

OUR SUNDAY VISITOR

Encounter *with* Christ

Be Sealed

CONFIRMATION



Called to
WITNESS

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Session Outcomes

Informing the Mind

- Connect Jesus' image of the vine and branches to the Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- Explore the connection between being a disciple and a witness
- Learn that when celebrating Confirmation, the last part of Mass includes a special blessing
- Identify the dove as a symbol for the Holy Spirit

Forming the Heart

- Understand that witnesses for Christ first know Christ alive in their hearts
- Develop the desire to be a faithful witness of the faith
- Appreciate the role of the sponsor in Confirmation
- Recognize that Jesus' Resurrection makes him Lord over sin and death

Church Documents

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1832
- *Order of Confirmation* 5

Catechist Background

Discipleship and evangelization share an intimate connection. We clearly see it present at the first Pentecost. After the death of Jesus, the disciples gathered in the upper room. They had responded to his invitation to follow him. They had followed him through the hillsides of Galilee to the Cross. And now, they were without their "Master," afraid to speak or act in his name. When the Holy Spirit descended upon those disciples, the joy they felt in the love of Christ could not be contained. Now, they understood the words of Jesus: "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5). The Fruits of the Holy Spirit made visible in them would become for others the "taste" of the Kingdom of God, a sign of the risen Jesus.

Through Baptism, we enter into the dying and rising of Jesus. Then, like the disciples, we receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation—our own Pentecost. In each Sacrament, we receive the Holy Spirit's grace that equips us with the virtues and gifts we need to live as disciples. In Confirmation, the Spirit unites the baptized with a new bond to Christ. As members of his Body, the Church, we are united by the Holy Spirit and strengthened to participate in the mission of the Church. We are called and empowered to manifest God's Kingdom on earth. Do you hear the echo of the Christian disciple's mission in these familiar words: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done"? Confirmation gives the grace necessary for each believer to live in the service of the reign of God.



Confirmation normally takes place within Mass. The Eucharist nourishes and strengthens us for the life of discipleship. In the final blessing of each Mass, we are sent to be witnesses in the world.

➔ **Reflect** What do you think would help Catholics become better equipped to be witnesses of their faith? How will you help your children develop a desire to be a witness for their faith?



Holy Spirit, thank you for helping me be a good witness to our faith. Help me to recognize ways that I can help these young people have a strong desire to witness for the faith.

Session Planning

| What You Do | | What You Need |
|---|--|---|
|  Invite, 15 minutes | | |
| Page 33 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirit of the Lord (Luke 4:16–19), Reflect prayerfully on God’s Word. | <input type="checkbox"/> prayer table <input type="checkbox"/> small electric candle <input type="checkbox"/> large wax candle <input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard or newsprint |
| Page 34 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity Identify how a missionary can show and teach people how to farm. | <input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens <input type="checkbox"/> markers or crayons |
|  Discover, 40 minutes | | |
| Page 35 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic Signs & Symbols Examine what a Confirmation Sponsor does for the candidate and the newly confirmed person. • Meet Jesus Introduce Jesus as the Risen Christ by discussing what happened when Mary Magdalene went to the tomb where Jesus was buried. | <input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard |
| Pages 36–37 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the command that Jesus gave as he ascended into heaven. • The Ascension (Acts 1:8–9), Proclaim the scripture passage about Jesus’ command to be his witness to all the nations. • Share ideas about how others may have responded to Mary Magdalene as she announced the news of Jesus’ Resurrection. • Activity Have the candidates identify different ways to share the Good News about Jesus. • Entering the Mystery Explore the symbol of the dove, which is how the Holy Spirit descended at Jesus’ Baptism. | <input type="checkbox"/> cardstock with letters that spell WITNESS <input type="checkbox"/> Activity stickers (provided in the Child Book) |
| Pages 38–39 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how the Holy Spirit calls us to be witnesses to the world. • Point out that at the end of Mass we are sent to share the Good News in our actions and words, and explain that the Holy Spirit strengthens us to do that. • Activity Have the children match different parts of the Prayer Over the People blessing with sentences that explain what each part means. | <input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens <input type="checkbox"/> download of <i>Final Blessing for Confirmation</i> prayer |
| Page 40 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail the Fruits of the Holy Spirit found in the new testament. • Activity Invite the children to have fun unscrambling letters to identify the Fruits of the Holy Spirit. | <input type="checkbox"/> pencils and pens |
|  Live, 15 minutes | | |
| Pages 41–42 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity Identify different Fruits of the Holy Spirit that you would like to share with different people. •  Point out the My Family in Our Parish activities for the upcoming week. • Conclude with the closing prayer and ritual. | <input type="checkbox"/> pencils and pens <input type="checkbox"/> markers or crayons  copies of Session 4 Family + Faith Pages |

