

4th Sunday of Lent through the 6th Sunday of Easter  
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Grades 7, 8

# VISIONS

## Teaching Guide

### Unit 4: Followers of the Risen Christ

#### Contents

Connecting Gospel and Doctrine	page 2
Lesson Plan, March 14 • 4th Sunday of Lent	page 3
Lesson Plan, March 21 • 5th Sunday of Lent	page 4
Lesson Plan, March 28 • Palm/Passion Sunday	page 5
Lesson Plan, April 4 & 11 • Easter & 2nd Sunday of Easter	page 6
Lesson Plan, April 18 • 3rd Sunday of Easter	page 7
Lesson Plan, April 25 • 4th Sunday of Easter	page 8
Lesson Plan, May 2 • 5th Sunday of Easter	page 9
Lesson Plan, May 9 • 6th Sunday of Easter	page 10
Continuity Projects	page 11
Extending Activities	page 12-14
Assessment Tool	page 15
Unit 4: Scope and Sequence	page 16

**Pflaum**  **Gospel Weeklies**

Supplement to the *Pflaum Gospel Weeklies*

# Connecting Gospel and Doctrine

During Lent the Church not only prepares catechumens for Baptism but immerses all of us in the mystery of our redemption.

In celebrating Holy Week, we remember the final events of Jesus' life—the new covenant he makes in pledging his lifeblood for us, his death on the cross, his resurrection to new life.

The 50 days of Easter celebrate the risen Jesus' continuing presence with us and our lives in his Holy Spirit. Like his first followers, Jesus calls us to gather others into our community, to love one another as he loved us, to share the Spirit of love that is the very life of God. This is the mystery of our redemption—that we share the very life of God, who lives three-in-one love.

Quotations below from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* indicate the doctrinal emphasis in each *Venture* issue.

## 4th Sunday of Lent

Our salvation flows from God's initiative of love for us, because "God loved us and sent the Son to be the expiation for our sins" (620). The process of conversion and repentance was described by Jesus in the parable of the prodigal son, the center of which is the merciful father (1439). "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another even as I have loved you." It is impossible to keep the Lord's commandment by imitating the divine model from outside; there has to be a vital participation, coming from the depths of the heart, in the holiness and the mercy and the love of our God (2842). Also 1847, 2774-2776, 2838-2845, 2862, 2798-99

## 5th Sunday of Lent

Only God forgives sins. Since he is the Son of God, Jesus says of himself, "The Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" and exercises this divine power: "Your sins are forgiven." (1441). During his public life Jesus not only forgave sins, but also made plain the effect of his forgiveness: he reintegrated sinners into the community of the people of God from which sin had alienated or even excluded them (1443). When we say "Our" Father, we are invoking the new covenant in Jesus Christ, communion with the Holy Trinity, and the divine love which spreads through the Church to encompass the world (2801). Also 574, 594, 620, 1492, 2774, 2776, 2846-2854, 2857, 2863-64

## Palm/Passion Sunday

The Paschal mystery of Christ's cross and resurrection stands at the center of the Good News that the apostles, and the Church following them, are to proclaim to the world. God's saving plan was accomplished "once for all" by the redemptive death of God's Son Jesus (571). "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (619). Jesus freely offered himself for our salvation. Beforehand, during the Last Supper, he both symbolized this offering and made it really present: "This is my body which is given for you" (621). By his loving obedience to the Father, "into death, even death on a cross," Jesus fulfills the atoning mission of the suffering Servant (623). Also 607, 616, 629, 1168, 1169, 1187, 1189

## Easter/2nd Sunday of Easter

The Resurrection of Jesus is the crowning truth of our faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian community; handed on as fundamental by Tradition; established by the documents of the New Testament; and preached as an essential part of the Paschal mystery along with the cross (638). Christ's resurrection—and the risen Christ himself—is the principle and source of our future resurrection (655). Faith in the Resurrection has as its object an event which is historically attested to by the disciples, who really encountered the Risen One (656). Also 179, 180, 639, 641, 654, 1089, 1169

