient, he was doing for Jesus. John also was the first to treat different kinds of illnesses and injuries in different sections of the hospital; his hospitals inspired the modern hospital.

It seems that John never forgot the advice that he turn his faith to practical matters and serve God by meeting the immediate needs of those around him, even if those needs were not dramatic or glamorous.

John of God is the patron saint of nurses and other people in the medical profession. His feast day is celebrated on March 8.

Kateri Tekakwitha: A Woman with the Courage to Go Against the Crowd

Kateri Tekakwitha, a Mohawk Iroquois woman, was born in 1656 in what is now northern New York state. Her parents named her “Little Sunshine.” When she was four years old, her mother, father and

were staying in her family's longhouse. She heard the priests talk about God and Jesus, and she remembered her mother teaching her about Christianity before she died. As the years went by, she found herself wanting to know more, but there was no one she could ask.

When she was 18, Tekakwitha finally asked a priest if she could learn more about Jesus. Although her people had deep spiritual beliefs and worshipped the Creator, she wished to become a Christian and serve Jesus. The priest asked if she was strong enough to go against her family's wishes, for they would not want her to become a Christian. She said yes.

She began religious instruction and was baptized on Easter Sunday 1676. She was given the Christian name Kateri (or Catherine). Her family was still against her being a Christian. Some of them made her life hard, giving her extra work to do and making fun of her. The village children threw stones at her, adults called her a fool, and a young man who had hoped to marry her even threatened to kill her. No matter what happened, Kateri prayed that she might act as Jesus would act in her place.

Things got so bad at home that Kateri had to leave. Friends helped her escape to another Iroquois village where everyone was Christian. Here she could live her faith openly, without fear. (This village – Caughnawaga – was near Montreal.)

Her friends encouraged her to get married. Kateri didn't feel right about this. Her relationship with Jesus was the most important thing in her life; she didn't think she had room for a husband and children. Then she found out that Christian women could choose to live as Sisters and do God's work instead of getting married. She decid-

little brother died in a smallpox epidemic. She survived, but was left with poor eyesight and a badly scarred face.

With her family dead, she went to live with her aunt and uncle. When she was eight years old, they gave her a new name: "Tekakwitha," which means "one who bumps and bounces off things that might be in the way." The name fit, for in dim light, she walked with her arms out so she wouldn't bump into things. (As she got older, the name still fit: she did not let anything stand in her way!)

The year she got her new name, she briefly met some Catholic priests (known as blackrobes for the clothes they wore) who

ed that she wanted to be “married” to Jesus. In 1679, Kateri took a vow of celibacy: she would stay single and devote her life and work to God. She worked very hard, nursing the old and the sick and telling stories to entertain and teach the young. She was known by everyone for her gentleness and good humour.

Here, the story takes a sad turn. After overcoming so many obstacles, Kateri got sick from working so hard. Her friends, seeing her get weaker, knew that she was dying. Kateri was not afraid to die, for she knew that in death she would be with Jesus. On the day before Holy Thursday in the year 1680, Kateri died. She was only 24 years old.

A miraculous thing happened a few minutes after her death: the marks on her face disappeared and all signs of suffering were gone.

In 1943, Kateri was declared Venerable by Pope Pius XII. (This is the first step toward becoming a saint.) In 1980, exactly 300 years after her death, she was beatified by Pope John Paul II. (This is the second step.)

In the years since she lived and died, Kateri Tekakwitha has inspired many people to work to integrate Christianity and native North American culture. In this way, the elements of native spirituality are kept alive. When they are made part of Christian traditions, both become richer.

What Is Success?

God created each person as unique, with unique gifts and talents. We are successful when we develop and share our gifts and talents. We are successful when we do God’s will and become the people God created us to be. Since we are all differ-

ent, success will be a bit different for each one of us.

As Christians, we are called to be like Jesus. This does not mean we should try to do everything that Jesus did. It means we should try to be true to ourselves and to our relationship with God just as Jesus was. We are called to follow Jesus’ example, loving generously and using our gifts and talents to help others.

Saints are people who have made a difference in the world – not by doing remarkable things, but by doing ordinary things remarkably well. They learn to hear God’s call in everyday life and are not afraid to answer that call.

Think about St. Augustine, St. Marguerite D’Youville, St. John of God and Blessed Kateri. Each of them is remembered as a great success because they used their gifts and talents to help those around them. All of them truly loved their neighbours. None of their lives turned out the way they expected. But all of them listened to the way God was calling them, and all went where they were needed, even if it was not where they wanted to go.

Two Prayers for Every Day

Morning Prayer

Here is a prayer to help you begin the day in the right frame of mind.

God of Heaven, only God,
all creatures received life from you.
As the brilliance of the sun in the morning
vanquishes the darkness of the night,
in the same way, you, who are invisible, reveal your
handiwork.
I thank you because you gave to me a good night's
sleep
and you woke me up again this morning.
Do not abandon me during this day;
be with me and help me always.
God, immense and infinite, be praised in my heart.

*(This prayer was taught to a Catholic missionary
in Pakistan by one of his Muslim friends.)*

An Evening Reflection

God is with us every day, but sometimes we are so busy that we fail to notice God. It can help to take some time at the end of each day to think about the day, how you lived it, and how God was present in it. Here is one way to do this.

1. **B**egin by thanking God for giving you another day of life. Thank God for any good things that happened during the day.
2. Ask God to help you see the places where God was calling you during the day.
3. Go through the day, hour by hour. Picture what you were doing at different points of the day. Ask yourself, “What was I doing? What was I thinking about? How did I interact with the people around me? How was God helping me? How was I ignoring God?”
4. Ask God to forgive you for your mistakes and to help you do better tomorrow.
5. Finish by praying the Our Father.

Unit 4 Summary Statements

- Death cannot destroy the bonds of Christian community and love. Those who have died are a part of our community, but in a new way.
- All of the faithful form one body in Christ. All of us, living or dead, are part of the body of Christ. When we say that we believe in the communion of saints, we are saying that we believe we are all connected to each other in Christ.
- God created human beings for eternal life. Jesus came to destroy death and make it possible for us to turn back to God and to share in the eternal life that God offers.
- Saints are people who see God's great love for them and act the way God wants them to, even when it's hard. Each of us is called to be a saint.
- We are successful when we develop and share the gifts and talents that God has given for the benefit of all people. We are called to follow Jesus' example of loving generously and unselfishly.
- The Church recognizes the saintliness of people with a two-step process: beatification (the person is called "Blessed") and canonization (the person is seen to be a saint).

Key Terms

communion of saints
intercession
death

saints
holiness
canonization

beatification

Unit 5

We believe in...the forgiveness of sins

5.1

We know these rules. Why do we have to learn them again?

The Ten Commandments



1 You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

The first commandment reminds us that our God is almighty and all-loving. The God who created us deserves our complete faith and trust. This commandment teaches us to see and appreciate God's tremendous love for us – to love God above all else and to be grateful for all that God has done for us.

Sometimes we forget that everything good comes from God. We act as if someone or something else could make us happy. We put all our energy into reaching some personal goal.

Some of these personal goals are good – such as trying to do well in school, working on a sport or making friends with a lot of people – but they are not as important as being loving. When we do not take time to appreciate the good things God has given us, or to love the people God has placed in

our lives, we are headed for a life of stress and sadness.

Our priorities are always changing. We need to keep looking at the way we live in light of the first commandment. Are we thankful and loving people? Does God come first in our lives? Are we relying on God, who will never fail, or are we putting our faith in things that will fail in the end? Do we respect each other and all of creation, and thereby respect the Creator?

This commandment offers comfort and hope. It reminds us that God loves us, God will care for us, and God will see that everything in our lives works for the best. We don't need to be afraid. Our God will lead us out of slavery and into freedom.



2 You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

The second commandment reminds us of the power of the words we use. Our words reflect our attitudes, but they also shape attitudes.

When we use God's name to express anger, we associate God with anger. When we make promises using God's name but then don't keep those promises, we give the impression that God cannot be trusted or is easily fooled. We may weaken our relationship with God; we may also weaken the relationship that those who hear us have with God. If others, especially non-Christians, hear us showing disrespect for God, they may think that God does not deserve respect. (If you hear a lot of bad things about someone, how does this affect how you think of that person?)

The second commandment also calls us to think about how we speak to and about other people. Do we pay attention to the words we use and the impact they have? Do we tend to say hurtful things when we are angry or frustrated? Do we use put-downs? Do we trivialize the way we speak about relationships and sexuality?

You can now probably express things you couldn't express a few years ago. This is a wonderful gift and a great responsibility. You can now share your love and care for others in new ways. You can also hurt others in new ways. Think about the second commandment and what it says about the power of words.



3 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

The third commandment teaches us three very important things. First, we need to set aside time each week to pray and to worship God. Second, because we depend on God, we must regularly ask God to renew our strength and our spirits. Third, we need to take time to rest and to spend time with our friends and family.

As Catholics, we believe that part of keeping the Sabbath holy is taking the time to go to Mass on Sundays. Christians have done this since the time of Christ – for Christians the “seventh day” is the day of the Lord’s resurrection. At Mass we commit ourselves again to God and to God’s people. We thank God for all we have received and we offer ourselves – all that we have and all that we do – to God. We also receive the strength we need to do God’s will during the week. If it is impossible to get to Mass on Sunday, it is important to at least come together to hear the word of God.

The Sabbath is a day to relax and enjoy all that God has given us, and to encourage others to do the same. One of the most wonderful gifts God has given us is our family and our friends. We need to spend time with those we love, getting to know each other better. This helps our relationships grow stronger.

or when they are doing good things, or because they have done so much for us, but because they are our parents or caregivers and they have been put in our lives by God.

Respect for our parents helps create peace and warmth at home. When there is peace in our homes, we find it easier to be peacemakers in the world. All the more so should we respect the single parent on whom the burden of being a parent is so much greater.

When we respect our parents, we begin to develop a habit of respecting others. We become people who can see the dignity in others. Those who respect the dignity in others are far more likely to win the respect of others in return.

As we grow older, we start to see that our parents or caregivers are not perfect. This is when the fourth commandment becomes more and more important. It asks more of us now than it did when we were younger.

Adolescence is a time when you are changing quickly. You may not be getting along with your family and your friends because they may not know the “new you.” Maybe you haven’t had a chance to get to know them in ways that fit with your new ways of thinking. If you have changed a lot in the past year or two, the third commandment is a very important one for you. Taking time to relax and share who you are with your family and friends will help you find happiness and peace.



4 Honour your father and your mother.

The fourth commandment teaches us to respect our parents, grandparents, caregivers – not just when we agree with them,



5

You shall not kill.

The fifth commandment speaks out against violence of any kind. When Jesus refers to it, he says that we must not only avoid killing, we must also avoid any form of destructive anger. (See Matthew 5.21-22.)

Human life is sacred because God created us to interact with God. We are sacred because we are made in the image of God. We must never do anything that undermines the value of human life or the value of another human being.

This commandment asks us to take the best possible care of human life. Whenever

we make choices that hurt our bodies or someone else's body, we are breaking the fifth commandment. As we get older, we face more temptations. We may find it harder to say no to smoking or drinking or drugs or other things that hurt our bodies. We might also be tempted to encourage other people to do these things.

The fifth commandment reminds us that when we harm ourselves or others (or tempt others to do so), through abuse, neglect or violence, we are hurting our relationship with God and making it harder to find true and lasting happiness.

This commandment also applies to issues we hear debated in the news and played out in the movies – war, abortion, suicide, euthanasia, capital punishment. God is the author of life. It is up to us to safeguard life and to help people live in a way that fits their human dignity.



6 You shall not commit adultery.

The sixth commandment reminds us of the great value of human sexuality. Our sexuality has been given to us by God as a way to communicate with others. When we treat sex as nothing but a way to make ourselves feel good or to gain power over another person, we are showing great disrespect – for ourselves and for others.

We are responsible for what we do with our bodies. It is up to us to develop healthy relationships and to avoid any relationship where people are treated like things.

Sexual intercourse belongs only in marriage. Between a husband and a wife, it is a complete gift of each person to the other. It can deepen and strengthen the love that

the spouses have for one another, and it allows the couple to join God in creating another human being. People who are sexually intimate outside of marriage are acting selfishly – they are taking what they can from each other's bodies without making a commitment to meet each other's real needs. Without this lifelong, committed relationship, they are treating each other as objects that can be used and discarded, rather than as people who must be loved and treasured forever.

Now that you're a teenager and your body is changing, you probably spend more time thinking about sexual relationships

mission, unless you need it to survive at that moment. It is stealing to take something that does not belong to you, even if the owners have more than they need. It is stealing to take so much of something that others who need it cannot have any. It is stealing to damage on purpose anything that does not belong to you. It is also stealing to give less than you have promised. (In other words, a person who does poor quality work on purpose and is being paid for it is stealing.)

Whenever we take without thinking about the needs and rights of other people, we are breaking the seventh commandment. This includes exploiting, wasting and abusing the limited resources of the earth in a way that future generations will not have what they need.

As you become more independent, the choices you make have more of an impact on other people. You may choose to do things that help others or that hurt others. The seventh commandment will remind you how God wants you to choose.



7

You shall not steal.

The seventh commandment demands that we live justly and share generously. God has entrusted the earth and its resources to all people so that the needs of all may be met. We all have a right to own enough to meet our needs; we don't have a right to own so much that others can't meet their basic needs. We must think about the needs and rights of others every time we take or use anything. This is why the Church has always taught that the needs of the poor must come first before the extras of the rich.

It is stealing to take something from another person without that person's per-



8

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

We are called to be truthful people. We should avoid all dishonesty, especially when it hurts another person.

This commandment reminds us that we can only live in peace if we can trust each other. If someone is being hurt, we have a responsibility to speak up. On the other hand, sometimes the most loving thing we can do is to be silent. At those times we should not lie, but we need not share everything we know.

The eighth commandment also speaks about respecting other people's reputations.

This means avoiding gossip, which might make people think less of another person or which might lead us to dislike or leave out someone we don't even know yet.

Gossip can become a big problem in Grade 8 classes. Maybe talking about the value of the eighth commandment as a class would save a lot of heartache.



9 You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.

This commandment is really for both males and females, so perhaps in our own time we should put it as "You shall not covet your neighbour's partner."

The ninth commandment reminds us that the way we think about other people is important to God. We should always think of others as whole people with hearts, minds, souls and bodies. We should never think of them as just a body or just a mind, just a heart or just a soul.

Whenever we are interested in only one part of a person, we sin. We hurt our relationship with that person and with God, for that person was created in God's image.

Our society often encourages us to value only parts of a person; for example, regarding women as sexual objects for the pleasure of men. The ninth commandment challenges us to value people for more than what they look like or how smart or strong they are.



10 You shall not covet anything that is your neighbour's.

The tenth commandment reminds us of the dangerous power of envy and greed. It also reminds us that we should never

let things become more important to us than people.

We cannot call ourselves loving people if we wish others would suffer (or if we let them suffer) so that we might have more. For example, if we "have to have" some particular kind of clothing to fit in with a group and this strains the family budget, we may be breaking this commandment.

The more we covet what other people have, the harder we will find it to be the generous and loving people God wants us to be. The tenth commandment reminds us that who we are, not what we have, is the important thing. We need to reflect upon this commandment every time we are not satisfied with what we have.



An Examination of Conscience Based on the Ten Commandments

LEADER:

You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

Reader:

- How do I spend my time each day?
- Do I remember that God loves me?
- Do I remember to give thanks to God for all that I have received?
- Do I try to love the people God has placed in my life?
- Do I have my priorities in order?
- Do I pray?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Reader:

- Do I pay attention to the way my words affect others?
- Do I misuse God's name to express anger or frustration?
- Would the way I talk lead other people, especially non-Christians, to think less of God?
- Do I make promises in God's name and then break them?
- Do I say hurtful things when I am angry or upset?
- Do I pay attention to the words I use and the impact they have on others? Do I put down other people?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Reader:

- Do I take time each week to pray and to worship God?
- Do I take part in Mass on a regular basis?
- Do I remember that my strength comes from God and that without God I can do nothing?
- Do I take time to relax and appreciate all that God has given me?
- Do I make time to get to know my family and my friends better?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

Honour your father and your mother.

Reader:

- Do I show respect for my parents or for those who care for me?
- Am I too critical of my parents?
- Do I do things to upset my parents on purpose?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

You shall not kill.

Reader:

- Do I value all people?
- Do I do things to undermine the value of other people?
- Do I do things that harm the life I have been given?
- Do I take good care of myself?
- Do I encourage other people to take good care of themselves?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

You shall not commit adultery.

Reader:

- Do I value and respect my sexuality?
- Do I try to develop healthy relationships and avoid relationships where people are treated like things?
- Do I express my sexuality in appropriate ways?
- Do I respect the relationship God has set up between sexual intimacy and marriage?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

You shall not steal.

Reader:

- Do I consider the needs and rights of others every time I take or use anything?
- Do I respect public property and the property of other people?
- Do I take more than I need?
- Do I share generously?
- Do I do the best work that I am able to give?
- Does my lifestyle make life harder for other people?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

Reader:

- Am I a truthful person?
- Do I try to mislead other people?

- Do I say things just to hurt other people?
- Do I gossip?
- Do I let gossip influence my opinion of others?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

You shall not covet your neighbour's partner.

Reader:

- Do I think of other people as whole people, or just as a body or a mind?
- Do I let myself be convinced by some media that a person's value is based on appearance, strength or intelligence?
- Do I remember that all people are created in the image of God?

(pause for silent reflection)

LEADER:

You shall not covet your neighbour's things.

Reader:

- Do I let greed or envy take over my thoughts?
- Do I let others suffer so I can have more?
- Do I think my own wants are more important than other people's?
- Do I remember that it is who I am, not what I own, that is really important?

LEADER:

Lord, help us to examine our lives honestly. Help us to see the things that keep us from being the people you created us to be, and give us the desire and the courage to change.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #2063)

What's right? What's wrong?