Catholic Faith Words witness • mission • Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Making Connections

Family Resources



My Family in Our Parish

Page 42 of the Child Book asks the children to listen carefully to the final words of the deacon or priest. Then young people can draw or write something for which they are thankful. Then on the way home, each family member can share how they will share the Good News through their behavior and words.

Session 4 **Family + Faith Pages** provide suggestions for family activities that explore how Confirmation and being strengthened by the Holy Spirit helps to prepare us to be a witness for Christ.

Online Resources

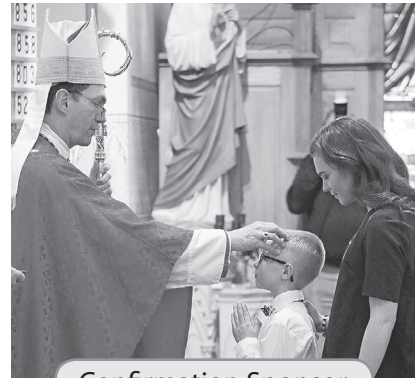


sacraments.osv.com

- Adaptive Learning & Special Needs options
- Online games and downloads
- Multimedia Glossary
- Additional Lesson Plan

Catholic Signs & Symbols

Confirmation sponsors are called to be representatives of the Church. The Introduction to the *Order of Confirmation* summarizes the roles of the sponsor in this way: to bring candidates to celebrate the sacrament, to present them to the bishop for the anointing, and to help them fulfill their baptismal promises (see *Order of Confirmation*, 5).



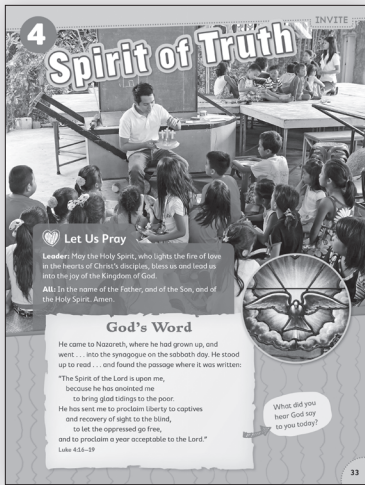
Confirmation Sponsor

As the Child Understands

Developmental psychologists point to the presence of mentors in the life of a child as one of the key factors in resilience and healthy development. Children are naturally drawn to adults who are supportive and caring. They look for people to emulate. A significant adult who is supportive of the faith of the family and serves as an additional positive influence can have a great formative impact. The sponsor serves as a moral and spiritual mentor and can help to guide the child as an additional support to parents. This is especially true as the child gets older and the drive for independence and autonomy can compete with the influence of parents and family.

A Deeper Understanding

From the very beginning of the Church, we can see the importance of individuals who, on behalf of the Christian community, would guide those inquiring about the faith as they learned what it meant to be a disciple of Christ. These sponsors vouched for the those seeking membership into the Church. They spoke to the person's commitment to Christ as it was expressed in prayer and action. In Scripture, we see Ananias and Barnabas guiding Saint Paul through his conversion and advocating for him to the Christian community (see Acts 9). A sponsor is someone chosen through prayer and careful consideration. This person stands for the community as the person designated to support the child's journey to the heart of God. A sponsor must be a practicing Catholic who provides witness through his or her words and actions that God is present in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. The role of the sponsor is to help the child learn, live, and love his or her Catholic faith.



Page 33

Spirit of Truth Page 33

Let Us Pray

Consider gathering the children around a prayer table that contains small battery-operated candles, one for each child. A large candle can be lit by the leader and placed in the middle of table next to the Bible.