## 3rd Sunday of Easter

Jesus is at the same time the suffering Servant who silently allows himself to be led to the slaughter and who bears the sin of the multitudes, and also the Paschal Lamb, the symbol of Israel's redemption at the first Passover. Christ's whole life expresses his mission: "to serve and give his life as a ransom for many." (608). The Paschal mystery of Christ cannot remain only in the past, because by his death he destroyed death, and all that Christ is—all that he did and suffered for all—participates in the divine eternity, and so transcends all times while being made present in them all. The event of the Cross and Resurrection abides and draws everything toward life (1085). Also 96, 638, 654, 656, 658

## 4th Sunday of Easter

The Church is a sheepfold, the sole and necessary gateway to which is Christ... the Good Shepherd and Prince of Shepherds, who gave his life for his sheep (754). The Church is the Body of Christ. Through the Spirit and his action in the sacraments, above all the Eucharist, Christ, who once was dead and is now risen, establishes a community of believers as his own Body (805). Every person, through the gift given to him or her, is at once the witness and the living instrument of the mission of the Church itself "according to the measure of Christ's bestowal" (913). Also 71, 782, 810, 866-869, 1591

## 5th Sunday of Easter

In response to the question about the first of the commandments, Jesus says: "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these" (2196). The New Law is the grace of the Holy Spirit received by faith in Christ, operating through charity. It finds expression above all in the Lord's Sermon on the Mount and uses the sacraments to communicate grace to us (1983). Also 96, 2011, 2017

## 6th Sunday of Easter

The Holy Spirit, whom Christ the head pours out in his members, builds, animates and sanctifies the Church. She is the sacrament of the Holy Trinity's communion with people (747). The Spirit manifests the risen Lord to Christ's faithful, recalls his words to them and opens their minds to the understanding of his Death and Resurrection (737). Also 726, 729, 743, 777, 809-10.

## Gospel Theme: We learn to ask for forgiveness.

Nothing is unforgivable, Jesus teaches us in Sunday's Gospel story. In the Gospels of Lent Jesus shows us the quality of God's love. In this parable, Jesus adds the portrait of a forgiving father to last Sunday's portrait of the gardener who wants to fertilize a barren fig tree and give it one more chance to produce figs.

This week *Visions* tells a story of a young man who loses his way and the caring people who help him find a straighter path. The young people will see similarities between the teen in the story and the younger son in this week's Gospel and reflect on their own experiences of needing forgiveness.

## Share Our Life Stories

**Opening Prayer** We all want forgiveness, but are we willing to give forgiveness? Ask the young people to think about someone they will forgive, while praying the *Our Father*.

**Objective:** The young people will recognize their own capacity to forgive.

**Cover Activity: What Can I Forgive?** Read the directions at the top left aloud and give the young people a few minutes to answer. Ask them to share their responses with a partner and discuss responses that are different.

**Objective:** The young people will discuss the lives of runaway youth, the circumstances they run from, how they cope, and dangers they face.

**Story: Second Chances (pages 2-3)** Have the students read this story alone silently, aloud together as a class, or aloud in pairs of weak and strong readers. Discuss *TALK* on page 3. Answers: **1.** Answers could include a broken home life, unsuccessful foster care, hanging out with troublemakers, doing drugs, vandalism, not having anyone to love him. **2.** To be loved, to have people to trust and care for, to be encouraged. **3.** Getting sick showed Robert just how out of control his life had become and how people who cared about him can be positive influences in his life. Call attention to the facts at the bottom of page 3 and have students take turns reading the facts aloud to the class. Encourage sharing among the young people about what surprised them.

## Listen to the Gospel

**Objective:** The young people will identify which character in the story of the forgiving father they most identify with.