On the Rocks

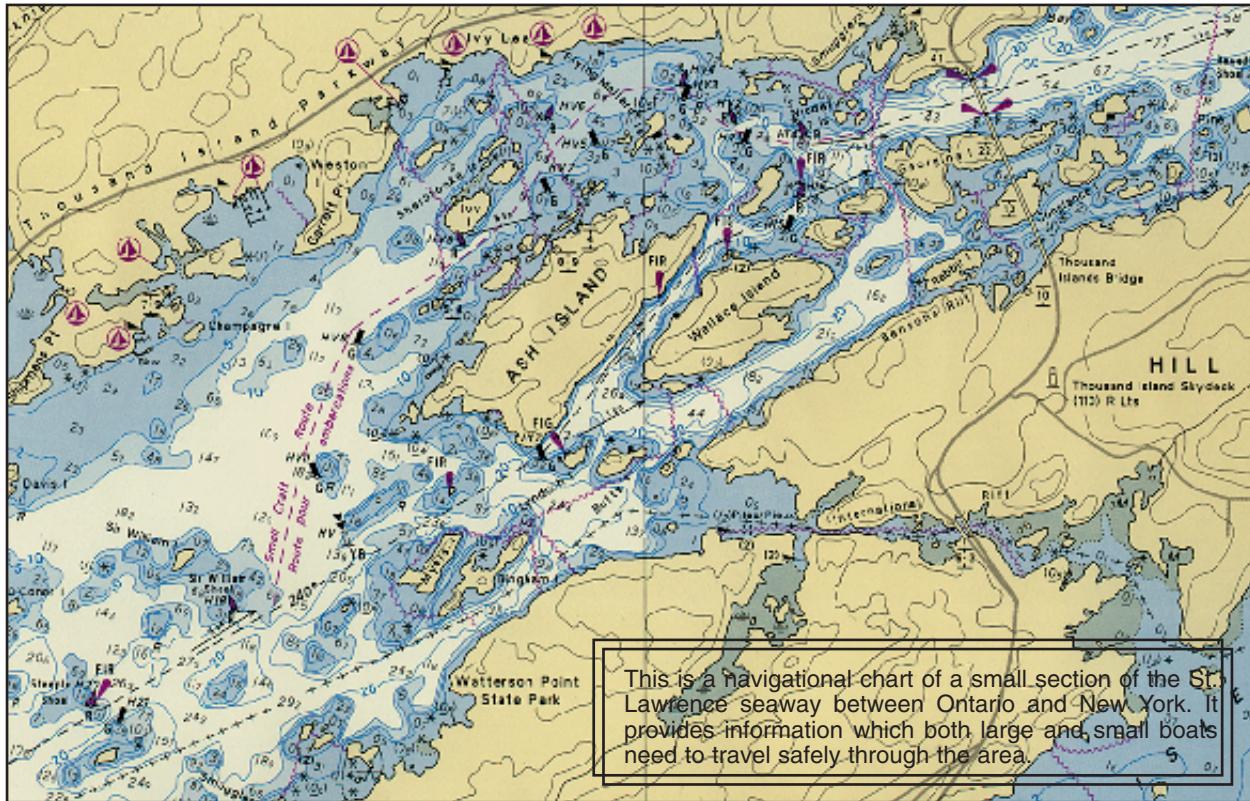
The boat looked funny, tipped to one side on top of a rock in the middle of a big open channel of water. Todd felt stupid sitting in it, but he had nowhere else to go. He was stuck.

Todd and his boat were sitting high and dry on a rock because he hadn't paid attention to any of his navigational aids. He thought that he knew these waters well and had no need of charts (maps for the ocean), tide tables or a compass.

Todd had ignored the green buoy and got stuck on the large rock ledge that it marked. He knew that he now had to wait until the tide came in and floated the boat free. If only he had been more careful!

"If I'd looked at my charts I would have seen that that buoy marked a ledge and I could have avoided it," he said to himself. "If I had looked at the tide tables, I would have seen that the tide was going out and I would have known that I couldn't take the

boat all the places I did last week at high tide. If I'd just followed the standard navigational rules I would have kept the green buoy on my right and I wouldn't be in this mess! If... if... if...."



Reproduced with the permission of the Canadian Hydrographic Service

Navigating Through Life

Todd spent almost nine hours sitting in his boat on the rock ledge because he could not be bothered to pay attention to his navigational aids. We can also spend a lot of time going nowhere and feeling silly if we ignore our conscience – our navigational aid for life. Our conscience helps us know right from wrong. Our conscience is the voice of God within us to guide us.

If Todd had paid attention to the green buoy, he would have watched closely for the ledge. Our conscience is like the buoy that warns of shallow water or underwater obstacles. It can help us identify the possibilities for good and for bad in each situation.

If Todd had paid attention to the rules of sailing, he would have kept the green buoy on his right. Our conscience is like the rules of the sea, which tell us that if we are in doubt, we should keep green buoys on our right and red on our left. Our conscience reminds us of the rules we should always keep in mind – rules like the Ten Commandments.

If Todd had paid attention to his charts, he would have known that he would hit a ledge if he passed on the wrong side of the buoy. Our conscience is like the charts, which help us decide when we can or can't make exceptions to the rules. It helps us to see the unique angles of a situation and to make the best possible decision for that situation.

For our conscience to help us, we must develop it. First, we need to pay attention to the effects of what we do and of what other people do. Then we will know what kinds of things are most likely to cause problems. Second, we need to think about our options in each situation so we can make the best possible choice. Finally, we need to listen to and try to understand the guidelines the Church gives us. These guidelines have been set by a lot of people over a long period of time. They reflect the truth of God and the wisdom of experience. Our conscience must be shaped by the truth that is God. If our conscience is undeveloped and is not shaped by this truth, it is like a navigational chart that does not show what's really there. The teachings of the Church help us to shape our conscience properly.

If we fail to develop our conscience, or if we ignore our conscience, we are sure to sin.

What Is Sin?

Sin is a decision we make that goes against the truth that is God. It is a deliberate refusal or failure to pay attention to the rules and guidelines set by the Ten Commandments and by the Church. Sin weakens our love for God, for others and for ourselves. The more we love other people, the more we grow in our love for God. Jesus said, "Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25.40). The more we hurt our relationship with others, the more we weaken our love for God.

Sin is deciding to be less loving than we could be. It is abusing the freedom God has given us. It is a deliberate step backward in our life.

Sometimes it's hard to know when you have sinned. We may know we have done

something wrong, but we don't really think that we love God less because of it. Each time we do something that makes it harder for us to love others or to become the best people we can be, we weaken our relationship with God. When this happens, we have sinned.

Here are some questions to ask yourself when you are trying to decide whether you have sinned:

- Does what I have done weaken my love for God, my relationship with other people or my growth as a human person?
- Did I know that what I was doing was wrong? If I did not know, should I have known? Would I have known if I had taken care to develop my conscience and to become more aware of the way my behaviour affects others?
- Was I aware of what I was doing at the time? Was it my own personal decision? If someone else was putting pressure on me, could I have said no to them?



"Anyone who knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, commits sin." (James 4.17)

If the answer to each of these questions is “yes,” then we have sinned and need to be forgiven.

Social Sin

Individual sin is not the only kind of sin there is. There is another kind of sin called social sin. Social sins are the structures and accepted practices in our society that make it hard for people to avoid sin.

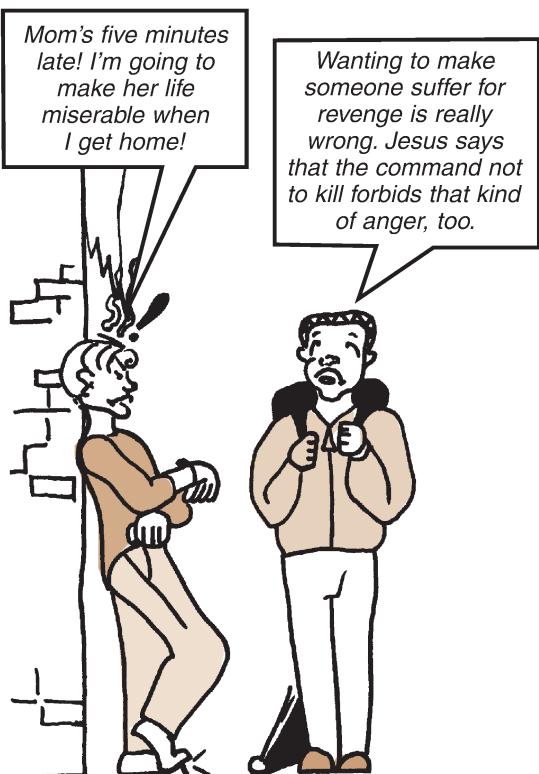
Here are two examples of social sin:

1. Many of the things that are sold in Canadian stores were made by people

who do not earn a just wage. Canadians are able to buy these things cheaply. As a result, many Canadians have luxuries while the people who made the luxuries barely have enough to survive. When we buy or use these things, we are taking part in social sin.

2. People of certain races are often given advantages over people of other races. It is not your fault if you are treated better than someone else because of your race; however, you are still taking part in and getting benefits from social sin.

All of us are called to do what we can to end unjust policies and to get rid of social sin. When we support or put up with policies and practices that cause social sin, we are sinning.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #2302)

I confess to almighty God, and to you
my brothers and sisters,
that I have sinned through my own fault,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done
and in what I have failed to do;
and I ask Blessed Mary ever virgin,
all the angels and saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

How can we work it out?

Another Long Day

The garage door rumbled down. It was almost midnight, but Kathy's mother was just getting home from work. Kathy had waited up to tell her that she had the lead part in a school play.

"Kathy, what are you doing up this late on a school night? Get to bed right now!" her mother said sharply as she came into the house.

"But mom, I just wanted to tell you that...."

"No 'buts,' just get to bed. I'll see you in the morning."

Kathy slammed the bedroom door behind her, swearing that she would never tell her mother anything ever again.

At breakfast the next morning, her mother went on and on about some big

event going on at work and said something about working late again. As she was putting on her coat to head out to the garage, she asked, "By the way, Kathy, what did you want to tell me last night?"

"It's nothing important," mumbled Kathy into her glass of juice.

"Dinner's in the freezer. I'll call if I'm going to be really late. Love you, bye!" She was out the door.

"Yeah, right." Kathy said to the door. "I hate you!"

Kathy and her mom didn't communicate much over the next few weeks, although her mom talked a lot about what was going on at her work. Finally, one day, they had dinner together. As usual, her mother was talking a mile a minute. Kathy couldn't take it any longer. She blurted out, "Mom, will you just shut up!"

Her mother looked as if she had been struck in the face. "How dare you speak to me like that!" she finally said. Kathy threw the dishes she was carrying on the floor. They shattered into a thousand pieces, but the dishes were not nearly as broken as she was inside. She ran out of the kitchen and flung herself onto her bed.

After a while, Kathy heard her mother sweeping up the broken dishes. The phone rang, and her mother said something about not being able to help out that night. Then silence, and then a gentle knock on the bedroom door. Kathy buried her face deeper into her pillow.

"I'm sorry, Kathy," said her mother as she sat down on the bed. "I guess I've been caught up in my own world. I don't even know what you're up to these days. I hadn't realized until tonight how much I had shut you out. Can we at least try to talk?"

"What's the point?" Kathy asked.
"Tomorrow's your 'big event' at work.
That's all you can think about."

"I promise not to even mention or touch anything from work this evening. Please, give me a chance."

Kathy did want her mother to come see the school play. Maybe she could start there. And then there was something really important she wanted to ask.... She sensed that maybe there was hope. It was worth a try, because it was getting pretty painful keeping everything inside. Kathy rolled over and said, "Can we have dessert and talk in the kitchen?"

God's Forgiveness

When we sin, we hurt our relationship with God and with other people. Our sin makes it hard for us to be truly loving. As

long as we sin, we will be unable to become the people God calls us to be. When we turn away from our sin, admit that we were wrong and make a commitment to change, God forgives us and helps us get back on the right track.

There is no sin so great that God cannot or will not forgive. No matter what we have done, no matter how far away from God we have moved, God is always ready to welcome us back. But first, we must admit that we have done something wrong and are in need of forgiveness. We must express true sorrow for our wrong behaviour, and we must show that we really want to act differently in the future.

Forgiveness repairs our relationship with God. If we do not want the relationship to be repaired, forgiveness is not possible. God will not force forgiveness on us.

The Call to Forgive Others

God promises to forgive our sins if we ask for forgiveness. God also calls us to forgive those who have sinned against us. God wants our relationships to be whole. If someone hurts the relationship we have with him or her, God asks us to work with that person to fix it.

Forgiving another person can be hard, and it can take time. But if we refuse to forgive another person, we are being unloving, which is also a sin. Hanging on to our anger can hurt us as much as the original hurt did.

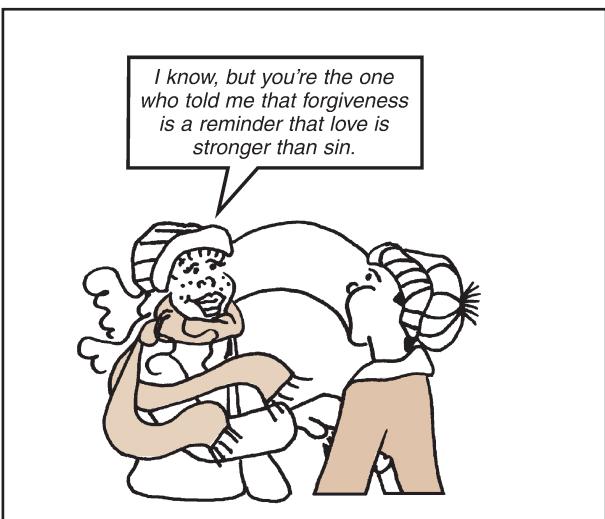
In order to forgive someone, we must give up the desire to get back at that person. No matter how much we have been hurt, we do not have the right to hurt someone else on purpose. A loving person wants the best for other people, even for people he or she dislikes. When someone

has hurt us, we must find a way to wish that person good rather than bad. One way to do that is to pray for the other person.

We must also try to build a new relationship with that person. We may not be able to forget what happened, and the relationship may be different now, but we can still try. It is never too late for a person to change. If we want God to believe us when we say that we want to change, we need to try and believe others when they say the same thing. (If the hurt was very deep, we may need to get help from another person to believe again and to forgive.)

God calls us to wish people well and to pray for them even if they have not

repented of their sin. Forgiveness can begin with us, but we can't do it all. Just as God does not force forgiveness on us, we can't force it on others. If someone has really hurt us but won't admit it or apologize for it, all we can do is pray for that person, show what kindness we can, and move on with our lives.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #2844)

Forgive your brothers and your sisters if they
hurt you
It's true, at times the pain may seem too great
But if we try to follow God's own example
The whole wide world would be a better place.

*(refrain from "Forgive
Your Brothers and Your Sisters,"
song #8 on the Stand By Me music cassette)*

Why should I confess my sins to anyone but God?

The Parable of the Bicycle Wheel

The master wandered from place to place healing the sick, reaching out to the lonely and teaching the people about the love of God. One day a group of skeptical students asked him, “If God is so loving and forgiving, why does forgiveness depend on so many things? Why can’t we just tell God we’re sorry? Why do we need to tell a priest and then do penance?”

The master responded: “A child rode her bicycle over rough ground. She rode it through mud and never cleaned it. She rode on sharp stones without checking that there was enough air in her tires. She threw it down on the ground whenever she was tired of riding it.

“Over time, many of the spokes on her bicycle were bent. Some began to rust along one end. They were not as strong as they had once been. Some of the spokes broke. The girl did not know the purpose of the spokes. If a spoke was attached to

either the hub or the rim, she thought that was enough. She only tried to fix the spokes that broke off completely.

“One day when she sat on her bicycle, both wheels bent sideways and broke, and the girl and the bike tumbled to the ground.”

“What does this tale have to do with forgiveness of sins?” the students said.

The master answered: “The Christian community is like a bicycle wheel. God is the hub: the centre that holds everything together, gives the wheel its shape and makes it possible for the wheel to function. The Church is the rim. It is through the movement of the Christian Church along the paths of the world that most people come to know God. The hub and the rim are held together by the spokes: the individual members of the Christian community.

“Spokes are bent and broken by sin. Serious sins (also called mortal sins) break the spokes. They separate us from God or

from the rest of the Christian community and make it impossible for us to love fully. We commit a mortal sin when we reject God and pull away from God or from God's people on purpose. Less serious (venial) sins bend the spokes. They weaken but do not destroy our relationship with God or with others.

"When a spoke breaks, the whole wheel becomes unbalanced. It does not roll properly. If one spoke breaks, more stress is put on the other spokes. Before long these other spokes will begin to bend and break, too.

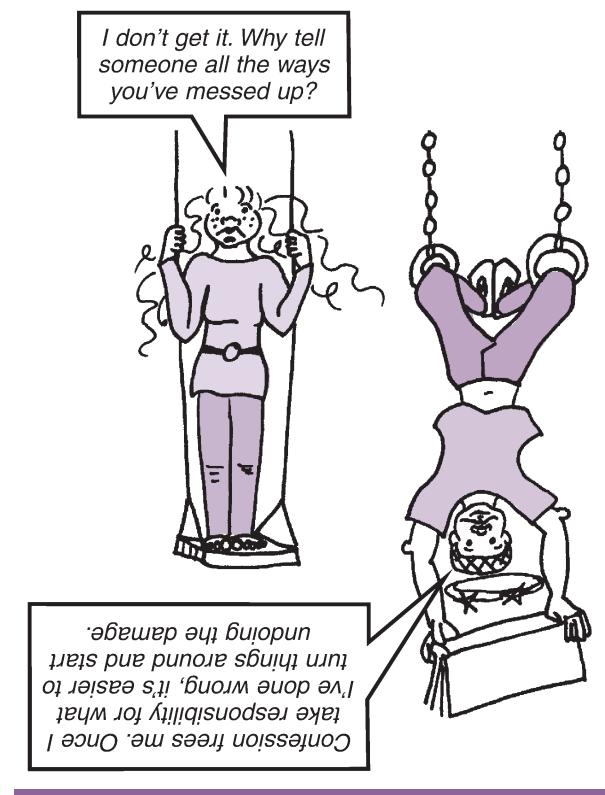
"A bent spoke must be straightened as soon as possible. A broken spoke must be fixed. It must be reattached to both the hub and the rim. Then it must be precisely tightened. The tension on each spoke must be exactly right if the wheel is to be properly balanced. If these things aren't done, the wheel won't work properly.

"When we hurt someone, we must do what we can to apologize and to repair our relationship with that person. That's how we 'repair the spoke.' But repairing the spoke isn't enough. We must also reattach the spoke to the wheel. Our sins affect our relationship with both God and the Christian community. Our sins also affect the relationships between all of the other members of the Christian community, and between the Christian community and the world. That is why we must repair our relationship with both God and the community.