Write the **All** response to the prayer on page 33 on the board or newsprint.

Read leader part of the prayer. Direct the children to turn on their small candles and place them on the table.

Prompt the children to say aloud the **All** response.

God's Word

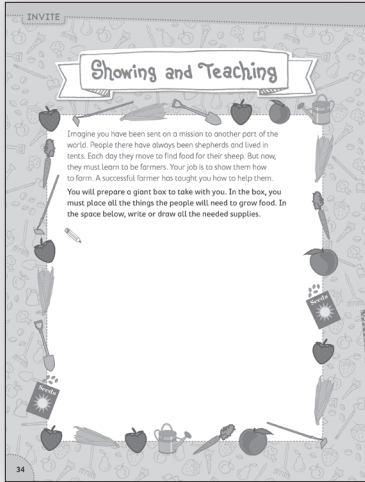
Guide the children through the process of preparing for scripture reflection.

- Invite the children to close their eyes, be still, and be ready to hear what God is saying to them.
- Ask them to pay attention to their slow steady breaths.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- Read aloud the Scripture.
- Sit in silence for an appropriate amount of time.
- *Ask:* "What did you hear God say to you today?"
- Invite volunteers to share.

To transition to the next page discuss how much of the day the children spend learning. Then compare learning to teaching.

Ask: Did you ever wonder what it is like to be a teacher?

Say: Let's look at the next page. I think you may be asked to teach something!




Page 34

Showing and Teaching Page 34

Ask: Have you ever been asked to teach someone else how to do something? Can you give me some examples? *tie a shoe, use the video control, ride a bike, make a sandwich*

Say: Let's listen to the first paragraph. As I read, circle the sentence that tells us what the people know now. Underline the sentence tells you what you will need to teach them.

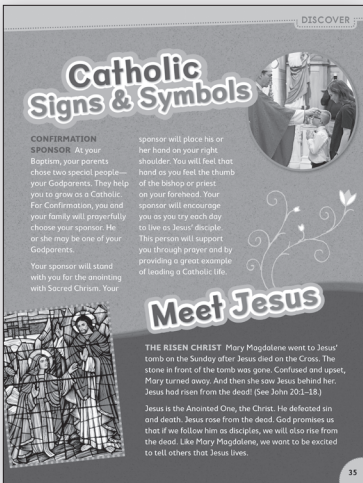
Review the sentences. *They should circle the second sentence starting with "People there ..." and underline the sentence beginning with "Your job ..."*

 Lead the children in completing the Showing and Teaching activity.

Say: Think about what the people will need to learn and what you will need to teach them. Now write or draw all the needed supplies in the space provided.

Invite the children to share their suggestions after giving them time to complete the assignment.

Ask: Did you include examples of crops that they will grow so that they can touch, taste, and smell them? Why do you think these things might be important? *Possible response: It might motivate the people to want to learn how to farm.*



Page 35

Catholic Signs & Symbols Page 35

Optional Activity: Story Circle Sponsors witness the Good News of Jesus to the Confirmation candidates. Arrange the children’s chairs in a circle. Tell the children you are going to create a story together. Each person will make up a line of the story. The next person continues with another line, then the next, and so on. The story must contain the following elements: A child sees something amazing happen. She wants to tell about it but is afraid that no one will believe her. In the end she tells. Here’s an example of how to begin: “A young girl was on her way home from school . . .” After the story is complete, discuss the girl’s feelings and what finally motivated her to tell about what she saw. Compare the story to our need to witness to the amazing story of Jesus and our new life in him.

Direct the children to look at the picture near the top of the page. Previous signs and symbols have been objects or words. The focus on the sign in Session 4 is the Confirmation Sponsor. The sign is a person.

Ask: What do you think is happening in the picture? *The bishop is anointing the candidate and the sponsor is standing behind.*

Say: The person behind the person being confirmed is very important. Let’s read about who this person is. As I read, listen for the two special words that we use to name people who have been chosen to help you to grow as a disciple.

Read aloud the first paragraph and ask for the word that is used to name the people your parents choose to help you grow at your Baptism. *Godparents*

Then ask if anyone knows the actual names of their godparents.