**Gospel: Jesus Tells About a Forgiving Father (page 4)** Young people may know this Gospel as the Parable of the Prodigal Son. But this story is about more than a younger son's turnaround and a father's mercy. It's about the elder son's hard-hearted righteousness, too. Jesus alerts us that this parable is about three people by saying, "There was a man who had two sons." Have six volunteers take the parts of Narrator, Jesus, Younger Son, Father, Older Son, and Servant; divide the remainder of the

class into Pharisees and Teachers. Because this is such a long Gospel, encourage students to act it out in front of the class. Discuss *TALK*. Answers: **1.** The younger son is dissatisfied with his position. He heads out so he can be on his own—do his own thing. **2.** He is penniless and homeless and realizes he has made a bad decision. **3.** Open-ended. Probably, like Robert in the story, he will rely more on his father's wisdom and accept some guidance from him. He will probably work hard to make up for the money he lost and the pain he caused. **4.** The older son feels unappreciated. He resents forgiveness is given so freely to his brother. If he doesn't join the family circle, he will be alienated from them all. **5.** The father loves each son and recognizes what each needs and wants. God loves us each as individuals, too. **6.** Open-ended.

**Objective:** The young people will identify ways the Church celebrates forgiveness in the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Reconciliation.

**Our Catholic Faith: We Seek Forgiveness at Mass (page 5)**

Read this page aloud, pausing at the end of each of the first three sections to make sure students understand how they can ask for and receive forgiveness in each of these ways. Many people celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent. Use the last section of this feature to review the sacrament and to encourage the class to prepare for and receive it.

**Definition: Examination of Conscience (page 5)** Read and discuss this definition as a summary of this feature.

## Build Christian Community

**Objective:** The young people will compare their dreams and desires with those of the characters in Jesus' parable.

**Living the Gospel: A Man Had Two Sons (pages 6-7)** This activity leads the young people through the Gospel parable from the viewpoints of the older son, the younger son, and then from their own perspective. Students will move from a relatively unexamined list of dreams and desires to a thoughtful choice about what is really important in their lives. Have them work individually to complete page 6 and the first box in column one of page 7. Assign partners to reflect on each other's dream; then give time for everyone to complete the last box in column one. Discuss the two large print questions as a group.

**Prayer: Forgiveness Prayer Service (page 7)** Read the introductory paragraphs. Assign one boy and one girl to read the examination of conscience or have all your students read as a "boy" group and "girl" group. Celebrate the prayer service.

**Objective:** The young people will review the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Activity: The Sacrament of Pardon and Peace (page 8)** This activity reviews the steps of the Sacrament of Reconciliation—*Contrition, Confession, Penance, Absolution*.

**Doctrine: Our Forgiving Father Welcomes Us Back (page 8)** Read aloud this summary of the restorative power of forgiveness.

## Gospel Theme: Jesus refuses to condemn.

In the Gospel this Sunday the Teachers of the Law attempt to trap Jesus into defending a woman caught in adultery and therefore into speaking against the Law. The woman is one of the sinners with whom the Teachers think Jesus spends too much time. They are so certain that Jesus is not from God that to get evidence against him they are willing to use a woman, publicly shame her, protect her male partner—who, under Mosaic Law, also deserves stoning—and forget that they themselves are sinners.

Unlike the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus condemns no one in this Gospel. Instead, with his silence and attentive writing on the ground, he creates space for them to see themselves. Jesus encourages the woman to change and grow. Jesus again shows us how loving and forgiving God is.

## Share Our Life Stories

**Opening Prayer** Invite the young people to form a circle, turn so they are facing out, step forward, and sit down. Ask them to focus on a recent experience where they were blamed for something. Why were they blamed? Did they deserve the blame? Did the person(s) forgive them? Did they forgive themselves? Finally, ask if they blame others too quickly. When they are ready have them come back and sit down at their original place in the circle. Pray the *Our Father* together.