"The Church has made this easier for us. When we confess our sins to a priest, he forgives us in the name of the entire community. Anyone who still refuses to forgive us is choosing to be outside of the community.

"God, too, has made it easier for us to be forgiven. God has promised that if we repair our connection with the rim (the community), God will restore our connection with the hub (God). God has even promised to adjust the tension in the spokes when the community agrees to reconciliation and turns to God for help. When the priest speaks the words of absolution, he is speaking on behalf of God. God has forgiven us. God has promised to give us and the community the grace we need to repair the damage our sin has done.

"God has not put all kinds of restrictions on forgiveness. God has made fixing the wheel as easy as possible."



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #1455)

Reconciliation

The word “reconciliation” means “to flow together again.” When we are reconciled with God and with the Christian community, our lives will flow (or roll) in the right direction.

The sacrament of Reconciliation (sometimes also called the sacrament of Penance) allows us to repair the breaks caused by mortal (very serious) sins. God always loves us no matter what we have done. There is no sin too great for God to forgive. The sins that have hurt our relationship with God and with others the most are the ones we must bring before God and the community in the sacrament. It is also good to confess our less serious sins. Confession can help us develop our consciences and fight against the tendency to sin.

This sacrament offers us the grace we need to restore our relationship with God

and with the Christian community so that our lives may “roll” in the right direction. “Penance” involves making up the damage caused by our sin and, in the wider sense, turning our hearts toward God.

The process of reconciliation looks like this:

- God reaches out to us to heal us.
- We have a guilty conscience or feel hurt, depressed or sad because of our sin.
- We resolve to seek forgiveness and to change our lives.
- We confess our sins to the priest.
- Our sins are forgiven through sacramental absolution.
- We are reconciled with the community and become part of it again.

Eucharist

Reconciled, we gather at the one table of the Lord. If we still have any venial sins, they are forgiven in our entering to communion with God and with the community. Eucharist helps us to keep the right tension in our spoke and to keep the wheel well oiled and in good balance. The Eucharist can straighten out the “bends” caused by venial (less serious) sins. The Eucharist also helps us avoid future “breaks” caused by mortal (very serious) sins.

Celebrating Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a “growing back together” that takes time. The sacrament, an important part of this process, involves preparation and celebration. Here are a few things to keep in mind when preparing to celebrate it:

- The word of God is like a light that helps us see ourselves as we are. Choose a scripture reading and read it slowly. Think about your life and the mercy and love of Jesus.
- Pray. Ask God to forgive the wrong you have done, and give thanks for the healing God has already begun in your life. Make up your mind to avoid this sin in

the future. Try to repair any relationships that have been hurt by your sin.

- Confess your sins to the priest, who represents Christ and the Church community. Tell him about the brokenness you feel and the sorrow in your heart. After confessing, say something like, “I’m sorry for hurting God and my community.”
- The priest may then lay his hands on your head and will absolve you of your sins. When the priest forgives us in God’s name, it is God forgiving us.

While it is good to know these steps, the most important thing is to go to the place of reconciliation. The priest will help you throughout your confession.

“ **I**t tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Luke 15.10

When we take part in the sacrament of Reconciliation, we show that we want to be reconciled. Christ, through the Church, forgives our sins and reconciles us. The sacrament heals us and moves us forward into renewed growth and peace. It calls us to forgive and accept others, too.

“... Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us ...”

There are three different ways or “rites” for celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation.

- We celebrate God’s forgiveness and healing power with the community. After a common preparation time, including listening to God’s word and examining our conscience, we confess our sins individually to the priest.
- When there are many people and few priests, sometimes the bishop will allow general confession and absolution. We express our sorrow in our hearts to God, and receive God’s forgiveness as a group, without confessing our sins individually. A person who is aware of a serious sin should still confess that sin to a priest.

- Sometimes we will want to see the priest on our own. There will be a reading of God’s word, the confession of sins, the counsel the priest might give, and sacramental absolution. Even when we celebrate this sacrament individually with the priest, we do so within the community of the Church.

Unit 5 Summary Statements

- The Ten Commandments are fundamental obligations that lead us to life-giving relationships with ourselves, God, and others. As our lives change, the Ten Commandments have different things to teach us.
- The Ten Commandments:
 1. You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.
 2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
 3. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 4. Honour your father and your mother.
 5. You shall not kill.
 6. You shall not commit adultery.
 7. You shall not steal.
 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
 9. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.
 10. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbour's.
- The Ten Commandments help us to examine our consciences in a complete way.
- Our conscience is like a navigation chart that helps us to do the right thing as we go through life. We must not only follow our conscience, we must also develop it.
- Sin is abusing the freedom God gives us. It weakens our love for God and one another, and keeps us from being whole people. Sin is not doing on purpose what we know Jesus would ask us to do.
- To be a serious sin, the action must be sinful and we must know that the deed is wrong and decide freely to do it anyway.
- In order to be forgiven, we must first know we have sinned. Being truly sorry means admitting our wrong, trying to fix the damage, deciding not to do it again, and asking for forgiveness.
- The priest, through the words of absolution, reconciles us both to God and to the Christian community. The grace received in the sacrament of Reconciliation allows us to turn our lives around and live as God wants us to live.

Key Terms

Ten Commandments
examination
of conscience
sin

serious sin
repentance
forgiveness
reconciliation

confession
absolution

Unit 6

We believe in...the resurrection of the body



6.1

Who wants this body?

What Good Is My Body Now?

As soon as I met Amanda, I knew we were going to like each other. There was something in her eyes and in her smile that made me think, "She looks like fun."

"Hi, Amanda, my name's Pam," I said. Then I did something stupid. I reached out to shake hands.

Amanda looked at my hand, looked at me and raised her eyebrows. I could feel my face turning bright red. Then we both started to laugh. I sat down, and somehow we were friends.

Almost a year and a half before I met her, Amanda's life had been completely changed by a hunting accident. She and her brother had been out in the woods hunting for rabbits. Somehow her brother's gun had gone off just as they were packing up their lunch. The bullet hit Amanda in the neck and severed her spinal cord. By some miracle, her brother was able to get help in time. The doctors thought she would die, but Amanda was a fighter. For nearly a month she lay in a coma, attached to a respirator that forced air in and out of her lungs. Then one day, without warning, she opened her eyes.

Amanda's family was filled with joy. She would live! Then the doctors came in. Yes, Amanda would live. But she would never walk, she would never be able to use her arms or even turn her head. For now she would need to be attached to the respirator. Eventually, after a certain operation, she would be able to breathe on her own.

Amanda began to cry again. What was the point of being alive if you couldn't do anything? Her father was thinking the same thing. He turned and yelled at the doctor, "What kind of life is that? Why did you even

bother if you knew this was the best we could hope for? Now she'll just have years of misery and suffering."

"In today's world, there are a lot of things she can do as long as she can think," was the doctor's answer.

Amanda told me that for weeks, whenever any of her family members came to visit her, she begged them to kill her. "I just wanted them to put me out of my misery and to go on with their lives. I would never be 'normal' again. Our family would never be 'normal' again. Death seemed like the best alternative."

"Why?" I said when she told me this.
"There's so much you can do! I mean, your dad told me that you've already been offered a job with a computer software company. And you can write stories on the computer, and talk with me, and...."

"Don't worry, Pam. I don't want to die anymore. It just took me time to see that I am still me, no matter what my body will or won't do. When the doctors first told me that I would never move again, I didn't know about wheelchairs that can be propelled with a blow tube. I didn't know that I could work a computer with a mouth straw. I didn't know that what I had would be enough.

"When they sent Pat, the hospital tutor, to see me and told me that I had to go to high school just like any other kid, I was so angry. I refused to even look at her the first week. What good was an education to me?

"Pat told me that as long as I was alive, I could make choices, and as long as I could make choices, an education was valuable. I thought that was just a stupid teacher line at first, but I was so bored I agreed to study with her. It wasn't always fun, but at least now I have some new hopes and new dreams, and even a plan for my life."

A few months after I met her, Amanda moved back in with her family. The last time I talked with her, she said that life was going well. One thing she said just before she hung up has made me think a lot. "Maybe the biggest difference is that Glen no longer worries that he's a little shorter than some guys. And Mom no longer feels she has to try every new diet that comes along. My whole family has learned a lot about the value of everybody, whether or not it's 'perfect.'"

If Looks Could Kill

Armand's muscles bulged and his veins stood out. Two short strong huffs of breath, concentration, gritted teeth, and heave – a new club record for his weight class! Armand had lifted 145k.

Armand had started lifting weights to get in shape for football. It turned out that he liked weightlifting better. Now he was the strongest kid in his class, except for George. George got all the attention, but he didn't work out as hard as Armand did. It didn't seem fair.

Armand finally asked George, "So, what's your secret?"

George laughed and said, "Hey, some of us just have what it takes."

Later, one of the gym staff members pulled Armand to the side and said, "I heard you talking to George. It's no secret, man. If you want to bulk up like that, you need steroids. Let me know if you're interested."

Armand had heard about steroids. He knew that they could screw you up. But George sure didn't seem any worse for taking them. Armand asked how much it would cost to fix him up.

During the next few months, nobody seemed to notice how Armand changed. It

was only during a beach volleyball game that summer that one of the girls said what a "hunk" Armand was. Even the football coach tried to talk him into coming out for the team in the fall. Armand was on top of the world. He had the perfect body, and he knew it.

The provincial weightlifting competition brought together the best lifters, and Armand was ready. George was easy to beat, but Jacques "Chopper" Landry was another matter. Armand and Chopper were tied for first going into the final round. A berth on the provincial team to compete at the Canada Games was on the line. Armand looked over his rival. Chopper didn't look as strong as he did. "No problem," thought Armand. Armand went on to outlift Chopper by 1.5 kilos, but his few moments of glory didn't last. The next day, he was disqualified for using banned drugs and suspended from competition for two years. After the news broke, Armand found that he had lost many of his former admirers. "Oh well," he thought to himself. "At least I still have my perfect body...except for this pain in my gut. It's been bugging me for a while. I'd better get it checked out."

Sometime later, we caught up with Armand. He was in the hospital being treated for a liver ailment related to his steroid abuse. He didn't look very good.

Body and Soul but Truly One

The human person, created in the image of God, is at once a physical and a spiritual being. In the Bible, the term "soul" often refers to human life or the entire human person. "Soul" also refers to the innermost aspect of the person – the spirit. The body and soul are united, yet the soul does not perish. After death, the body and soul will be reunited at the final Resurrection.

(see Catechism of the Catholic Church, #362-368)

For We Are Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Chorus:

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. And God saw everything that he had made, and indeed it was very good.

Reader 1:

From the very beginning, the human body has been something wonderful and good.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reader 2:

But many have doubted the goodness of the human body and so...

Reader 1:

The Word became flesh and lived among us.

Reader 2:

God became a human being. God accepted a human body with all of its limitations.

Readers 3 and 4:

God showed us that the human body is so valuable and so special that even God could accept a human body.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reader 1:

When Jesus was born, the angel appeared to the shepherds and said: "I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people. To you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour.... This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

Reader 2:

The birth of a helpless infant was news of great joy. The birth of any human being is news of great joy.

Readers 3 and 4:

The wonder of Jesus' birth reminds us of the wonder of every human birth.

Reader 5:

Each person is a precious gift from God. Each person will affect the world in a unique way.

Reader 6:

The world is a physical world. If we did not have bodies we could not affect it. Our bodies are partly what makes each one of us precious and unique.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reader 1:

Jesus went among the people, healing their diseases and making their bodies whole again.

Reader 2:

He did not tell people that only their souls mattered. He knew that their bodies mattered, too.

Readers 3 and 4:

God cares for both our bodies and our souls. To be fully human, we need both a body and a soul.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reader 1:

When Jesus healed people, he touched them.

Reader 2:

He knew the importance of human touch.

Reader 1:

Jesus was not afraid to touch or be touched by even the most untouchable people in his society. He touched lepers with open sores. He allowed a woman of the streets to bathe his feet with her tears. He washed the dirty, sweaty feet of his apostles.

Reader 2:

By his touch, Jesus showed that every human body has dignity. Every human body deserves care and respect.

Readers 3 and 4:

Every human body should be treated with respect.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reader 5:

Pope John Paul said that our bodies are the sign and the place of our relationship with others.

Reader 6:

In other words, we use our bodies to communicate with other people.

Reader 5:

Our bodies come into existence because of human relationships, and our bodies can only keep existing with the help and support of others.

Readers 3 and 4:

Our bodies are reminders that we were made for each other. We are responsible for one another.

Reader 5:

We come to know God in one another.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reader 2:

We come to know God in one another because God lives in us.

Reader 1:

In his letter to the church in Corinth, St. Paul says, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

Readers 3 and 4:

Our bodies are sacred. We should treat them that way. How we treat our own bodies and other people's bodies reflects our attitude toward God, who created our bodies and whose dwelling place on earth is in our bodies.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reader 5:

When Jesus rose from the dead, he rose in his bodily form.

Reader 6:

Both the body and the Spirit have a place in the everlasting kingdom of God.

Readers 3 and 4:

Once again, God made it clear that bodies are valuable.

Reader 5:

When Jesus rose from the dead, his body was transformed. He was not limited by time or space.

Reader 6:

But his body was not what we would call physically perfect. He still had holes in his hands and feet and a wound in his side.

Readers 3 and 4:

God values our bodies exactly as they are. God does not go along with the standards of the movie industry, but with the standards of love.

Chorus:

We praise you, O Lord, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made.



Using Our Bodies in Prayer

Do you ever wonder why we stand up, sit down, and kneel at different times during the Mass? Have you noticed how the priest uses his body during the liturgy – bowing, genuflecting, blessing, and holding his arms out wide in prayer? See if you can figure out the meaning of each of the following types of movements with the help of a few questions.

Standing

- Why do people stand when the national anthem is played?
- Why do people stand when the judge enters a courtroom?
- What does it mean “to take a stand”?
- Is standing an active or passive body posture?
- When do we stand during the Mass? Why?

Sitting

- List some activities that you do sitting down.
- When do we sit during the Mass?
- In what ways does sitting help us to pray?

Genuflecting and Bowing

- Show the proper ways to genuflect and bow.
- What does it mean when someone genuflects?
- When does the priest genuflect and bow during the Mass? Whom is he honouring?

Kneeling

- We don't often kneel down in front of another person. If we ever did, what might we be saying to that person through this gesture?

Reflection questions

1. Describe three events from the gospels where Jesus showed that he cared for the human body.
2. How are our bodies signs that we are meant to live in relationships that respect everyone's dignity?
3. “How we treat our bodies and other people's bodies reflects our attitude toward God.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain.
4. After his resurrection from the dead, Jesus' body still had the wounds of his crucifixion. What does this mean for you?

- If we kneel at Mass, in front of whom are we kneeling?
- What does our kneeling express?

Using our hands

- What do you think it means when the priest holds his hands open and upward when he prays?
- Describe the various actions that people are invited to do with their hands during the Mass. What is the meaning of each one?

Your body can help you to pray better.
Just as our body language sometimes

speaks louder than our words when we communicate with people, our bodies express something when we pray. Try using various gestures and postures in your prayer.

6.2

What's sex worth?

The Treasure Box

When Burr-nose Bear was born, his father carved him a special treasure box. It was the kind of treasure box each member of the bear family had received when he or she was born. The lid was carved with Burr-nose Bear's name, along with symbols of the hopes and dreams that other family members had for him. Carved around the side of the box was the story of Burr-nose Bear's family and how they had come to live in the Great North Wood. On the inside bottom of the box was Burr-nose Bear's secret name, the name known only to his immediate family and to God, the name which Burr-nose Bear would one day tell his mate.

As Burr-nose Bear grew, he placed things in the box that had special meaning. He put in a rainbow-coloured scale from the first fish he ever caught all by himself. That scale represented his independence. He put in a feather that had been given to him by a bluejay he had once sheltered from a storm. The feather was a reminder of Burr-nose Bear's gentleness, a gentleness that many never saw. The box held happy memories and sad memories. In it were memories Burr-nose Bear was proud of, and memories of things he was sorry about. Burr-nose Bear's treasure box held all of the things that made Burr-nose Bear who he was.

Someday, when Burr-nose Bear was a fully grown adult, he would choose a mate

for life. They would go off and make a den together. Then Burr-nose Bear would give his mate his treasure box and she would give him hers. When Burr-nose Bear gave his new mate his box, he would be saying to her, "I give you everything that I am, everything that I've been, and everything that I hope to be." When he accepted his mate's box, he would be saying, "I accept everything that you are, everything that you have been, and everything that you hope to be." Then, together, Burr-nose Bear and his mate would make a new treasure box. In it they would place their old boxes, along with all of the memories that they would gather together. Their new box would be a sign of their promise to share things with each other that they never could or never would share with anyone else.

Now it happened that Burr-nose Bear started showing interest in female bears

long before he was ready to choose a mate for life. When young females were around, Burr-nose Bear would try to impress them by challenging his male buddies to a wrestling match, or by uprooting small trees and shaking them in his mouth. At first he tried to impress all of the female bears, but after a while he became interested in one particular bear, Golden Bear.

Burr-nose Bear and Golden Bear spent a lot of time together. They climbed the trees on Baldface Mountain and swam in the icy cold lake. They caught fish and gathered berries. Then one day Golden Bear said, "Will you show me your treasure box? I'll show you the one my parents carved for me."

Burr-nose Bear was excited. He was too young to have his own den, but he really liked Golden Bear and she really liked him. They could share treasure boxes now, and

then in a year or two they would announce that they were going to be mates and build their own den.

Burr-nose Bear waited until the rest of his family was out. He took his treasure box from its secret hiding place and went out to meet Golden Bear. They spent several days sharing all of the memories and all of the hopes that were in their boxes. They had a wonderful time.

Then one day Burr-nose Bear's friends asked him to join a hunting party. Golden Bear wanted Burr-nose Bear to stay home. But Burr-nose Bear had promised to gather food for his family for winter, so he rubbed noses with Golden Bear and trotted off.

When the hunting party returned a week later, Burr-nose Bear noticed that many of the bears who had stayed behind were giving him strange looks. Some of them even seemed to be laughing at him. Then one bear called him by his secret name.

Burr-nose Bear was horrified. Golden Bear must have told others about the contents of his treasure box! How could she do that? He had to find her. But when he did she laughed at him. "What's the big deal, Burr-nose Bear? I've shared lots of treasure boxes. Yours wasn't so different from any other. Grow up! Here – take your box back. I have a new friend now."