Ask: What word is used to name the person who will stand beside you at Confirmation? *Sponsor*

Summarize the second paragraph as volunteers stand in to demonstrate the various roles being described in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Consider placing a painter’s cap with the words *bishop*, *candidate*, and *sponsor* written on the front to help the children understand the different roles.

Meet Jesus

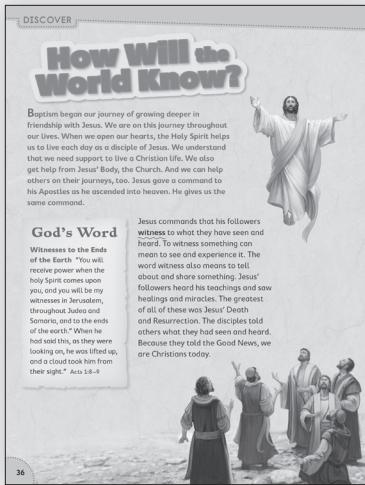
For this section, hold up a crucifix and ask a volunteer to tell the group what happened to Jesus on the Cross.

Ask: After his death, what happened to Jesus’ body? *He was placed in a tomb.*

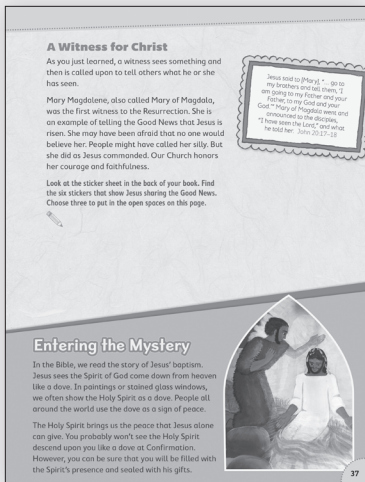
Read the first paragraph. Ask for two volunteers to be the “actors” as you tell the story again. Have the children use gestures and facial expression to help tell the story. They can also make up their own dialogue.

Write the words *Anointed One* and *Risen Christ* on the board. Discuss what each term means.

Read the last two sentences together.



Page 36



Page 37

How Will the World Know? Page 36

Summarize the first paragraph on page 36. Then ask what command Jesus gave the Apostles as he ascended into heaven. *to be his witness throughout the world*

Say: Let's read the passage from God's Word and find out.

God's Word

Proclaim the Word, and then ask the children to circle the word that Jesus uses to describe what his disciples would be.

Ask: What is the word? *witnesses*

Read the last paragraph and review the teaching of the Apostles.

Next, hand out sheets of cardstock with separate letters outlined as big as the sheet. When placed together, the letters spell the word *WITNESS*. You may need two or three sets depending on the number of children.

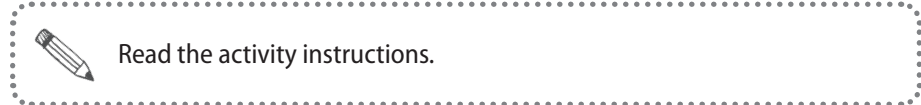
Give each child a letter. Direct them to raise their letters one at a time and say the letter. When the word is completed, everyone says, "I am a witness for Jesus."

A Witness for Christ Page 37

Point out that the first witness to Jesus' Resurrection was Mary Magdalene. If you have taught the song *Mary Magdalene*, remind the children of the song. If they are not familiar with the song, consider teaching it before this lesson.

Proclaim the Scripture in the small box on page 37, then ask what others might have thought when Mary Magdalene announced the Good News. *Possible response: They thought she was hysterical or seeing things.*

Read the two paragraphs to the left of the Scripture and ask why is Mary Magdalene so important? *She is the first to see the risen Jesus.*



Say: Think about different ways you can share the Good News about Jesus. Choose the stickers that show this and place them on the page in your book.

Have volunteers show you what stickers they chose. If possible, consider having the children shout or give witness with a bullhorn.

Entering the Mystery

Say: Look at the picture of Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Do you see anything in the picture that tells us that the Holy Spirit was there? *the dove*

Summarize the two paragraphs and read the second paragraph with emphasis.

DISCOVER

Strengthened for Mission



We have many prayers to the Holy Spirit. One of these prayers asks the Holy Spirit to come into our hearts. We ask God to make us brave witnesses of his truth. We pray, "If not me, then who...? If not now, then when...?"