**Objective: The young people will examine blame and how it arises.**

**Cover Activity: Blame—What Good Is It?** Ask the young people to describe what's going on in the three photos (catcher arguing with umpire, principal bawling out a student, soldier arguing with civilian). Ask where, how, and by whom they feel blamed, especially in situations that may have started out innocently but ended with someone getting hurt or something bad happening. Discuss words people use to blame others and have students write in the empty balloon a blame word they hear or use.

**Objective: The young people will investigate their relationships with their consciences.**

**Play: Can You Hear Me Now? (pages 2-4)** In this drama, a teenage Jesus visits a young girl named Carla. Through their conversations, Carla starts to question the decisions she has been making. This drama tackles being honest with ourselves and each other, and the role our consciences play in the decisions we make. Ask for six volunteers to read the parts of the characters in the play. If you have an extroverted class, perform it for another group of students. Discuss *TALK. These questions deal with the concept of conscience. Some students will notice that it is Carla who is making herself feel guilty, rather than Jesus. Our consciences cause us to take a closer look at the choices we are making. Jesus is friendly, and unimposing with his opinions, but he is clearly concerned with Carla's wellbeing. Our consciences are similar—they don't tell us what to do, but they make us think about what we're doing.*

## Listen to the Gospel

**Objective: The young people will recognize that Jesus forgives rather than condemns.**

**Gospel: Jesus Refuses To Condemn (page 4)** Choose five volunteers to proclaim the Gospel. Discuss *TALK*. Answers:

1. She has been caught in adultery and they want to trap Jesus into contradicting the Mosaic Law that said she should be stoned.
2. They know that each of them is also a sinner.
3. Jesus expects the woman to recognize her sin and change her ways. Jesus expects Carla to think about the wrong she is doing and make the right decisions.
4. Open-ended.

**Definition: Mercy (page 4)** Ask one of the young people to read the definition aloud. Point out that mercy has aspects of both understanding forgiveness and compassionate help.

**Our Catholic Faith: God Makes a Road (page 5)** Read aloud as a class. Allow time for the students to complete the wordfind.

## Build Christian Community

**Objective: The young people will explore the power of community ritual and recognize elements of personal and ritual prayer.**

**Living the Gospel: How Does Ritual Help Us Pray Together? (pages 6-7)** Read the directions aloud. Then allow time for the students to complete the Birthdays section individually. Assign partners for the Baseball and Eucharist sections.

**Baseball actions:** *standing for the national anthem, seventh-inning stretch, the wave* **Foods:** *peanuts, Cracker Jacks, hot dogs, soda* **Songs:** *"The Star-Spangled Banner," "O, Canada," "Take Me Out to the Ball Game,"* team songs **Stories:** *player stats, team records, historic plays* **Signs:** *team logos, team colors, uniforms, flags;* open-ended. **Eucharist actions:** *standing, kneeling, sitting, shaking hands, Sign of the Cross* **Foods:** *bread and wine* **Songs:** *hymns, parts of the Mass* **Stories:** *Old Testament history, Apostles' letters and stories, Jesus' stories in the Gospels* **Signs:** *bread, wine, altar, book, Sign of the Cross, Easter candle, cross, statues, holy water;* open-ended. Have the young people write their responses to the statement on the bottom of page 7. Discuss responses.

**Christian Leader: Tim Shriver (page 8)** Many people know Tim Shriver as President John F. Kennedy's nephew or as the brother of Maria Shriver, the First Lady of California. What makes him important to *Visions* is his work as head of Special Olympics, carrying on the legacy of his mother, Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Read this page aloud as a class.

**Doctrine: The Gospels of Lent Encourage Us (page 8)** Read aloud this summary of the qualities of God, which Jesus teaches us in the Gospels of Lent.

**ALERT!** At next week's gathering the young people will follow Jesus' example and wash one another's feet. They should plan to wear socks and shoes which they can easily remove.