Burr-nose Bear was crushed. He picked up his box, which now seemed meaningless, and shuffled back to his den.

When Burr-nose Bear's father came home, he took one look at his son and said, "Come with me. We'll find some wood and carve a new treasure box together. When we are done, the first thing you put inside will be your old treasure box. It's a memory of sorrow and new understanding. Then you must begin to build your treasure again."

Reflection questions

1. Should Burr-Nose Bear have shared his treasure box? Why or why not?
2. Why did Golden Bear laugh at Burr-Nose Bear?
3. Do you think Burr-Nose Bear will share his new treasure box? Why or why not? If yes, when?
4. Why did Burr-Nose Bear's father suggest that they make a new box?
5. How is our sexuality like the bears' treasure boxes?

Sexual Intimacy

Sex is an amazing treasure given to us by God. It is a treasure which, if used wisely, can bring us lifelong joy.

However, if we misuse the treasure and treat it carelessly, we will be left feeling empty, lonely and without value.

Sexual intercourse is the gift of one's whole self to another person. As such, it is one of the greatest gifts we can ever give to another person or receive from another person.

Sexual intimacy belongs only in marriage. When a husband and a wife share their bodies with each other, it is a sign of their promise to share their whole lives with each other. They have promised to love and respect each other for life, and that means they will never treat the gift of

the other person as meaningless or unimportant.

When two people choose to have sexual intercourse outside of marriage, they are almost certain to hurt each other. Without the lifelong commitment of marriage, the two people will not be able to truly treasure and care for the gift they have received.

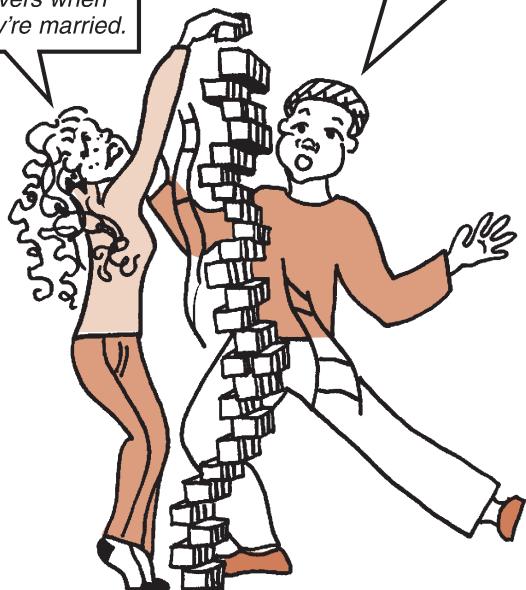
Outside of marriage, neither person can be sure that the other person will always accept them for who they are. Little seeds of doubt will begin to grow here and there. Soon the two people may be afraid to share everything about themselves for fear that

the other person might walk out. The promise of their whole self in sexual intercourse can become a lie. They will not be giving their whole selves, but only part of themselves. As well, they will be accepting only part of the other person. They may begin thinking that not every part of themselves is good enough to share. Their self-esteem can begin to fall. Because they have not treasured their sexuality, they may find it hard to treasure themselves.

People who become sexually involved before they are married do so because they see no point in resisting their physical desires. We must learn to be in control of our desires so that they do not take control of us. We must learn to treasure our sexuality. We must not give away our whole selves physically if we are not prepared to give away our whole selves spiritually, emotionally and socially. Nor must we take others sexually if we are not prepared to take them spiritually, emotionally and socially, and commit publicly to cherish them till death. This ability to control our physical desires and to treasure the gift of our sexuality, and the sexuality of others, is called chastity.

Some kids want to have sex now so they'll be good lovers when they're married.

Good lovers are those who can be good friends without sex. They're the ones who've mastered the desire to take and who can make a commitment to give. Sex without commitment is a tower without a foundation.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #2346, 2347)



6.3

Can suffering be meaningful?

“**T**he world we live in often seems very far from the one promised us by faith. Our experiences of evil and suffering, injustice and death, seem to contradict the Good News; they can shake our faith and become a temptation against it. It is then we must turn to the witnesses of faith.”

(Catechism of the Catholic Church,
#164-165)

A Letter of Courage from a Dying Woman

This letter was written by Ruth Gusz to her brothers just before she died. She had been fighting cancer for over a year and had suffered a lot. Her husband, Jim, was pleased to share this letter with you. (We have shortened the original letter.)

Dearest Alfred and Kim,

Hello, Hello! Finally I have the time and inclination to write this letter. I've been wanting to for some time....

...I'm full of faith and hope. Our Saviour Jesus gives me great joy in time of sorrow, a joy that passes all understanding. I pray that all in my family will be filled with this joy.

I've been on quite an adventure throughout my life, but more so in the last 6 to 10 years, where I've been searching for the meaning of life – my reason for existence here on earth. All my questions, all my answers I've found are written in the Bible, as stories and parables. If you need to understand more clearly,

ask the Holy Spirit sincerely and he will come to help you.

Through my searching, I've met some beautiful Christian people who have literally changed the...way I look at life. I call them "bright lights." I always look for the positive in people and surround myself with people who are full of the zest for living. There are too many gloomy people around always complaining about one thing or another. To me this association is a waste of precious time. I have too much living to do, places to go, people to meet, and things to see to be gloomy about anything!

I'm thankful for each glorious day that the Lord has given me, and

indeed, he has blessed me with much. If I die today I will be very satisfied as to how I spent my life, not wasting it, being surrounded with family and friends I love very much.

I've found that you do need goals to focus on, so that you can follow a path. Always have a dream that lightens your load each day, and be grateful for your health and well-being. God will take care of you, He always has, he always will – all you need to do is ask.... All I want you to know is that...it's the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that fills my heart with love and joy. He's the only one I've found in my search for the meaning of life that brings complete joy, happiness, peace and understanding. Whenever I'm in trouble or my heart is heavy, I carry these little scripture verses to cheer me...

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and do not rely on your own insight.

In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

I'll always love you, now and forever. Our life here on earth is very short; I can't wait to be with all the people I love in paradise, as well as seeing the glory that the Lord Jesus has prepared for me. I'm not afraid. I'm sorry I can't see all my wonderful family who I will miss down here on earth. One never knows what it's

going to be like, but I believe it's like stepping into another road in life. I'll let you know when I get there!

This letter does sound like it's my last one to you. Hopefully it's not. But if it is, know that I'm not afraid! Love one another and always make the special "other" person in your life feel like he or she is the most precious jewel on earth and love seems to wash over you and all who are around you.

May God shower you with his blessings.

Love always,
Ruthy

Reflection questions

1. Do you think that Ruth was happy to be dying of cancer?
2. How is Ruth a “witness of faith” in her suffering?
3. What can we learn from Ruth’s experience of suffering?
4. How can people be drawn into community through suffering?
5. How do you respond to others who suffer (for example, a sick grandparent or an injured or sick friend)?
6. How does our society respond to pain and suffering? What lessons can our society learn from “witnesses of faith” such as Ruth?

When Will It End?

Suffering is a consequence of sin in the world. It was not part of God's original plan and will not remain forever.

Suffering is something that is part of our life on earth, but will not be part of everlasting life. As Christians we believe that God values our bodies whether they are perfect or not and whether they are healthy or not. We are called to care for and pray for those who are suffering, and to show them that we love and value them even though they are suffering.

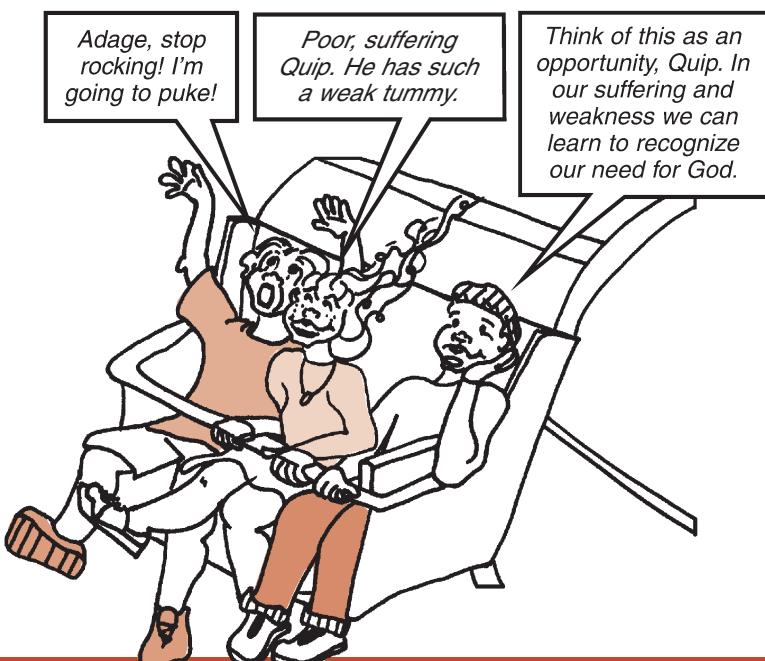
Sometimes God takes away our suffering when we pray. At other times our suffering is an opportunity to draw closer to Christ. St. Paul tells us that suffering can help us to understand our own inadequa-

cy and to turn more fully to God. (See 2 Corinthians 12.9) We know that God will eventually take away all suffering. When our bodies are reunited with our souls in everlasting life, they will be free from pain and suffering.

In the "new Jerusalem"

[God] "will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and
pain will be no more,
for the first things have
passed away"

(Revelations 21.4)



Doogie Dogma (*Catechism #1508*)

What is one of the greatest gifts that we can bring to people who suffer?
Sometimes we can't do anything, but we can be there. Our supportive presence
makes a world of difference.

Unit 6 Summary Statements

- Because each body is a precious gift from God, each person has the responsibility to care for his or her body.
- God created humankind in [God's] own image, male and female he created them. And God saw that it was very good.
- Our sexuality is part of what makes us complete people made in the image of God. Sexual love should be total, lifelong and life-giving, in the sacrament of Marriage.
- Our experience of evil and suffering can tempt us to give up our faith. The witness of people of faith shows us that in suffering, we can find God. Jesus calls us to reach out to those who are in need.

Key Terms

body
soul

sexual love
sexuality

suffering
witness of faith



We believe in...life everlasting



7.1

How is my life connected?

"Life..."

Have you ever stopped to think about how often people say things like "life sucks"? Life does have some very hard and painful moments, but it also has many wonderful and joyful moments. If we pay attention to the joyful moments, the joy of life will outweigh the pain.

Doctors say that one of the most intense pains that humans ever face is giving birth. Yet most women remember the incredible joy of holding their newborn child more than the pain of the birth. And most mothers go through the pain of childbirth more than once so they may share the wonder of life with another human being.

Parents choose to have children because they know that, even if it's painful at times, life is a wonderful gift that is meant to be shared.

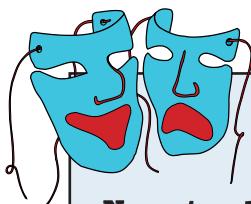
Every kind of life is a precious gift from God, full of beauty and wonder. Look around you. Look at the vast sky over your head, the veins in every leaf, the colours that surround you. Open your ears. Hear the songs of the birds, the variety of human voices, the drums and guitars and horns that make music. Feel the world around you: the air across your face, the texture of the bark on a tree, the rush of water spilling from a tap. Life is full of infinite variety and goodness.

The variety and goodness in life reflect the infinite wisdom and goodness of God. As Christians, we believe that all life comes from God, helps us to understand God, and belongs to God. We also believe that when God took on human life, becoming flesh in Jesus Christ, all life was united with God forever. Because we believe in a God who is everlasting and we believe that life is connected to God forever, we believe in life everlasting. Even in death, in the Mass of Christian Burial, we say, “Lord, for your faithful people, life is changed, not ended.”

To say that life is everlasting means that life is bigger than we are and should never be treated as our possession. Life is always important and valuable and should never be treated as something that can be thrown

away. We have a responsibility to care for and protect all life because all life belongs to God forever, and because all life helps connect us to God forever. Believing in life everlasting means accepting the call to be stewards (caretakers) for all of creation.

Life doesn’t “suck.” Life is infinitely good and wonderful. But sometimes our attitude toward life “sucks.” Sometimes we treat life as if it were junk. When we do that, we lose our sense of connection with God and with all of creation. Then we are unable to see the wonder of life.



Readers' Theatre

The Parable of the Talents (Based on Matthew 25.14-29)

Narrator 1:

A man, going on a journey, called three of his slaves. He said to them:

Master:

I am entrusting the three of you with my property while I am gone. Care for it wisely. To you who have held a position of authority among my servants I will give five talents.

First slave:

Why, master, one talent alone is worth more than a labourer earns in 15 years! You are asking me to look after enough money to hire 75 men for a year or to pay the lifetime earnings for at least two men.

Master:

Care for it wisely. I trust you.

Narrator 1:

The master then turned to the second slave.

Master:

To you I am entrusting two talents, enough to hire thirty men for a year. In the past you have shown that you can lead others. I hope you will do so again.

Second Slave:

I will do my best, sir.

Master:

And now I come to you, my third slave. I have seen promise in you.



To you I am entrusting one talent. Although it is less than what the others were given, it is still more than a labourer earns in 15 years. Think on that, and let me see that my trust has not been misplaced.

Narrator 1:

The third slave took the money but said nothing. The master bid the three goodbye and set off on his journey.

FREEZE

Narrator 2:

A woman and her three teenage children lived on the edge of a small community. For many years, she had been a leader in the community. She employed almost everyone in town in her apple orchard. The apples from this orchard were the best in North America.

Narrator 3:

The woman was also a fine weaver. She wove beautiful blankets with colourful designs. Each year, she would teach one or two young people how to dye the wool and weave it. During the winter, she and her students would weave their beautiful blankets. In the spring and summer, people would come to buy blankets for themselves and as gifts.

Narrator 4:

But the real reason the woman was seen as a leader was that she could tell stories. Old and young often gathered around and listened to her spin her tales. She had a story for every situation. She could tell a story to calm a fight, to ease the

pain of a sick child, or to help a lonely widow grieve. She could make people laugh or cry, dance or mourn. The woman guided the community with her stories through the years.

Narrator 2:

One day, the woman had to go to a relative who lived far away. She packed her bags and called her three children to her.

Mother:

I must go away for some time – it could be a few weeks or a few years. While I am gone, I want you to care for the people in our community just as I have done. To you, my oldest child, I entrust the family orchard. You have shown skill in caring for the trees and in leading the workers. I hope you will use that skill well.

First Child:

But, Mom, the orchard has been in our family for hundreds of years. Almost everyone who lives around here works there. What if I make a mistake?

Mother:

I trust you. Just act wisely. Now, my second child, you have sat with me through the years as I dyed the wool and wove the blankets. You have helped me teach some of the young people to weave. I entrust you with the family dyes, and with passing on our special way of weaving.

Second Child:

Mom, you know that I don't have nearly your skill in weaving or teaching. For years, this community has

been known for its blankets mainly because of your work. What if I can't help the new weavers make blankets of true beauty?

Mother:

Don't be afraid. I trust you.

Now, my third child, to you I give my precious collection of storybooks. I was given them by my father, who got them from his mother, who got them from her father, and so on back through untold generations. Care for them well.

Third Child:

Thank you, mother. They will be safe with me.

Narrator 2:

The mother hugged the three good-bye and then set off.

FREEZE

Narrator 1:

The slave who had been given five talents said to himself:

First Slave:

Every year I have seen my master's business grow. I'm sure he expects to have more than five talents from me when he returns. I will go and invest these wisely. When my master returns, he will see that his business has not suffered.

Narrator 1:

The slave who had been given two talents said to himself:

Second Slave:

My master has given me a lot of money. I will learn what I can about business and do my best to see that

I can't believe you bought a lion to support the nature club. I joked about using frogs for target practice and a couple of them took a fit!



Each animal reflects God's wisdom and goodness. When we mistreat any of them, we show a lack of respect for God.





my master has more money when he returns.

Narrator 1:

But the third slave said to himself:

Third Slave:

My master has always been a good businessman. As far as I know, he has never lost any money. He will not understand if I make a mistake with his money. I will bury the money in the ground. Then it will be safe. When my master returns, I can give him what is his.

FREEZE

Narrator 2:

After the mother left, the oldest child gathered all of the people who worked in the orchard together and said:

First Child:

My mother has left me in charge of the orchard while she is gone, but many of you have more experience than I do. Let's form teams to oversee the various aspects of the business: caring for the trees, harvesting the fruit, and selling our produce. I will be part of each team so I know what is going on, but I will rely on you to keep this orchard going and maybe even make it produce more while Mom is gone.

Narrator 3:

The second child met with the apprentice weavers.

Second Child:

We must keep weaving the blankets that have put our community on the map. We must also involve more and

more people, teaching our special dyeing techniques, the art of spinning, and our unique patterns. None of us is as skilled as Mom, but if we work together, we should be able to sell as many blankets as before, or even more.

Narrator 4:

But the child who had been entrusted with the storybooks did not gather anyone together. Instead the third child said:

Third Child:

These precious books have been in our family for generations. I can't take the chance that they might get damaged. I will put them in boxes in the attic where they will be safe.

FREEZE

Narrator 1:

The master of the three slaves was gone for a very long time. During that time, the first slave, through his investments, was able to double his number of talents. Now he had ten. The second slave learned enough about business to double his talents from two to four. The third slave didn't even think about his master's money very often, but once in a while he would go and make sure that it was still there.

FREEZE

Narrator 2:

For a while after the mother left, everything ran smoothly. Then a

disease hit many of the apple trees. The oldest child met with the team that cared for the trees. They agreed to cut down some trees and prune others. A few people grafted some trees that were immune to the blight onto the other trees. Others found uses for the apple wood from the trees that had been chopped down. After two years the blight was under control, but the orchard was only half as big as before.

Many of the trees were now producing a different type of apple because of the grafting. These new apples were good, but not quite as tasty as the old ones. They did, however, make delicious cider.

A small business was set up to make boxes and children's furniture out of apple wood. Many of the people who came to buy blankets also went home with something made of apple wood. Some even came just for the apple wood boxes.

Narrator 3:

In the second year that the mother was away, the community was hit with a terribly cold winter. An international oil crisis meant there wasn't much fuel for heating. People were afraid of freezing to death. The second child gathered the weavers together.