The prayer reminds us that the world needs our witness right now. In Confirmation, the bishop or priest will call you by name when you are anointed. Jesus is personally calling you to be his witness. You can use the name your parents gave you at Baptism. Or, in some dioceses, you may choose the name of a Saint.

Our families and the Church help us to be a witness for Christ. Sometimes we may need a little more confidence. That is one reason why participating in Sunday Mass is so important for Catholic disciples. At Mass, we are strengthened by God's Word

and by receiving Jesus' Body and Blood in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Being with other disciples as we worship at Mass supports us in our mission.

At the end of Mass, the priest gives us a special blessing and then dismisses us. The priest doesn't just say, "Mass is over!" Instead, we are sent on our mission to share the Good News and give honor to God by the way we live. At the end of the Confirmation Mass, the bishop or presider may say a special blessing for the newly confirmed. The bishop may say the Prayer Over the People. Let's look at the next page to see this prayer.

The celebration of Confirmation during Mass shows the unity between Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist—the Sacraments of Initiation (see Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1212).

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Page 38

Strengthened for Mission Page 38

Point out that Jesus has called each of us to be his witness. We can count on the Holy Spirit for help.

Summarize the first paragraph, then read aloud the second paragraph.

Ask: When your parents want you to do something at home, do they call you by name? Does anyone's parents ever call you by your whole name? For example, John Michael Jones. When does that happen?

Discuss how important the use of a person's name is. Emphasize that God calls us by name to be his witness.


Say: As I read the next paragraph listen for the three ways during Mass that God gives us strength to share his Good News—to be "witnesses" of Jesus. Write the numbers 1, 2, and 3 above the phrases.

Then read aloud the third paragraph.

Ask: What are the three ways God gives us strength? *God's Word, Jesus' Body, and Jesus' Blood*

Summarize the last paragraph and emphasize how we are sent at the conclusion of Mass to share the Good News with others.

Sent for Witness



The words of the Prayer Over the People blessing are on the left side. For each line of the prayer, draw a line to the phrase on the right side that explains what it means.

| | |
|---|--|
| Confirm, O God, what you have brought about in us. | Make the Gifts of the Holy Spirit strong in us. |
| and preserve in the hearts of your faithful the gifts of the Holy Spirit. | God, you send us to your Son and give us your Holy Spirit. |
| may they never be ashamed to confess Christ crucified before the world. | God will be our King forever. |
| and by devoted charity may they ever fulfill his commands. | Make us brave to tell the Good News of Jesus' sacrifice of love. |
| Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen. | Let us show love to God and love our neighbor. |


We hear important things in this blessing. To be a witness to our faith, we have to open our hearts to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Our loving words and actions are an invitation to others to meet Jesus and his truth.

39

Page 39

Sent For Witness Page 39

Say: At the end of Mass we are sent on mission. During Confirmation, there is a special final blessing at the end of Mass for those who have been confirmed. It is a prayer that speaks about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and being a witness to God's Kingdom.



Tell the children to put their finger on the picture of a pencil. Point out that when you look at the phrases on the left side, you can see the blessing. Ask the children to use their fingers to follow along as you read.

Read straight down the column.

Say: Now let's look at the first phrase. I'll read it again.

Read aloud the first phrase.

Ask: What phrase on the right side of the page means the same thing?

Then ask for volunteers to share their answers. Next, direct the children to draw a line that connects the phrases.

Repeat this exercise for each phrase.

DISCOVER

Gifts That Bear Fruit

Jesus tells us: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). The Holy Spirit connects us—the branches—to Jesus, the vine. The stronger our connection, the better we are as disciples of Jesus. We give others a "taste" of God's goodness.

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit are the qualities that can be seen in us when we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts. When we offer someone one of these fruits, or qualities, we help him or her to know Jesus.

Unscramble the words and write the correct Fruit of the Holy Spirit in the spaces provided.

Generosity is giving to others than what we have.

Charity is acting and thinking in ways that are appropriate and pure.

Goodness is being better, it is treating others and things with care.

Faithfulness is keeping our promises to Jesus and to others.