Page 13 of this guide is a letter to parents encouraging them to bring their children to Holy Week liturgies. Send a copy home with each member of your group.

### Gospel Theme: We celebrate Jesus' passion and death.

Our faith is an Easter faith. We follow Jesus, who died for us and was raised to new life. During Holy Week, which begins this Sunday, we remember the events that founded Christianity. The Church does not obligate us to attend the liturgies on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday; nonetheless, these days celebrate the most important events of Jesus' life—the Last Supper, the crucifixion, and the resurrection—as well as the building up of the Church through the initiation of catechumens and others who have taken part in the RCIA. *Visions* presents activities that involve your young people in one aspect of each Holy Week liturgy at the classroom level in order to ready them for the experience of the parish liturgies.

### Share Our Life Stories

**Opening Prayer** Feet are definitely a theme in this week's Gospel. Ask the young people to think about Jesus walking with them. Invite them to close their eyes and listen as you read the *Footprints Prayer* on page 11 of this guide.

**Objective: The young people will explore the positive and negative ways that Jesus was viewed by his contemporaries.**

**Cover: Who Is Jesus?** Distribute *Visions*. Identify the cover illustration as the map of Jerusalem with the Temple on the hill overlooking the city. Choose a volunteer to read the Gospel words at the top of the page to begin the activity. Point out that Luke is telling what Jesus did the week before he was crucified. Divide the young people into pairs or small groups. Distribute scissors and Bibles. Read the directions and begin the activity. Explain how the axis works. Have one volunteer from each group role play their character for the class.

**Objective: The young people will commit to attending Holy Week services.**

**Palm Sunday (page 2)** Begin the lesson by reading the Palm Sunday feature aloud. Ask the young people to tell their experiences of Palm Sunday and what they do with palms in their homes.

Obtain in advance the times of your parish Holy Week liturgies. Write times of liturgies on the board or newsprint, and have the students copy them in the boxes in their issues on pages 3, 5, and 7. Allow time for them to think of people with whom to attend the liturgies. Decide on one to attend as a class.

### Listen to the Gospel

**Objective: The young people will relate their own lives to the celebration of Jesus' love for us in the Holy Week liturgies.**

**Definition: Passover (page 3)** Read this definition to place the saving events of Holy Week in an Old Testament context.

**Holy Thursday: Jesus Shows Us How to Serve (pages 2-3)** Bring enough pitchers for water, basins, and towels to class so every four to six students share a set. Plastic ice cream buckets work, too. Read aloud the introduction on page 2. Gather chairs in a circle to create a class prayer space. Number off in twos for the foot washing. Assign parts for the Foot Washing Prayer Service. Invite the young people to enter into Jesus' spirit of service as they wash each other's feet. Allow time for them to reflect individually on the experience and respond to the statements on page 3, then invite volunteers to share their impressions.

**Good Friday: We Remember Jesus' Passion and Death (pages 4-5)** Bring enough Bibles so each group can use one. Read aloud the introduction and instructions to the activity. Have the students interpret the photos on pages 4 and 5. Divide the class into four groups. Have each group find and read its scripture passage in the Bible. Encourage the students to imagine the events of Good Friday occurring today and to add modern-day characters. Have each group dramatize its scene using contemporary language. Conclude the activity by celebrating the Good Friday Prayer Service. Some of your students may be experiencing parents' unemployment, illness, or other problems within their families; encourage them to pray for sufferings that are real to them and for people they know who are suffering.

**Holy Saturday: We Celebrate the Easter Vigil (pages 6-7)** The Easter Vigil culminates the Holy Week remembering of Jesus' last days before his death by celebrating his new life with us in his resurrection. The early Christians stayed awake all night before the great feast of Easter. They told the ancient stories of their Jewish tradition. They lit candles so they could see each other. They baptized those who had been preparing during Lent to join the Christian community. Finally, at dawn, they celebrated the Easter Eucharist with the story of the women at the tomb. The young people will need to experience the Easter Vigil to come to love it. These *Visions* pages summarize in photos the parts of the liturgy.