Second Child:

I know that we have always been known for the beauty of our blankets. But they take a long time to produce. Right now, people need blankets to keep warm. Let's weave



simple blankets for now. We can do that very quickly.

Narrator 4:

With all their troubles, the people were feeling quite sad. Many of them longed for a story to make them smile or to help them express their sorrow. They went to the third child and begged for a tale or two told around the fire. But the third child said:

Third Child:

My mother's books are far too precious to be used day after day. The pages are so old they might tear. No, I must keep the books safe. Some day, when this community is no more, the books will be of great value.

Narrator 4:

Without the stories to cheer them, the people grew sadder and sadder. Some even began to leave the community.

FREEZE

Narrator 1:

After a very long time, the master returned. He called his three slaves together to settle accounts with them. The one who had received the five talents came forward and said:

First Slave:

Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.

Master:

Well done, good and trustworthy slave. You have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come, share in the joy of your master.

Narrator 1:

The one who had received two talents then came forward and said:

Second Slave:

Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.

Master:

Well done, good and trustworthy slave. You have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come, share in the joy of your master.

Narrator 1:

Then the one who had received one talent came forward, saying:

Third Slave:

Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed. I was afraid. I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here is what is yours.

Master:

You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.

Take the talent away from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

FREEZE

Narrator 2:

After several years, the mother returned. She was very surprised at what she saw. The family orchard was only half the size it had once been, although the apples still looked quite good. The shop where the blankets had always been sold looked dull. Most of the blankets were a single colour and a plain weave. They still seemed soft and of good quality but they were no longer attractive. Mixed in with the blankets were some small apple wood boxes and bowls. She was about to pick one up when she was hit by the real change in the store. No one was laughing. No one was even smiling. The life had gone out of the people.

Narrator 3:

She called her three children together to ask them what had happened while she was gone.

First Child:

I'm sorry the orchard does not look as fine as it did when you entrusted it to me, Mom. Several years ago we were hit by a terrible blight and we lost many of the trees. We had to bring in some new varieties to graft onto the old. The apples are a bit different now. But people still like them, and they make delicious cider. We are still able to employ most of the people in the community. The small woodworking operation we set up is really doing well. Some of the young people who were planning on

leaving the area are staying here as carvers and furniture makers.

Mother:

Well done! I'm proud of you. Despite setbacks, you have kept people employed, kept the quality of the produce high and even created new opportunities. The orchard shall be yours, and I will give you money to buy new trees and to research new growing techniques. You have been a good steward of our family's treasure!

Narrator 3:

The mother then turned to the second child.

**Mother:**

Now tell me, how has the weaving been going? Why is the shop in town carrying only simple one-coloured blankets?

Second Child:

In the beginning, we did weave beautiful blankets. But then the very hard winter came and people needed more blankets. We stopped doing the fancy designs to make as many blankets as possible in a short time. We have forgotten some of the things you taught us, but we helped keep people from freezing to death. Maybe you would teach us again. Many people are begging to learn the art of weaving now.

Mother:

I am very proud of you! You have done well! You have kept our community on the map as blanket weavers and you have increased the interest in weaving in our community. You have been a good steward of our family's treasure! I will reteach you all of the old techniques and I will also entrust you with some wonderful new methods and designs I learned when I was away.

Narrator 4:

Finally the mother turned to her third child and asked why the people seemed so sad. Hadn't the stories helped?

Third Child:

Mother, I knew what a precious treasure those books were to our family. I knew how upset you would be if the stories were gone when you came back. So I put the books up in the

attic. I will get them now and we will have a story to celebrate your return.

Narrator 4:

The third child went up to the attic to get the books and came back looking horrified. The books had been shredded by a family of mice who were trying to stay warm during that long, cold winter.

Mother:

Never mind, my child. It is the stories, not the books, that are so valuable. Why don't you tell me one of your favourite ones from memory?

Third Child:

Oh, mother, I wish I could, but it is so long since I heard or read one that I cannot remember a single story.

Mother:

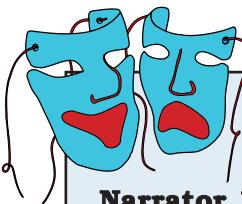
You have lost our family's greatest treasure. Nothing will ever be able to replace it. You forgot that the stories were not yours to keep – they were yours to share. Now they are not yours at all. You have been a careless and thoughtless steward. You will have nothing until the day that you have learned enough stories to replace all those that are lost.

Narrator 4:

For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who treat what they have as nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

Stewardship

The earth belongs to God, not to us. We are only stewards, or caretakers for creation. Everything that we have has been given to us so that we may use it to improve our life and the lives of others. It is our responsibility to use things wisely so that they will bring the greatest possible benefit to as many people as possible.



Readers' Theatre

The Last Judgement (Based on Matthew 25:31-46)

Narrator 1:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then we will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

King:

You, whom I have placed on my right hand, you are my sheep. You are blessed by my Father. Come, inherit the kingdom which has been prepared for you since the beginning of the world. I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.

FREEZE

Narrator 2:

A school was given a grant to take 20 students on a three-week, all-expenses-paid trip to Eastern Europe. The students would be working with Eastern European youths on a service project to help very poor families build or rebuild decent homes.

Over 200 students wanted to go on the trip. The school principal called them all together.

Principal:

As you know, over 200 students want to go on the trip to Eastern Europe, but we can take only 20. We have decided to hold a contest. You have one month to do a project that will show that you understand and are committed to the service work we will be doing there. You may display your projects in the auditorium.

**Narrator 2:**

At the end of the month, all 200 students gathered again to find out who had been chosen. The walls of the auditorium were lined with projects of all shapes and sizes. Students were comparing notes on what they had done.

Student 1:

Did you see Kaitlin's project? She has a video presentation on the fighting that displaced so many people in Eastern Europe. It shows the kinds of places where people have to live now.

Student 2:

Heston's project is the one that really amazed me. He has all kinds of information on building and renovation and construction. I think he even has special tools he could bring.

Student 3:

Yvonne has been studying the language of the area so she can talk with the students there.

Narrator 2:

The principal spoke:

Principal:

All of you have worked very hard. The quality of many of the projects is outstanding. I am now proud to announce the names of the 20 students who have been chosen for the trip. These students have shown understanding for those who are in need, and a commitment to serve without judging.

Narrator 2:

The principal began to read off the 20 names. Gasps of surprise could

be heard all over the auditorium. Many of the 20 students had very small projects displayed. Most of the students who had done really spectacular displays were not called. What was going on?

FREEZE**Narrator 1:**

Then the righteous will answer:

Righteous Person 1:

Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food?

Righteous Person 2:

When did we see that you were thirsty and offer you a drink?

Righteous Person 3:

When did we notice that you were a stranger who needed to be welcomed, or a naked person who needed clothing?

Righteous Person 4:

Lord, when did we ever visit you when you were sick or in prison?

Narrator 1:

And the king will answer them:

King:

I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

FREEZE

Narrator 2:

The students whose names had been called walked slowly up to the front of the auditorium. They were very happy to have been chosen, but most of them were as surprised and confused as anyone. They said to the principal:

Student 1:

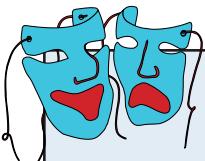
We are very happy to have been chosen for this trip, but we are puz-

zled. Our projects are not the most spectacular ones in this room. How have we shown understanding for the needs of the people we will be serving?

Principal:

Many of the people you will be serving have been displaced. They are strangers – alone and afraid. You showed your understanding for strangers when you welcomed the students from refugee families who joined your class a few weeks ago.

Some of the people you will be serving have lost everything. You showed your care for those who have lost their possessions when you gave away some of your best clothes and games to the families who lost everything in the apartment fire last month.



Many of the youths you will be working with have gone for weeks and months with very little to eat and with no special treats. You showed your solidarity with the hungry when you went without snacks, pop or junk food to save money for the food bank.

In many ways, both big and small, you have done what you could to reach out to those in need.

FREEZE

Narrator 1:

Then the king will say to those on his left hand:

King:

You are the accursed. Depart from me. Go with the devil and his angels. I was hungry and you gave me no food. I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. I was a stranger and you did not welcome

me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.

Narrator 1:

And the unrighteous will answer:

Unrighteous Person 1:

Lord, when did we see you hungry and refuse to give you food?

Unrighteous Person 2:

When did we see that you were thirsty and fail to offer you a drink?

Unrighteous Person 3:

When did we ignore you when you were a stranger or not offer you clothing when you were naked?

Unrighteous Person 4:

Lord, when were you sick or in prison? When should we have visited you and didn't?

Narrator 1:

And the king will answer them:

King:

I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

FREEZE

Narrator 2:

The students who had not been chosen for the trip began to complain. They called out to the principal:

Student 2:

Surely some of us deserve to go on this trip more than the students you have chosen. Look at our projects compared to theirs! Look at how much Heston has learned about building so that he could lead a work team.

Student 3:

Look at how much Kaitlin has learned about the suffering of the people of Eastern Europe.

Student 4:

Surely some of our projects show our great understanding and concern.

Principal:

Your projects show how much you want to go on this trip. They do not show any real understanding. When the students from the refugee family joined your class, you told the teacher you were too busy working to spend time helping them feel at home.

When the apartment building burned down, you gave only clothes that were out of style and games that you have never liked.

When we were collecting money for the food bank, you said you were broke even though you spend at least \$3 on junk food every day.

In big and little ways, you have shown that your concern is always for yourselves first. Even your fancy projects were done more to make you look good than to help you or anyone else learn more about those we will be serving. I am sorry, but this trip is not for you.

The web of life is fragile, yet it's strong
And with our help, it will live on and on
That's why we're called to live in harmony
For life is God's gift to you and me.

*(refrain from "The Web of Life,"
song #11 on the Stand
By Me music cassette)*

7.2

How can I make the world more peaceful?

Peace I Leave You

Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives” (John 14.27). What is the difference between the peace Jesus gives and the peace the world gives?

In the world, peace is often seen as an absence of violence or as a pause in a fight. The peace Jesus gives is not an absence, it is a presence. Jesus’ peace is a sense of calm that fills us so that there is no room for hatred or violent thoughts. Jesus’ peace is seeing the good in every person. It is the desire to do what we can to bring out that good.

The newspapers are filled with stories about people who say that they will not be able to be at peace until they get revenge. Parents whose children have been killed say that they will only find peace when the killer has suffered as much as they have. People who have had to leave their homes because of war say that they will have peace only when the invaders have been completely destroyed. So many people seem to feel that their peace depends on another's suffering.

The peace Jesus offers does not depend on anyone's suffering. It depends on forgiveness. Jesus tells us that we will only have peace if we give up our desire to get even and focus on doing what is good.

When Jesus tells us to turn the other cheek and to pray for our enemies, he is telling us that if we want to find true peace we must learn to act, not react. Ask yourself this question: "What kind of person do I want to be?" Do you want to be generous? Then be generous even to those who are ungrateful. Do you want to be friendly? Then be kind even to those who are rude. Do you want to be peaceful? Then be gentle even around those who are violent.

"But," you say, "that is too hard." Yes, it is too hard for us to do alone. But we do not have to do it alone. Jesus has promised to help us. He offers us the gift of inner peace – the knowledge that we are loved and treasured by God forever. If we accept the gift, we will not need to fight to feel secure or to cut others down to feel important, or to be violent to have peace.

Reflection questions

1. How does Jesus ask us to stretch our definition of peace?
2. How would you define "inner peace"?
3. If you have inner peace, is it possible for you to be violent? Why or why not?

Living as People of Peace

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts....

Colossians 3.12-15



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #2304)

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
where there is hatred, let me sow love.
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I
may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we
receive,
it is in pardoning that we are
pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are
born to eternal life.
Amen.



7.3

Do I live justly?

The Foundation of Justice

The pharisees asked Jesus, “Which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22.36-39).

The second commandment, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself,” is known as the golden rule. In this case the word “rule” means “ruler” or “measuring stick.” This commandment is like a measuring stick we can place next to everything we

say or do to see if it is the kind of thing God wants us to say or do.

Micah 6.8 tells us that God expects us to do justice and love kindness. The golden rule helps us to see what is just and what is kind.

Whenever we see someone being treated unjustly, we are called to put ourselves in that person’s shoes. We must ask ourselves some serious questions: If I were that person, what would I want someone to do for me? If I were the kid in school everyone always makes fun of, how would I want to be treated? If I were part of a family that had just arrived from another country, how would I want people to welcome me? If I

lived in a country where many people were starving, what would I hope for from kids in North America? If I were at the end of the line for a buffet or for choosing art supplies, what would I hope for from the people at the front of the line?

Once we have seen things from the other person's point of view, we must change our behaviour so that we are not adding to the injustice.

The golden rule reminds us that God does not expect us to change the world on our own, but God does expect us to do what we can. God also assures us that what we do can make a difference.

Jesus calls us the salt of the earth, the light of the world and the leaven for the kingdom of God. This means that every little thing we do affects the people around us. They in turn affect the people around them, who in turn affect still more people.

Everything we do in the name of justice makes justice grow. Everything we do out of selfishness and greed makes selfishness and greed grow.

If we treat others the way we would like to be treated, then we help to build the kind of world we want to live in. If we treat others badly, then we help to build the kind of world that even we won't like.

Reflection questions

1. What is the golden rule?
2. How is it the foundation for justice?
3. What is its connection with poverty?
4. What is its connection with living in peace?
5. By living justly, how can we be leaven for the kingdom, salt for the earth, light for the world?

A Little Leaven Leavens the Whole Lump

She was like a grandmother to the whole neighbourhood. All of the kids knew her. On spring days she sat on her porch and waved as we headed to school.

In the summer she would make lemonade for us, and sometimes she would run the sprinkler so we could come and play under it. Even kids who didn't like each other played together on her lawn. When our parents asked her if she minded us playing there, she just shook her head and said, "A little leaven¹ leavens the whole lump."

At the beginning of each winter, she would invite us to choose a new hat and mitts from those she had knitted over the summer. Even though she was an old lady, they were always in the latest colours and styles. After we had made our choice she would say, "Now remember, a little leaven leavens the whole lump." None of us knew what that meant, but we would nod and say, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump."

She died when I was 14. I went to her funeral, and so did most of the neighbourhood. The church was packed. People had come from all over the world to attend the

¹ Leaven is any substance, such as yeast, that will cause fermentation and make dough rise.

funeral of one little old woman. One man who was there had grown up in our neighbourhood. He now worked with the United Nations in Africa, providing medical care for people in refugee camps. Someone asked him if he found the work frustrating.

He said, "Sometimes I do feel discouraged. But then I remember that each person I help may help one or two more people, and in that way the good that I do will spread. A little leaven leavens the whole lump."

Another woman worked with street youth. Mom asked her if she thought her work would really make a difference.

The woman answered, "Every time I give a pair of mittens to a kid who is cold, it makes a difference to that kid. Every time I give a sandwich to a kid who is hungry, it makes a difference to that kid. Every kid I help may be the kid who will make it off the streets and then help other kids do the same. I just keep reminding myself, 'A little leaven leavens the whole lump.'"

A guy who graduated from our high school last spring was trying to convince some others to get involved in the Big Brother-Big Sister program. He was saying, "Look, you may not be able to help every kid, but at least you can make a difference to one kid! A little leaven leavens the whole lump."

"A little leaven leavens the whole lump. A little leaven leavens the whole lump." Everywhere I turned I heard the same line. "You might not be able to do everything, but every little bit you do can make a difference."

I thought about it all the way home. So many people who grew up in our neighbourhood were trying to make the world a better place. So many of them had come

back to the neighbourhood for the funeral of someone who had baked cookies and knitted mittens and taught them to believe that they, too, could leaven the lump. I began to wonder what I could do to be leaven.

I thought about something I'd just learned in school: 20 percent of the world's population uses 80 percent of the world's resources, and I'm part of that 20 percent. I promised myself that for every dollar I spent on things for myself, I would set aside ten cents for charity. Maybe that wouldn't change the world, but it might begin to change me and a few people who knew me. After that, who knows? A little leaven leavens the whole lump!

The Story of Esther, Mordecai and Haman (based on Esther 1–8)

Esther was a beautiful young Jewish woman who lived in the city of Susa with her cousin Mordecai between 450 and 500 years before the birth of Christ. Mordecai had adopted Esther after the death of her parents and had raised her as his own daughter.

When Esther was sent to the court of King Ahasuerus (also known as Artaxerxes), ruler of the Persian Empire, Mordecai was worried. Jews were not always well liked in Persia because their customs and laws were so different. Mordecai told Esther that she must keep her Jewish identity a secret when she was in the palace. Esther said she would.

After being in the palace for one year, Esther was called to go before the king. When Ahasuerus met Esther, he fell in love with her and crowned her as queen.

Shortly after Esther was named queen, Mordecai, who had also come to live in the palace, overheard some of the guards plot-

ting to kill the king. He told Queen Esther of the plot; she told the king in Mordecai's name. The two traitors were hanged, a note was made in the court records, and the matter was forgotten. Mordecai went back to being a minor official in the king's household.

Then Haman was named as the highest official in the king's court. Haman was a very arrogant man. After his promotion, he insisted that the other servants and officials in the king's court bow whenever they saw him. Everyone was afraid of Haman, so they did as he asked – everyone, that is, except Mordecai.

This made Haman angry. He wanted to punish Mordecai. When Haman found out that Mordecai was a Jew, he decided that the best way to punish him would be to punish all Jews. Haman convinced the king that the Jews were a danger to the kingdom because they followed different laws. Haman promised to pay ten thousand talents of silver into the king's treasuries if the king would agree to have all the Jews killed. The king agreed.

When the Jewish people found out about this, they put on sackcloth and began to mourn. Mordecai sent a message to Esther, saying that she must speak to the king and try to save her people. She

replied that this was impossible. Anyone who went to speak with the king without first being summoned could be killed. Mordecai reminded her that as a Jew she was already under a death sentence.

Esther then told him to gather together all of the Jews in the area to spend three days in prayer and fasting. She would pray and fast for three days, too. Then she would go and speak to the king.

Esther asked the king and Haman to attend a banquet she was planning for the next day. The king promised that they would be there.

That night, the Lord made it impossible for the king to sleep. He decided to read the court records. He read about the time when Mordecai had saved his life. He decided that something must be done to honour Mordecai.

While the king was trying to decide how to honour Mordecai, Haman came to speak

to him about hanging Mordecai. When the king saw Haman, he said, "What shall I do for the person I wish to honour?"