Yield is giving up being united with God and those we love.

Self-control is doing the right thing because we love God.

Patience is being able to wait for God to do what we need.

Kindness is being friendly, considerate to the needs of others, and not being harsh or mean.

Peace is the absence of conflict or anger.

Agreeableness is being able to get along with others in their proper order and people with problems with kindness and grace.

Humility is first knowing that then choosing what God wants because he is perfectly good.

Hearthy is the very best of God so, in that order, it is possible for us to do God's will and our neighbor as ourselves.

Moderate is respecting our bodies and others by drinking, eating, and resting in appropriate ways.

Knowledge is knowing our bodies and others by drinking, eating, and resting in appropriate ways.

Justice is being fair and right.

Control is doing the right thing because we love God.

Kindness is being friendly, considerate to the needs of others, and not being harsh or mean.

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Knowledge is knowing our bodies and others by drinking, eating, and resting in appropriate ways.

Justice is being fair and right.


Control is doing the right thing because we love God.

Page 40

Gifts That Bear Fruit Page 40

Say: We have learned about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. There are also Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Read the first two paragraphs.

 Before beginning to work on this activity, copy the blanks and scrambled words on the board or newsprint so that you can work with the children on the activity.

Say: There are twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit. We need to unscramble the word before we learn what it means. Some of the words have already been unscrambled for you. You will need to unscramble the rest.

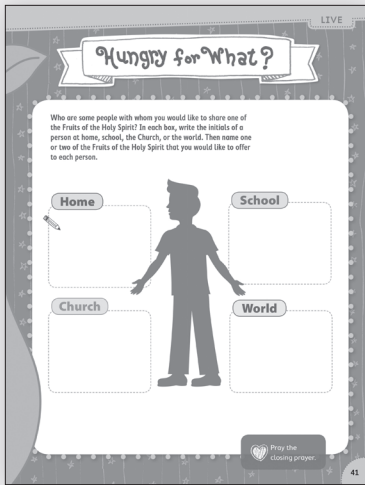
Read the definition after each word is unscrambled. Ask for a volunteer to say the definition in his or her own words.

Have the children reflect on people they know who share each Fruit of the Holy Spirit with others.

Ask: Do you know someone who shares this Fruit of the Holy Spirit with others? How do they do it?

Say: Let's together read all the Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Read all twelve.




Page 41

Hungry for What? Page 41

Say: Now that we have thought about the fruits others have shared with us, let's think about what fruits we can offer the world.

Summarize the first paragraph. Then give an example from your life for how you give fruits to others. Some examples might include the following: give patience to your own child; show generosity to the children in your session by sharing your time; or acting with self-control when someone cuts you off on the highway.

 Direct the children to follow the instructions in their book to complete the activity.

Say: Our world is really hungry for these fruits.

Closing Ritual Prayer

Have the children gather in circle.

Leader: The Holy Spirit fills us with the strength to be a witness of the Gospel.

All: Come, Holy Spirit, fill my heart with the power of your love.

Leader: The Spirit of the Lord is upon you

All: Help me to speak your truth in love.

Leader or Catechist: As a sign of our Church supporting you, everyone turn and face right and place your right hand on the right shoulder of the person in front of you.

Leader: Be living members of this Church . . . , and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, serve all people like Christ, who came not to be served but to serve.

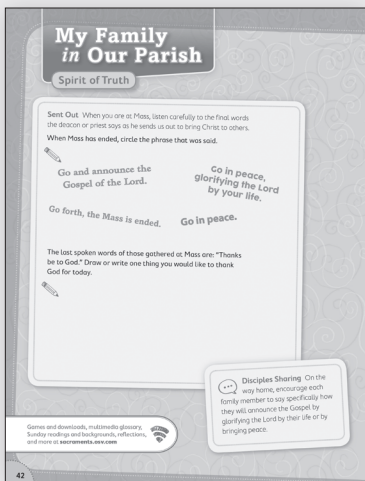
All: As a member of Jesus' Body, the Church, I will help you serve. Amen.

Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

(Adapted from the Order of Confirmation)



If books go home, remind the children to complete page 42 and bring their books back. Distribute copies of the Session 4 **Family + Faith Pages**.



Page 42