### Build Christian Community

**Objective: The young people will enrich their understanding of palms through a braiding activity.**

**Keeping Palms Is a Catholic Custom (page 8)** Obtain palm leaves from your parish office in advance. Distribute one to each of the young people. Read the Palm Blessing aloud as a group or have one strong reader read to the class. Read the directions aloud and begin the activity. Have an example of each type of braid ready for a visual aid.

**Closing Prayer** Gather in a prayer circle. Make this prayer personal by commending your young people individually for a way they tried during Lent to deepen their Christian commitment. Close with a blessing on them for Holy Week.

## Gospel Theme: Jesus is risen.

Easter Sunday celebrates Jesus' resurrection from the dead. This is the core of Christian faith: that God raised Jesus, who was crucified, from the dead. The promise of Jesus is that all who believe in him will be raised up to new life with God as he has been.

The act of raising Jesus from the dead reveals most ultimately who God is—the one who gives life. By accepting death Jesus reveals that God's power is not magic or military. The power that gives life, as Jesus reveals it, is love, especially its concrete forms such as forgiving, serving others, sharing. *Visions* features the story of a boy who is present when his grandmother dies and who comes to understand that her presence will always be with him.

Use this *Visions* for two Sundays. Consider devoting one class period to sharing the story and to preparing and acting out the Gospels, which appear on pages 4-5. In the second class period, review both the story and the Gospels, and then focus on the *Building Christian Community* feature of this lesson.

## Share Our Life Stories

**Objective:** The young people will celebrate the resurrection of Christ in song.

**Opening Prayer** Gather the young people into the prayer space and distribute *Visions*. Remind them that singing is a beautiful form of prayer. If you are nervous about leading the song on the cover, play a recording of the song or ask a music minister to lead the class. Invite the young people to sing along.

Ask what seems to be the most important word. *Alleluia* is repeated four times. *Alleluia* is a Hebrew word which means *Praise God*. It is a shout of joy heard especially at Easter and usually sung.

**Objective:** The young people will explore the experience of losing a loved one.

**Story: Love, Gram (pages 2-3)** Read this story aloud together. Discuss *TALK* questions on page 3. Answers: **1.** *Even though the family knew Gram was prepared for death, the decision was still difficult because her family will miss her. David learns that memories and mementos will help keep her spirit alive with her family always.* **2.** *Mary represents mothers, watching over their children and grandchildren. Open-ended.* **3.** *We believe that we as Jesus' followers will also have eternal life with him. Jesus destroyed death so that it does not have a permanent hold over us.*

## Listen to the Gospel

**Objective:** The young people will experience the resurrection of Christ through role-play of the Gospel readings.

**Gospel: Jesus Is Risen (pages 4-5)** This long Gospel is actually three Gospels: the Easter morning Gospel, the Gospel

for the second Sunday of Easter, and the Gospel about Mary Magdalene that John includes between them. Choose six strong readers to proclaim the individual parts, and assign the rest of the class to be Angels and Other Disciples. Discuss *TALK*. Answers: **1.** *They see the stone moved away and wrappings used to cover Jesus' body. They think someone has taken Jesus away.* **2.** *The cloth that covered Jesus' head; that Jesus has risen from the dead.* **3.** *At first Thomas does not believe Jesus rose from the dead; he needs to touch Jesus' wounds to believe.*

**Objective:** The young people will appreciate Mary Magdalene as one of Jesus' apostles.

**Our Catholic Faith: Mary Magdalene Is an Apostle, Not a Prostitute (page 5)** Before having students read aloud this page, you may want to survey them on their images and attitudes about Mary Magdalene. After reading this feature, ask them if their images of Mary have changed and why. Encourage the young people to illustrate the four comic strip spaces at the top of pages 4 and 5 in class or as homework.