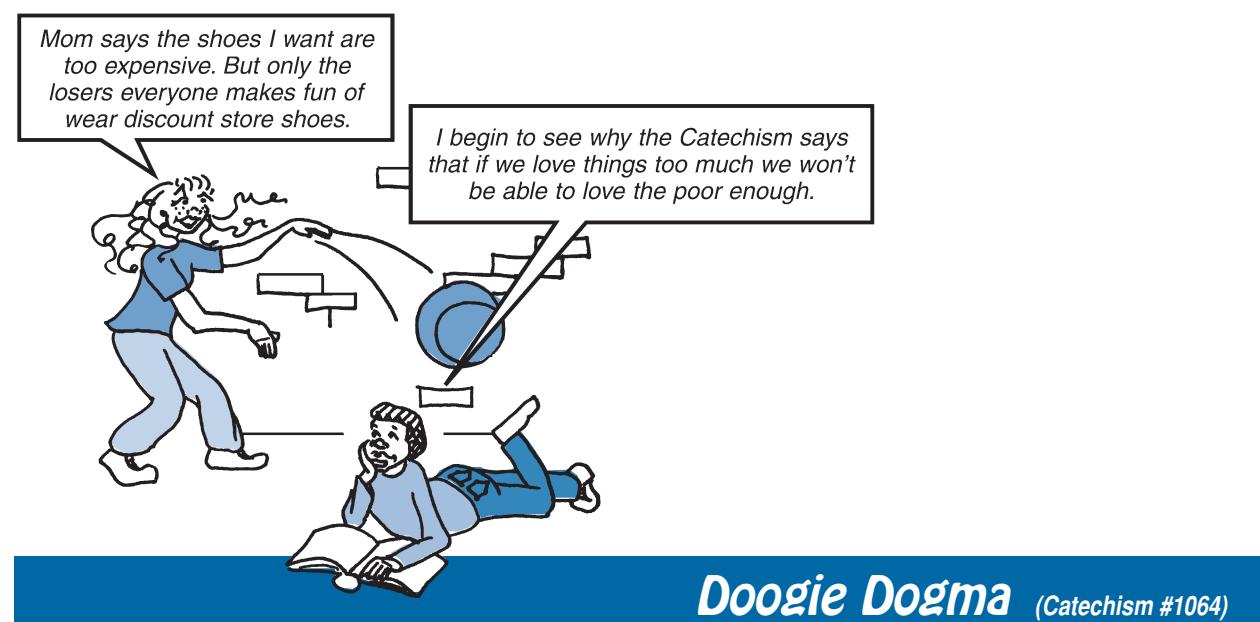
Haman assumed that he was the one to be honoured, and said, "The king should clothe the person he wishes to honour in fine linens and then place that person on the king's own horse. The person should then be escorted through the city so that all may know how pleased the king is with him."

"An excellent idea!" the king said. "See that all of what you have suggested is done for Mordecai, the man who saved my life."

Haman was very upset, but he did as the king ordered.

That night Haman and the king attended Queen Esther's banquet. There Esther pleaded for the life of her people, telling the king that killing all the Jews would bring shame to the whole court.

The king asked who had plotted against his beloved queen and her people. Esther



pointed at Haman. The king then declared that Haman should be hanged on the gallows he had built for Mordecai.

Esther was given Haman's property, and Mordecai was given Haman's position in the court. The king issued a decree protecting the Jews and allowing them to practise their religion and follow their religious laws.

The Story of Daniel and Susanna (Daniel 13)

Susanna was a very beautiful and holy woman. Her husband, Joakim, was a holy and well-respected man. Whenever there were problems in the Jewish community, the people would ask Joakim for advice.

Two of the people who often came to him were newly appointed judges. They came not only to talk to Joakim, but also because they were attracted to his wife. One day they snuck into the garden to watch Susanna as she walked alone with her maids. They heard her send the maids off to get her oils so that she might bathe.

As soon as Susanna was alone, the two men begged Susanna to have sex with them. They told her that if she refused, they would say that they had seen a young man in the garden with her and that was why she had sent her maids away.

Susanna knew that she was trapped, but she said that she would rather be punished by men for a crime that she had not committed than sin before God. Then she began to scream. One of the judges ran and opened the garden gates to make it look as if Susanna's lover had run off.

When the people from the household arrived, the judges said that they had interrupted Susanna and her lover in the garden. All of the people in the household were

shocked and ashamed. Her trial was set for the next day.

As the judges repeated their accusations against Susanna, she wept silently and turned her eyes toward heaven. She trusted in God, but she was afraid. Many of the people felt sorry for her, but they believed the judges. She was sentenced to death.

As she was being led to the execution site, Susanna cried out to God, "Eternal God, you know everything even before it has come to be. You know that these men have lied about me. You know that I have done none of the wicked things they have accused me of."

The Lord heard her cry and stirred up the Holy Spirit in a young man named Daniel. Daniel called out, "I want no part in shedding this woman's blood."

The people were amazed. They asked him why he had shouted out like that.

Daniel then asked them if they would sentence a woman to death without learning all the facts. He said he believed that the two men had lied. Then he offered to

prove that Susanna was innocent.

Daniel separated the two judges and asked each one a question: Name the tree under which they had seen Susanna and her "lover." One said it was a mastic tree; the other said it was an oak tree.

The people saw that the judges had been lying and that Susanna was innocent. The two judges were then given the sentence they had planned for Susanna.

“**L**et justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”

Amos 5.24

Unit 7 Summary Statements

- We are called by God to live life to the fullest in harmony with the rest of creation. All life is a gift from God.
- Life is everlasting. We have a responsibility to care for and protect all life because all life belongs to God forever, and because all life helps connect us to God forever. Life does not belong to us; we are only the caretakers or stewards of the life that is entrusted to us.
- Because human life is so valuable, we must oppose all things that try to hurt or destroy that life, and to honour the dignity that is in every human life. When we don't honour another human being, we are failing to honour God.
- The peace Jesus offers depends on forgiveness. Jesus tells us that we will only really have peace if we stop wanting to get even and try to do what is good.
- The love of God and neighbour are the foundation for just relation-
- ships. The first and greatest commandment is "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." The second is "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."
- The golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," is based on the second greatest commandment.
- God does not expect us to save the world or to overcome all injustice by ourselves. Jesus calls us "salt of the earth," "light of the world," and "leaven for the reign of God." By doing our little bit, we affect the world in ways we may never even know.

Key Terms

stewardship
everlasting life

peace
dignity

justice
golden rule

Unit 8

Amen



8.1

So what difference does belief make?

We stand for the stand we believe in
Stand firm though some wish we
were leavin'
We may need to stand out
And stand up to some doubt
But we stand by a faith worth believin'.

I believe in God

When we say that we believe in God, we are saying that we put our trust in God and direct our lives toward God. As Christians, we believe that there is only one God. We also believe that that only God has a right to absolute authority or to our complete trust. We will not let any substitutes for God into our lives. We will not let anything become more important to us than God and what God wants.

When we say that we believe in God, we are saying that we believe God is faithful. What God has promised, God will do. God will never leave us. God will always be there to support us and guide us through hard times.

The Father almighty

When we say that we believe in “God the Father almighty,” we are saying that we believe God is the perfect parent. When we call God the almighty Father, we are saying that even though human parents may fail their children, God will never fail us. We believe that God’s love will never stop; it is so strong that nothing can ever overpower or limit it.

We believe that God loves us even when we make mistakes. We also believe that God lets us make mistakes. God is all powerful, which means that God could control us. Yet God lets us make our own choices. In the teachings of Jesus, the Ten Commandments, and the teachings of the Church, God helps us make the best possible choices, but God does not force us to choose what is best. God lets us develop in our own way.

Creator of heaven and earth

Everything that is comes from God and keeps existing because of God. Only God has the power to create from nothing; anything that we make must begin with things that God has already made.

We believe that because all creation is the work of God, all creation is good. Human beings are particularly good because we are created in the image of God. This means that every person has equal dignity and deserves to be treated with respect. When we say that we believe in God the Creator, we are saying that we value all that God has created, especially human beings.

Humans have also been invited to join God in completing the work of creation. We are called to work with God in caring for creation and in helping to make the world a better place. If we really believe in God the Creator, we will care for creation.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

The name Jesus means “God saves” (see Matthew 1.21). The title “Christ” means the “anointed one.” When we say that we believe in Jesus Christ, we are saying that we believe that Jesus is the one sent by God to save us from our sin. Jesus is the one who makes it possible for us to rebuild our relationship with God after we have sinned.

The name Jesus signifies that God is present in the person of his Son. Jesus is more than human. He is divine. As the Son of God, he is one with the Father from the beginning. Because he is one with God, he can help us to understand God in a way that no other person can.

to be his mother. One of the great mysteries of our faith is that the Son of God did not come into the world as an independent adult. He was born as a helpless little baby, completely dependent on a human mother.

Second, Jesus is fully human and fully divine. Because he is divine, his death and resurrection destroyed the power of death and restored the relationship between God and human beings, which had been broken by sin. Because Jesus is fully human, he understands us completely. He is an example of how we should live.

Third, Mary was a virgin when Jesus was born, and she remained one always. Jesus' conception and birth were acts of God. We cannot understand them, but we can respond to them by trusting in God and trying to follow Mary's example. When she agreed to be the mother of the Son of God, Mary entrusted her whole life to God. She is an example for all of us of how we should say "yes" to God, no matter how hard that might seem.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead.

Jesus accepted suffering and death because they were part of being human. He wanted to share our human lives fully, even unto death. Nor could he avoid suffering and death without denying the truth and accepting injustice. Many people wanted Jesus to die because he challenged them too much. He told them that they must welcome outcasts and forgive sinners, think more about others and less about themselves. Many powerful people wanted Jesus to be put to death because they were afraid that they would lose their power if too many people listened to Jesus.

Because Jesus is one with God, we believe we should live the way Jesus teaches us to live. That is why we call Jesus "the Lord." We believe we should let Jesus be the Lord – the ruler – of our lives.

When we truly accept Jesus as Lord and live the way he wants us to live, we are living in the kingdom of God.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

Three very important beliefs are summed up in this line of the Creed.

First, God values human beings so much that God not only gives us a role in little things; God is also willing to give us a part in the most important things! Jesus was conceived through an act of God, but God needed help from people, too. Jesus would not have been born if Mary had not agreed

Jesus did not care about power. He cared about love. He wanted to teach people to love God and one another more. His death was the ultimate gift of love.

After his death, Jesus descended to the dead. He shared the good news of God's love and forgiveness with those who had died before he came to earth. Jesus' descent to the dead is a sign that his invitation to life and love is for all people.

Our belief in Jesus' suffering and death challenges us to accept suffering, if we have to, so we can live according to God's plan, and to share God's love with those who need it most.

On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

The resurrection of Jesus is the central truth of our faith. Because of the resurrection, we are a people of hope. We believe that the Father raised Jesus from death to new life in God, and made it possible for all of us to share this same life.

The resurrected Jesus, who is now with the Father, is the same Jesus who walked the earth. Because he is no longer limited by time or space, he can be with people in every place and every time. Jesus is present to us in special ways when people gather to pray in his name, in the person of the priest who acts for him, in the Word of God when it is read and heard, and especially in the sacrament of his body and blood that we share.

Jesus' resurrection is the fulfillment of the promises in the Old Testament and in his own earthly life. The resurrection lets us know that any scripture promises that are not yet fulfilled will be fulfilled by God, in God's own time.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

We believe that Jesus is the Lord of all that is. He sees what is hidden in our hearts. Jesus knows things about us that no one else could ever know. Because he sees both the goodness and the selfishness in us, he is the only one who can judge us fairly.

Jesus will judge each one of us. But his judgment is not the harsh judgment of the world. It is more like the light of a candle that gently lights up the corners of our lives, revealing us to ourselves, and calling us to change or leave behind the things that hurt us or those around us.

At the end of the world, Christ will come in glory to win out over evil once and for all. If we cling to what is good, we will share in Christ's triumph. If we cling to evil, when evil is washed away we will go with it.



Doogie Dogma (Catechism #1064)

fear of the Lord. Above all, the Holy Spirit helps us to love others as God has loved us. The Spirit is the power of God within us to change our lives and change our world.

The holy catholic Church,

When we say that we believe in the holy catholic Church, we are saying that we believe that God gathers all people together into one family.

The word “church” means gathering. We believe that God gathers people together to form the body of Christ on earth. We believe that God is present and active within this gathering. We also believe that we can come to know God better by taking a more active part in this gathering.

The word “catholic” means “universal.” We believe that God loves everyone and invites everyone to share in the gift of salvation. When we say that we believe in the catholic Church, we are saying that we believe it is wrong to reject anyone or to treat anyone as unimportant. We agree to reach out to those who are often left out.

To say that something is “holy” means that it has been given a special purpose by God. The purpose of the Church is to reveal God’s love and forgiveness to the world and to help people accept and share that love and forgiveness with others. When we say that we believe in the holy Church, we are saying that we are a holy people. We believe that it is our job, as members of the Church, to share God’s love, forgiveness and healing with others.

The communion of saints,

Some of the members of the communion of saints are living on earth; some have died and are being purified, and some are already united with Christ in heaven. The

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

The Holy Spirit is the third person in the Trinity. The Spirit is one with the Father and the Son and has been with them since before time began. When the Father or the Son act, the Spirit is also acting. When the Spirit acts, so do the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit was first given to the Christian community at Pentecost. This same Spirit comes to live in each of us at our Baptism. We are sealed by the gift of the Spirit when we are confirmed. The Holy Spirit unites us with Christ and helps us to live as Christ calls us to live. The Holy Spirit also unites us with all other Christians who have received the same Spirit. Joined by the Holy Spirit, all of us together become one body: the body of Christ on earth.

The Holy Spirit supports and strengthens us with the gifts of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety and

communion of saints is made up of all those who have seen God's great love for them and responded by loving God and their neighbour.

When we say that we believe in the communion of saints, we are saying that we believe that neither death nor distance can destroy the bonds of Christian community and love. Although we mourn those who have died, we believe that we will be reunited with them. Although we may never meet many of the Christians who live far away from us, we believe that they are part of our family and that we have a responsibility for each other.

We believe that the prayers of all the members of the communion of saints can affect our lives. We ask for the prayers of others, both living and dead, and we pray for others, both living and dead.

The forgiveness of sins,

Sin is rejecting God and God's call to us on purpose. Sin is abusing the freedom God has given us and not doing what Jesus would ask us to do.

We believe that even the most serious sin can be forgiven. We also believe that all people, no matter how wicked, may trust that God will forgive them when they are truly sorry for their sins. Jesus has given the Church, through the priests, the power to forgive in God's name. When the Church forgives us, God forgives us. God heals our hearts and renews our ability to love.

We also believe that we are called to forgive one another. If we want God to forgive us, we must be willing to forgive others. We believe that God wants us to stop wishing to "get even" with those who have hurt us and to try to love them instead.

The resurrection of the body,

When we say we believe in the resurrection of the body, we are saying that we believe that God values our bodies as well as our souls. Our whole self, both body and soul, was created by God and belongs to God. It deserves to be treated with respect.

Because we believe that God values our bodies as well as our souls, we believe that what we do with and to our bodies is important to our relationship with God. God wants us to care for our own bodies and for the physical needs of others. God also calls us to use our bodies to communicate in an honest, loving and responsible way. God wants us to value our sexuality and remember that sexual love should be total, lifelong and life-giving.

When we say that we believe in the resurrection of the body, we are saying that we will try to treat our bodies the way God wants us to treat them.

And the life everlasting.

When we say that we believe in life everlasting, we are saying that we believe that all life belongs to God and will be kept alive by God. We believe that, through his death and resurrection, Jesus has won out over death. Death cannot hold forever anything that belongs to God. After we die, we will rise to new life with God. At the end of time, the whole earth and all of the life on it will be made new by God. Nothing that has been created by God should be treated as unimportant or disposable.

When we say that we believe in life everlasting, we are saying that all life is precious. We are making a commitment to protect, care for and preserve all life.

Amen.

The word “amen” comes from the Hebrew word “believe.” To say “amen” is to say “I believe, I accept and I trust.” When we say “amen” at the end of a prayer, we are accepting the entire prayer and making it our own. We are saying that we believe in and trust God, to whom we are praying. When we say “amen” at the end of the Creed, we are saying that we not only believe in the forgiveness of sins, we also trust that God will forgive our sins. We not only believe in the Holy Spirit, we also trust that the Holy Spirit will strengthen and support us. We not only believe that God is the perfect parent, we also trust that God will never leave us, and so on.

The word “amen” can also mean “so be it.” It shows that we will act on our beliefs. Our “amen” at the end of the Creed is our promise to live in a way that shows our beliefs. For example, if we truly believe in God the Father almighty, we will live as if all God’s children were our brothers and sisters. If we truly believe in Jesus the

Lord, we will not let anything be more important than living and loving as Jesus did. Our “amen” is our promise to connect the faith we celebrate in church with the way we live. Our “amen” is our promise to stand up for the things we believe in.

God’s Like a Good Friend

Hi. My name is Kara and I’m a Grade 10 student. When I was asked what difference my belief in God makes, I didn’t know how to answer. I wouldn’t be me without faith in God.

God’s like a good friend. I talk to God every night. I talk about my friends and my family and the stuff that’s going on in school. Sometimes I read the Bible. One of my favourite passages is the one that says, “Don’t let the sun go down on your anger.” That seems like God’s message to me to help me keep my life on track. Sometimes I’ll go to bed mad at my mom. Then I’ll be praying and I’ll think of that line. I have to get out of bed and go work things out with Mom before I can sleep.

Another way my faith affects my life is in the choices I make. I've got a lot of friends who are into drinking and drugs. I know that God doesn't want me to wreck my life with that stuff. When they invite me to a party where there is going to be drinking I say, "Sure, I'll come, but I won't drink." They respect that. Some of them say that they wish they had my faith.

I haven't always liked to tell my friends about God and my values. Two years ago, when I was in Grade 8, I started smoking. I knew I shouldn't, but everyone else was doing it. My friends told me how to avoid being caught. But I always knew that I'd already been caught. God knew what I was doing even if my parents didn't. One day I decided that smoking just wasn't worth the guilt. So I quit. I felt a lot better. It was a lot easier to pray again; and my friends were still my friends.

It's funny – not all my friends believe what I believe, but they always want me to tell them about my beliefs anyway. It's as if they want me to convince them to do what is right. Earlier this year, one of my friends told me that she had decided to sleep with her boyfriend. She asked me what I thought. I was surprised she asked. She knew what I would say. I think sex is something really special that God wants us to save for marriage. God knows that when kids have sex before they're married it just messes up their lives either for a short time or for a long time.

I reminded my friend about a girl we know who's expecting a baby next fall. That really freaks me out. I mean, she's not even 16 and her childhood is over. She won't have time for all of those little things that seem so important to the rest of us. She'll have to worry about this tiny baby who's going to call her "Mom." What kind of a life

is she going to have? What kind of life is her kid going to have?

I think about her baby a lot. I could have been that baby; but my birth mother gave me up and I was adopted by great parents. They gave me a good home and taught me about God. God blessed me back then and God's been blessing me ever since.

Whenever I feel like things are getting out of control, I stop and pray and things calm down. I feel God's peace surrounding me like a soft, warm light. I pray that my friends will feel that peace too, especially the ones who have really messed up their lives. Even if I disagree with what they do, they're still my friends. My relationship with God helps me help them. God gives me the patience and understanding to be a good listener.

Sometimes I don't feel like listening. I want to walk away and pretend I don't see; but I can't. Maybe that's the kind of difference faith makes.

8.2

Why go to Mass?

How Can I Learn to Believe Like That?

It all started at breakfast when Grampa said, “Hurry up and finish those eggs, Jason. We don’t want to be late for church.”

“Grampa, I think I’ll stay home this morning. I’m taking some time off from church right now so I can figure out what I believe.” There, he had said it. Surely his grandfather would respect his point of view.

“Humph! No church, you say? So what is it that sustains your belief in God and in love? What keeps them together if things get rough?”

"What do you mean?"

"Jason, what if your life turns out like mine? What if your wife is killed in a car accident when you're driving? What if your son ends up in prison? Will you be able to believe and love then?"

"I don't know. Maybe, maybe not. But if I don't, that will be God's problem, not mine."

"No, Jason. That's where you're wrong. It will definitely be your problem. Let me tell you, if it hadn't been for Mass I wouldn't have made it after your grandmother died. And if it weren't for Mass I wouldn't be able to go visit your uncle in prison either. No amount of sitting at home and believing in God and in love could have kept me together."

"What does Mass have to do with visiting Uncle Ernie?" As soon as Jason asked the question he knew what the answer would be.

"Go get dressed for church and I'll explain when we get home."

"But.... Oh, okay."

Jason didn't pay too much attention during the first part of the Mass. The gospel reading was the one about the prodigal son – a good enough story, but he'd heard it before. He let his mind wander.

He watched the family who was carrying up the bread and wine. They stood next to the altar as the priest silently raised first the bread and then the wine. He was thinking that the daughter was kind of cute, when he noticed that tears were running down his grandfather's face. What had he missed? Then his grandfather was standing and boozing out the words "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord... Heaven and earth are full of your glory..."

"He really means that," Jason thought. "How can he say that the earth is full of goodness when he's suffered so much?"

Jason stayed sitting when his grandfather knelt, but now he watched closely. The priest was repeating the words Jesus spoke at the Last Supper: "This is my body which will be given up for you." Jason's grandfather bowed his head and covered his face with his hands. Jason slipped off the pew to kneel next to him.

The priest was now holding the cup. "This is my blood which will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven." Jason's grampa looked up for just a moment and then bowed his head again. In that moment, Jason had seen that his grandfather's eyes were filled with pain and loneliness.

"Why does he do this to himself?" Jason wondered. "Why does he come to Mass if it brings all that pain to the front of his mind?" The priest was still praying, but Jason was no longer following what he said. When everyone stood, Jason stood too. "Please, God," he thought, "help me to understand. I want to be able to understand so that I can reach Grampa."

Jason look over at his grandfather once again. Grampa was whispering the words to the next prayer: "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you. But only say the word and I shall be healed."

Jason stayed in the pew when his grandfather went up to receive communion. He watched all the people going by, all the different expressions on their faces. "Do any of them really know why they're here?" he

wondered. And then he saw his grandfather turn to walk back after receiving. He looked so relaxed, so at peace. All of the pain and loneliness that had been in his eyes only minutes earlier had faded away. "He knows why he's here," Jason thought. "I hope he can explain it to me."

A few minutes later, the Mass was over. When they were pulling out of the parking lot, Jason spoke up. "Grampa, what happened in church?"

"What do you mean, what happened? The same thing that always happens."

"But why were you crying when the priest held up the bread and wine? And why did you look so hurt when he said what Jesus said at the Last Supper?"

"It's like this, son. When the priest raises the bread and wine and offers them to God,

it's not just bread and wine that are being offered. It's us – all of us. God takes the simple gifts of bread and wine and transforms them. In the same way he takes us, just as we are, and transforms us. When I see the bread and wine being held up, I often think that they're not much of a gift, but God accepts them anyway. Then I look at my life and think that it's not much of a life, but God accepts it anyway. I don't usually cry at that part of the Mass. But this morning, when I talked about your grandmother and your uncle, both of whom I failed, I remembered that I didn't have much to offer God. Then the priest held up that little bit of bread and wine, not much of an offering, and I knew that God would still accept me even though I'm not much." Grampa paused for a minute.

"Then the priest repeated those words of Jesus: 'This is my body, given for you,' and 'This is my blood, for the forgiveness of your sins.' I was with Jesus and he was talking to me. He was reminding me that he died and rose for me. He was reminding me that he'll give me enough strength and hope to get through whatever comes.

"When I hear those words, I know that he died because of all the angry words I ever spoke to your grandmother. I know he died because of all the times I was careless when I drove. I know he died because of how much I hated my own son when he was arrested. I know he died because of my sin. But I also know that he rose because of his love for me. I know he rose so that I could tell your grandmother I was sorry. I know he rose so that I could try to change my bad habits. I know he rose so that I could love my son again."

"But, Grampa," Jason asked quietly, "how did his death and resurrection let you do all those things?"

"The Mass is so important because Jesus put all of himself into the bread and wine when he said those words. When I receive communion, all that is Jesus enters into me and becomes part of me. I then have the strength to change. Every single Sunday I say 'I'm not worthy,' and every single Sunday Jesus comes to me anyway."

"Once, when I was about your age, I tried to play hockey after a day without eating. It was a disaster. I had no energy. Once, a few years ago, I tried to go visit your Uncle Ernie without first going to Mass. It was a disaster. I had no patience and no love. Communion isn't magic. It doesn't make all the pain and sorrow go away any more than a good meal makes all physical weakness go away. But when I receive communion Jesus enters me, nourishes me and supports me; and that makes it a lot easier to do the things I need to do and to love the people I'm called to love, like my son, your Uncle Ernie."

Jason had one more question. "Grampa, how can I learn to believe like that?"

Reflection questions

1. Why does Jason's grandfather go to Mass?
2. How does Mass help Jason's grandfather love his son Ernie?
3. Based on this story, how would you explain communion?
4. How do you think Jason's grandfather will answer Jason's last question: "How can I learn to believe like that?"

The Sacrament of the Eucharist – A Choral Reading



Reader 1:

Did you know that Jesus is really present in the gifts of bread and wine we receive at communion?

Reader 2:

All that is Jesus is given to us when we receive the Eucharist.

Reader 3:

When I eat and drink the body and blood of Christ at Mass, Christ touches me and becomes one with me, and I touch Christ and become one with Christ.

Reader 6:

So what you're saying is that this Eucharist has some power? It's not just a role play to help you remember?

Readers 1, 2 & 3:

It's not just a role play.

Readers 4 & 5:

It has the power to change us, to bring us closer to God and to one another.

Reader 4:

What regular food does for us in our physical life, the Eucharist does in our spiritual life.

Reader 6:

But aren't the bread and wine still just bread and wine when the Mass is over?

Reader 2:

No, the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ. Sometimes this is called "transubstantiation." It means that they have become different.

Reader 5:

The bread and wine become Christ for us so that when we eat them, Christ enters us and nourishes us.

Reader 3:

Jesus said, "Whoever eats me will live because of me."¹

Reader 4:

When we share the sacrament of communion, Jesus enters us and supports us with his life.

Reader 1:

That is why we must always receive communion with respect and reverence. We should never take lightly what Jesus is doing for us.

Reader 6:

But the bread and wine still look and taste like bread and wine.

Reader 2:

It is true that the outer form of the bread and wine do not change. We can only see the change through the eyes of faith.

Reader 3:

We believe that the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ because we have heard Christ say, "This is my body" and "This is my blood."

Reader 4:

And we know that Christ speaks the truth.

Reader 6:

You said that the Eucharist changes us and makes us closer to God and

¹ John 6.57

to others. I understand that it makes us closer to God because God enters us when we eat it, but how does it make us closer to others?

Reader 1:

Christ touches all who receive him and becomes one with all who receive him.

Readers 1, 2 & 3:

Because we share together the one body of Christ, we all become one with each other.

Reader 2:

The bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ.

Reader 3:

And when we eat them, we too are transformed into the body and blood of Christ.

Reader 4:

We become Christ's body on earth.

Reader 5:

It is through us that others come to know Christ.

Reader 1:

When you go to communion and you hear the words "The body of Christ," what do you say?

Reader 6:

"Amen."

Reader 1:

Do you know why you say “Amen”?

Reader 6:

Not really.

Reader 2:

You say “Amen” as a way of saying, “I believe.” You are saying that you believe that this is really Christ, and you are inviting Christ to enter you and change you.

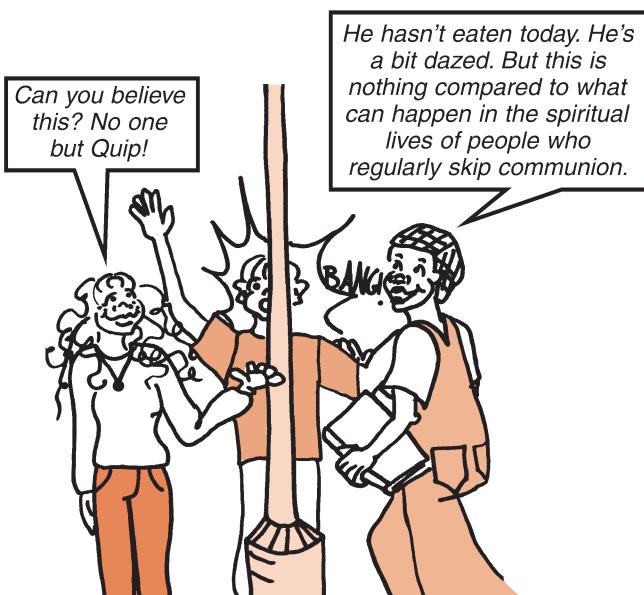
Reader 3:

You also say “Amen” as a way of saying “so be it.” When you receive the body of Christ, you are united to Christ and, through Christ, to all

other people. When you say “Amen – so be it,” you are agreeing to become one with all other people. Their concerns will become your concerns. Their needs will become your needs.

Readers 1, 2, 4 & 5:

“So be it.”



Doogie Dogma (*Catechism #1392*)

Father,
be near
to your
people
and hear our
prayers.
We have
many needs
that we can-
not express,
but you know
them, and we
ask you to
help us
through your
Son, Jesus
Christ,
who is Lord
for ever and
ever.
Amen.

(#584 from *The
Roman Missal,
CCCB*)

Acknowledgements

Each item in a church has a special purpose or meaning to express or encourage some aspect of our faith. Here are some of the items found in every Catholic church:

baptismal font

Often located near the entrance of the church to remind us that through Baptism, we enter this community of faith and become the sisters and brothers of Jesus. When the baptismal font is not at the entrance, fonts of holy water remind us of our baptismal life.

assembly

The people who gather to listen to the Word and share in the Eucharist are a sign of Christ's presence. The priest who presides at the celebration is also a sign of Christ among us. The arrangement of the seats in a church or chapel should help everyone to feel like participants in the celebration and not just spectators.

cross

We gather to join ourselves in the sacrifice of Jesus. During the Mass, we celebrate that Jesus gave his life so we might have life. The cross helps us to keep this in mind. The cross is also a sign of the faith we share together. That is why we make the sign of the cross. It is a reminder of our belief in God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

altar

The table of the Lord around which the community gathers. At the altar, Jesus' sacrificial death and his rising are made present to us. Around this table, God's people are fed.

lectionary

A collection of readings from Scripture that have been chosen for each Mass during the year. It is often carried high in the entrance procession as a reminder that it contains God's words.

ambo (or lectern)

The place from which the word of God is proclaimed. It is a visible reminder that Jesus Christ is present to us when the Word of God is read and listened to.

candles

Candles are a reminder that Christ is present in our midst and that his light casts aside all darkness. They also convey the festive spirit of the Mass. One candle remains lit all the time. That is the candle in the sanctuary lamp by the tabernacle. It is a sign of the real presence of Christ in the consecrated bread which is in the tabernacle.

sacred vessels

The chalice and paten are the cup and plate used only for eucharistic celebrations. They remind us that the body of Christ that we receive is real food for our journey, and that his blood is real drink to strengthen us.

sacramentary

The large book that contains the prayers of the Mass. Every Sunday, Catholics around the world use the same prayers in the celebration of the Mass. The sacramentary helps us stay united.

tabernacle

The Blessed Sacrament (the bread that was consecrated but not eaten during Mass) is kept in the tabernacle. The sanctuary lamp is a sign of Christ's presence there. The main reason for reserving the Sacrament is so that it may be brought to the dying and to those who were sick and unable to come to Mass. People may also spend time in private prayer and adoration near the tabernacle.



Not all Catholic churches in Canada are "Roman Catholic." There are many Ukrainian Catholics and others who use one of the Eastern rites in the Mass. If a Roman Catholic were to attend Mass at an Eastern rite church, he or she would notice that the prayers were different and that the appearance of the church was also different.

A Catholic from the Byzantine rite describes his church building this way:

The church building is much more than a place where the faithful gather for worship. It is a visible sign not only of our worship, but also of who we are as a people.

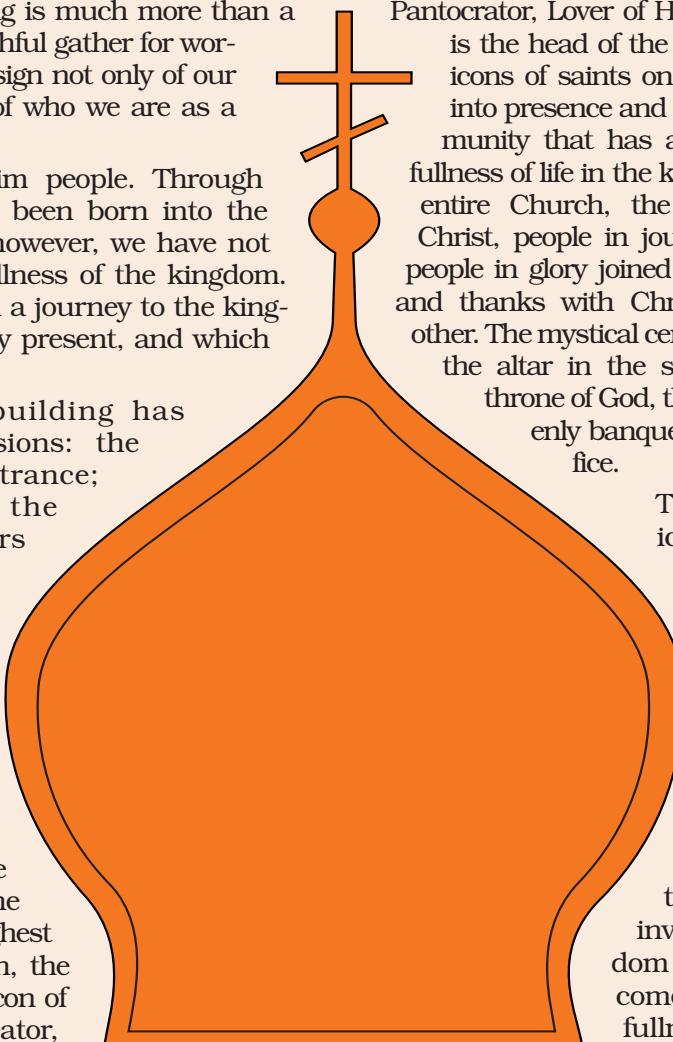
We are a pilgrim people. Through Baptism, we have been born into the kingdom of God; however, we have not yet entered the fullness of the kingdom. We are a people on a journey to the kingdom that is already present, and which is yet to come.

The church building has three main divisions: the vestibule or entrance; the nave, where the assembly gathers to worship and celebrate the sacraments; and the sanctuary.

The vestibule is symbolic of our entrance into the kingdom. The nave is a visible expression of the Church. In the highest point of the church, the dome, we see the icon of Christ the Creator,

Pantocrator, Lover of Humanity, judge. He is the head of the entire Church. The icons of saints on the walls bring us into presence and unity with the community that has already entered the fullness of life in the kingdom. Here is the entire Church, the mystical body of Christ, people in journey together with people in glory joined in prayer of praise and thanks with Christ and with each other. The mystical centre of the church is the altar in the sanctuary. It is the throne of God, the table of the heavenly banquet, the altar of sacrifice.

The iconostasis or icon screen brings the worshipping community into the presence of the great saving deeds of God. It stands not as a separation between the sanctuary and the nave, but as an invitation: "the kingdom of God is here . . . come . . . enter into its fullness . . . "



OUR CELEBRATION



GATHERING

The opening rite is a gathering and welcoming rite. We come together from our workplaces, our homes and our day-to-day activities to worship. We celebrate that we are one because of what God has done in Christ Jesus.

Thus we welcome one another in the name of God who gathers us. Only after we are properly welcomed in God's name are we ready to hear the word of God. The faithful take on the form of a worshipping community.

In planning and preparing for the gathering, we must ask ourselves some questions: How can we make people feel welcome? How can we encourage them to welcome one another? How can we help them to be aware of God's presence as the one who gathers us together?

RITUAL ELEMENTS

MEANING AND FUNCTION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Opening Song

Opens the celebration and leads our thoughts to what we are celebrating. It helps those gathered feel more united.

Entrance Procession



The entrance procession may involve all those with a special role in the liturgy. Special objects to be used in the celebration (e.g., a cross, the lectionary, incense, candles, banners, flowers) may be carried in the entrance procession. Symbols which represent the community which is gathering may also be carried in. On special occasions, such as Passion (Palm) Sunday and the Easter Vigil, the entire assembly may take part in the procession.

The entrance procession helps set the tone for the celebration. It is also a visible reminder that coming together in one place is part of our worship.

1. What aspect of the mystery of salvation do we wish to stress in our celebration on this day or during this season? What music can help us to be more aware of one another and of the God who calls us together for this celebration?

2. What tone should be set for this celebration? What items should be carried in to help set this tone? (For example, if we were emphasizing that Jesus is the source of light in our lives, we might carry in candles.) Do we wish to bring in symbols that represent who we are as a com-

RITUAL ELEMENTS	MEANING AND FUNCTION	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
Sign of the Cross/Amen	<p>All Christian worship is done in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</p> <p>All make the sign of the cross.</p>	<p>munity? (For example, at an all-school celebration, we might wish to have a banner from each grade.)</p>
Greeting/Response	<p>This greeting can take one of several forms. In each form, we are reminded that God is with us and always will be.</p>	<p>3. What can be done before the celebration to help you and others be more aware of the importance of the sign of the cross as a statement of our trust in and commitment to God?</p>
<p>Penitential Rite and the Lord Have Mercy or the Sprinkling Rite</p> 	<p>The community seeks reconciliation with one another and with God. This rite can take one of several forms. We may name our sins and ask for the prayers of those around us; we may praise God because we know that God is merciful and then ask for God's mercy; or we may use the rite of blessing and sprinkling holy water to celebrate the new life we have in Christ that is free from sin. The sprinkling rite is a reminder of our baptismal call. God cleansed us from sin when we were baptized. God cleanses us from sin each time we truly repent and seek forgiveness. Each option ends with a prayer of forgiveness.</p>	<p>4. What do these words mean: "The Lord be with you." "And also with you."? How might you show that these words are important?</p>
Gloria	<p>An ancient Christian hymn of praise and thanksgiving. Singing the Gloria adds to the spirit of the season. It is especially appropriate at Christmas, Easter, feast days and special occasions.</p>	<p>5. What aspect of our need for reconciliation and our trust in God's forgiveness do we wish to stress during this Mass? Do we wish to focus on our need for the support and prayers of the community? Do we wish to throw ourselves on God's mercy? Or do we wish to celebrate the forgiveness, which is ours through Baptism and the Eucharist?</p>
Opening Prayer Silence/Amen	<p>This is the "collect" or gathering prayer. Some people say that this is the only part of the introductory rites that can't be left out. After a moment of silent prayer in which the whole community prays for its con-</p>	<p>6. What season are we in? What are we celebrating? Would singing the Gloria help us to enter into the spirit of today's celebration?</p>

RITUAL ELEMENTS	MEANING AND FUNCTION	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
Opening Prayer Silence/Amen (continued)	cerns, this prayer gathers these concerns and presents them to the Father through Jesus' name in the Holy Spirit.	7. What is the focus of our communal prayer during this Mass? What do we need most from God at this time? Which option for the Opening Prayer expresses this best?

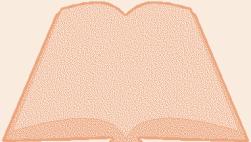
The *Liturgy of the Word (Listening)*

During the Liturgy of the Word, the Church proclaims the word of God in the midst of the assembled people. The people listen attentively. In a sense, they huddle around God's story.

As liturgy planners, our prime goal here is to help the gathered community hear God's call, to provide a setting in which God's word can enter into us and begin to call up its own response.



RITUAL ELEMENTS	MEANING AND FUNCTION	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
First Reading	A proclamation from the Old Testament. This reading is chosen to shed light on the gospel. During the Easter season, the readings are from the Book of Revelation and the Acts of the Apostles.	(The questions for the first and second readings and for the gospel are the same.)
Responsorial Psalm/Refrain	A psalm that reflects the spirit of the first reading. The psalm is best sung.	1. Which readings will be used for this celebration? 2. What do these readings have to say to this assembly today?
Second Reading	A proclamation from the letters of the New Testament. The New Testament reading is part of a continuous reading of a particular book.	3. What will help the assembly to understand these readings more clearly?

RITUAL ELEMENTS	MEANING AND FUNCTION	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
Gospel Acclamation/ Alleluia (or alternative) The Lord be with you..and also with you	We welcome the word of God joyfully by singing an alleluia or other acclamation. 	4. What is the best way to present each reading? Should they be proclaimed by a single reader? 5. Should one or more of the readings be divided into parts? 6. Should one or more of the readings be dramatized? 7. Should there be a brief commentary before one or more of the readings, telling students what to listen for? If so, what should this commentary say? Who will make it?
Gospel	A proclamation from one of the gospels as word of God.	8. Would you like the homily to have a particular focus or style?
Homily	The homily is a key part of the liturgy and is necessary for the nurturing of Christian life. The homily interprets the word of God for today and leads the community to give praise and thanks to God.	9. What needs or events in the Church, in the world and in the community do the readings call us to pray for? What will be the response to the prayers?
Profession of Faith	The Creed or profession of faith helps the people respond and agree to the word of God. It forms them to call to mind the truths of faith. The Creed is a remembering of God's acts in history.	
General Intercessions or Prayers of the Faithful	This is an act of the whole community. It offers to the Lord the world, which the community is sent to serve. Petitions are usually offered in this order: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. for the needs of the Church 2. for public authorities and the salvation of the world 3. for those oppressed by any need 4. for the local community. 	

T

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST (GIVING PRAISE AND THANKS)

The basic pattern of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, inherited from the Lord himself at the Last Supper and from the apostolic Church, consists of four parts:

- the Lord took bread and wine – we take bread and wine (presentation of gifts)
- he said the prayers of blessing – we pray the prayer of thanksgiving (eucharistic prayer)
- he broke the bread – we break bread (in preparation for communion)
- he gave the broken bread and the cup to his disciples – we share the one bread and the one cup (communion)

The eucharistic prayer is the centre and high point of the whole celebration. It is a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification.

RITUAL ELEMENTS

Preparation of the Altar and Presentation of the Gifts



MEANING AND FUNCTION

Before beginning the eucharistic action, we prepare the table. The gifts are then brought forward. A collection for the poor and for other needs is taken up at this time.

We prepare for the eucharistic prayer and pray that the Lord will accept the prayer and the gifts, to the glory of God's name.

The simple prayers over the gifts are modelled on Jewish blessings.

The Eucharistic Prayer



There are nine different eucharistic prayers: four that may be used for any occasion, two for Masses of reconciliation, and three for Masses with children. All of the eucharistic prayers begin with a preface addressed to God the Father. The preface praises God for what has been accomplished in Christ.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How can we present the bread and wine so that all will know how important they are? Are there special gifts we have for the poor (e.g. food, clothing)?
2. What aspect of salvation do we wish to stress during this Mass? Which eucharistic prayer might help us to do this?
3. Which memorial acclamation seems most fitting for this Mass? Why?
4. How might we encourage the community to really sing "Amen!" at the end of the eucharistic prayer?

RITUAL ELEMENTS

The Eucharistic Prayer (continued)



MEANING AND FUNCTION

Following the preface, everyone sings the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy). This hymn reflects Isaiah 6.3 and Psalm 118.26. The whole community joins in the praise of God.

In each eucharistic prayer, we ask God to bless the gifts we offer, and recall what Christ did at the Last Supper.

The different eucharistic prayers focus on different aspects of the mystery of salvation. It would be impossible to tell in a short time all that God has done for us. Each eucharistic prayer looks at one or two aspects of what God has done for us.

The choice of eucharistic prayers depends on the aspect of salvation and our relationship with God that is

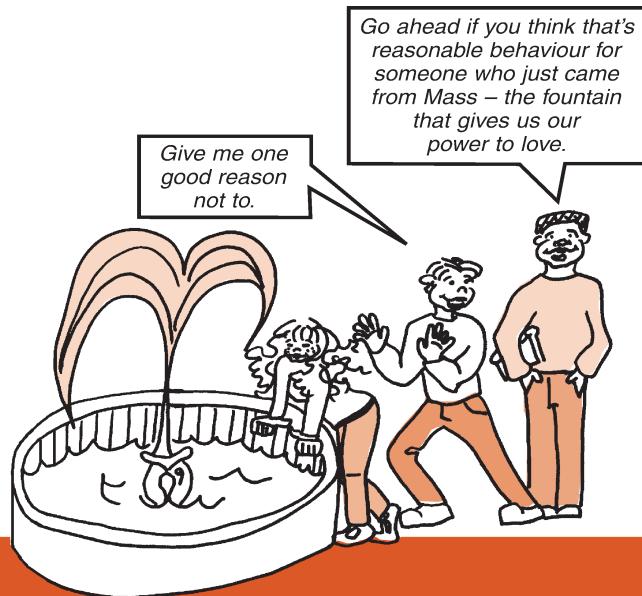
MEANING AND FUNCTION (continued)

being looked at during the Mass.

Eucharistic Prayer I emphasizes the unity of the Church throughout the world and through history. This prayer reminds us of and celebrates our taking part in the community of saints.

Eucharistic Prayer II sums up all that God has done for us in the person of Jesus. It is a good reminder of the importance of Jesus and how what he has done affects our lives.

Eucharistic Prayer III focuses on our relationship with Jesus and on how Jesus' sacrifice helps us to reconnect with the Father. When we use this prayer, we call to mind our dependence on God.



Doogie Dogma (*Catechism #1074*)

RITUAL ELEMENTS

The Eucharistic Prayer (continued)



MEANING AND FUNCTION

Eucharistic Prayer IV offers the most complete summary of salvation. It reminds us of God's faithfulness and love throughout history. This prayer stresses the hope that God offers to those who need it the most.

The two eucharistic prayers for Masses of reconciliation stress God's healing and forgiving love. The first talks about healing our broken relationship with God. The second focuses on how God helps us to end divisions among people and to restore peace.

The three eucharistic prayers for children use simple language to summarize what God has done for us and what God calls us to do. The first of these three prayers focuses on how

MEANING AND FUNCTION (continued)

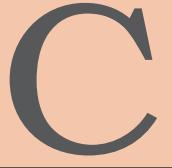
Jesus acted when he was on earth. The second looks at what Jesus taught us about how we should act. The third stresses that God will help us to get along with each other and to make the world a better place.

After the priest proclaims the words that Jesus spoke at the Last Supper, the community responds with a proclamation of assent called the memorial acclamation. There are several choices for this acclamation.

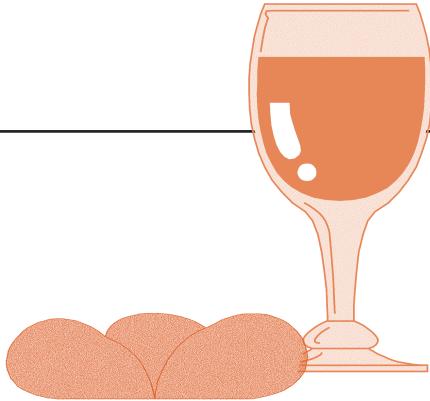
The eucharistic prayer ends with praise to God, through Christ, in the Spirit. This is one of the high points of the eucharistic prayer. That is why it is important for the community to listen to the doxology and then give assent by singing Amen (So be it).

Doogie Dogma





COMMUNION RITE



RITUAL ELEMENTS

MEANING AND FUNCTION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Lord's Prayer,
Rite of Peace

Before we break bread together and eat and drink of the same loaf and cup, we express unity with one another. For that reason we pray the Lord's Prayer and exchange peace. These are acts of communion.

Breaking of the Bread

This is a key action of the celebration: we all eat from the one bread which is Christ. During the breaking of the bread, the "Lamb of God" is sung.

This is the Lamb of God... Lord, I am not Worthy

Priest and people prepare themselves to receive Christ's body and blood. We respond to the invitation to communion with a prayer of humility and hope.

Communion

We receive the body and blood of Christ. During this time we meditate in song and silence.

1. How might this part of the Mass encourage that reconciliation? How can we encourage people to think about what they are doing when they wish one another the "peace of Christ"? How can we be more conscious of one another and our unity as family of God?

2. How can we help people be more aware of Christ's presence in communion and in the community that is receiving communion?

D

DISMISSAL RITE (GOING FORTH)

The dismissal or concluding rite consists of

- a) the priest's greeting and blessing;
- b) the dismissal of the community, which sends each person back to doing good works, while praising and blessing the Lord.



RITUAL ELEMENTS

MEANING AND FUNCTION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Blessing/ Amen

The final blessing can be given in a simple or more complex form. The more complex form reminds the assembly of some of the things God has done for them and names a particular hope connected with the focus of the day's Mass.

Dismissal/ Thanks be to God

The liturgy always concludes with the trinitarian blessing. (We are blessed in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.)

We are reminded to go forth and live according to the words and actions we have celebrated.

Closing Song

The closing song and procession remind us that we are sent out into the world to share the Good News we have received.

1. Of all the things that God has done for us, what do we want first in our minds at the end of this celebration? What hopes do we want to arise from this celebration? Which option for the blessing best expresses what we want to think about during this Mass and what we want to hope for as we leave this Mass?

2. What will help people realize that the end of the Mass is only the beginning of their offering of love, praise and service to God? What hymn can we sing that will remind us of this celebration as we go back to our homes or school? Are there any that call us to serve others?

Unit 8 Summary Statements

- The Creed reminds us who we are and who we are called to become. When we say “Amen,” we let God guide us in both our being and our becoming.
- The Eucharist gives us and the entire faith community the strength to live out what we say we believe in the Creed.
- The “theme” of every Mass is Christ’s passion, death and resurrection. In planning the liturgy, we do not develop new themes; we choose to look at different aspects of the central mystery and the way it touches our lives.
- “Liturgy” is how we as a community celebrate our faith. It is the ritual and actions of the people.

The flow common to every eucharistic liturgy is gathering, listening to the word of God, blessing, eating and drinking, and sending forth. Since liturgy is “the work of the people,” our taking part in the Mass is very important.

Key Terms

amen

real presence

altar

sacramentary

ambo

lectionary

cross

tabernacle

baptismal font

chalice

paten

sanctuary lamp

assembly

liturgy

Acknowledgements



Acknowledgements

Stand by Me, Student Text, is the Year 8 catechetical resource of the “We Are Strong Together” © series, written and produced by the National Office of Religious Education of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ottawa, Canada.

Approved by:

The Episcopal Commission for Christian Education, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Project Specialists, Youth Portfolio:

Patricia Morrison Driedger
Jonas Abromaitis

Editing and Writing Specialist:

Anne Louise Mahoney

Resource development group:

Jonas Abromaitis, Mary Lou Cohen,
Hélène Coulombe, Rev. William Derousie,
Char Deslippe, Carol Donahue, Patricia
Morrison Driedger, Douglas Finbow,
Catherine Gross, Dr. Heather Jamieson, Sr.
Donna Kelly, Geri Ann Lafleur, Sheila Moher,
Rev. Michael Mulhall, o. carm., Douglas
Nelson, Carol Ann O'Rourke, Nadia
Prokopchuk, Roseanne Russell, Diane Sharp,
Linda Sloan, Russ Snoble, Deirdre Thomas,
Patricia Weinstein, Nicholas White

We acknowledge with gratitude the National Catechetical Advisory Committee on Youth, pilot teachers, co-ordinators, school boards, diocesan offices, and others throughout Canada who contributed to the development of this resource.

The Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted, 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, and are used by permission. All rights reserved.

Excerpts from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* – Copyright © Concacan Inc. – LIBRERIA EDITRICE VATICANA, 1994, for the English translation in Canada.

The English translation of the Apostles' Creed and The Lord's Prayer prepared by English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC), 1988.

Excerpts from the English translation of *The Roman Missal* © 1973, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL); excerpts from the English translation of *Rite of Penance* © 1974, ICEL; excerpts from the English translation of *Rite of Confirmation*, Second Edition © 1975, ICEL. All rights reserved.

Take, Lord, and Receive, p. 75: from *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph*, by Louis J. Puhl, S.J., with permission of Loyola University Press.

The Kiss of Farewell... by St. Simeon of Thessalonica, p. 81: from “De Ordine Sepulturae”, 336 in J.P. Migne, ed., *Patrologica Graeca*, Paris, 1857-1866, 155, 684.

Art & Design:

Creative Art & Design, Publications Service, CCCB

Cover Art:

Ron Tourangeau

Illustrations:

Eugene Kral – 43, 83, 84
Ron Tourangeau – 10, 20, 68

Cartoon drawings:

Caili Woodyard

Photographs:

Berkeley Studios United Church of Canada – 55_{BL}, 105, 170_B
CCODP – 161
Compliments author – 51
Compliments Fr. Andrew Shim – 73
Joyce Harpell – 48, 52, 69, 81, 91, 111, 123, 127, 182, 183, 184, 187, 192_M, 193
Tom Hocker – 47
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate – 74_R
Patrick Onofrio – 33
SKJOLD – 6, 11, 14, 15, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 53, 55_{TL-BR}, 58_{TL-BL,R}, 64, 65, 66, 72, 75, 88, 94, 95, 97, 98, 100, 103_B, 108, 115, 117, 120, 124, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 137, 139, 142, 147, 152, 154, 156, 157, 158, 159_{ML-BL}, 164, 168, 170_T, 171_B, 176, 178, 180
Lu Taskey – 194
Toronto Star – 171_T
Bill Wittman – 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 43, 44, 45, 46, 55_{TR}, 58_{TR}, 62, 63, 70, 74_L, 78, 80, 82, 87, 90, 96, 101, 103_T, 107, 112, 121, 122, 126, 135, 136, 146, 149, 159_{TL-TR}, 162, 163, 166, 174, 189, 190, 191, 192_{T-B}

Printed and bound in Canada by:

Friesens Corporation, Altona, Manitoba

Published by:

Publications Service,
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops,
2500 Don Reid Drive,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1H 2J2
www.cccbpublications.ca

Stand by Me, Student Text, Copyright © Concacan Inc., 1996. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, photographic, or mechanical, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

If, through inadvertence, anything has been printed without permission, proper acknowledgement will be made in future printings after notice has been received.

Reprinted in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005

ISBN 0-88997-348-2

Legal Deposit:

National Library of Canada,
Ottawa, Ontario

CCCB Publication code: 183-278



nicene Creed

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:*

*by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered, died, and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in fulfillment of the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and
the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and
glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness
of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