## Build Christian Community

**Objective:** The young people will understand how faith works in their lives and what kind of believers they are.

**Living the Gospel: Explore Your Easter Faith Identity (pages 6-7)** This activity challenges young people to identify which believer in John's Gospel they are most like. Read aloud the four descriptions of believers. Next, have the young people work independently to complete the Easter Faith Identity Test on page 7, which should be a fun, not exact, way to look at how each believes. When all are finished, read aloud the directions in the far right column of page 7 and have students chart their answers. Encourage the class to share with each other the description of their faith and their answers to the two questions. *The Amazed Seer is like the beloved disciple; the Hearing, Feeling Friend is like Mary Magdalene; the Community Member is like Peter and the others; and the Questioner is like Thomas.* Be sure to explain that most people's faith identity shifts among these types throughout life. Each identity is a faith identity. Each is faith seeking greater faith.

**Easter Eggs Symbolize Life (page 8)** Read the introduction and directions aloud. Ask if any of the students have Ukrainian ancestry; if so, ask them to talk about their tradition of decorating eggs. Encourage students to use the symbols to decorate the egg space provided or eggs at home.

**Doctrine: Jesus Gives Us Joy (page 8)** Read this feature aloud as a summary of the Easter message: Jesus' resurrection brings us life.

**Definition: Resurrection (page 5)** Read this definition; have the young people share a litany of all the new life they see around them—newly baptized Christians, green grass and buds, programs to help the poor. After each "new life" item is mentioned have all respond, "Thank you, loving God."

## Gospel Theme: The risen Jesus calls us to new life.

Jesus lives on in the nourishing Eucharistic bread that is his body. Jesus lives in the word of the Gospel. Jesus lives in our prayer together. Jesus lives in the way each of us acts on his Gospel teachings to spread the good news of his death and resurrection. The Gospels after Easter proclaim Jesus' risen presence among us and help us recognize him.

During the Easter season the Sunday first readings come from the Acts of the Apostles, the biblical sequel to Luke's Gospel. Acts tells about the growth of the early Church during the 30 years after Jesus' resurrection. Some have called Acts the "Gospel of the Spirit," because it presents the activity of the Holy Spirit establishing and sustaining the Church and inspiring it to spread the good news.

## Share Our Life Stories

**Opening Prayer** Gather in a prayer circle. Since this lesson is about handing on legacies and traditions, start by recognizing what has been handed down. Ask the young people to share a trait or tradition they have inherited from someone in their family or another important adult in their life. Examples are, "I got my red hair and freckles from my grandma," or "I learned the art of fly-fishing from my Uncle Dave." After each person shares, the group responds, "We are grateful for the gifts we receive."

**Objective: The young people will explore legacies left by people who have died yet still impact the world.**

**Cover Activity** Look over the names on the cover. *They are famous people no longer living, whose work lives on after their deaths.* Read the names aloud and ask the young people what comes to mind about each of them and what lives on because of them. Ask them to identify the ways stories about these people have been passed on to them.

**Objective: The young people will appreciate the birth of the Church as their own history.**

**Play: Back to the Beginning With Dr. Time, the Reference Robot (pages 2-4)** Have the students read the photo cutlines and the cast of characters beneath the title to speculate what the play is about. Assign parts and allow a few minutes to skim parts silently to get acquainted with the story and action. Encourage the students to dramatize their parts with expression and movement. Give the following background after you have read through the play once.

Acts 2 describes Pentecost as the day the Church began. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus' followers, and Peter started to preach. Peter and Jesus' other followers began to travel to cities and preach Jesus' good news and make converts. The Jews believed in one God, thought Paul's teaching about Jesus and the Spirit dishonored God, and accused Paul of blasphemy. Greeks were used to hearing about new gods. Peter intended to preach only to the Jews, but Cornelius's faith showed him God accepts people of every nation (Acts 10.24-48). Discuss *TALK* on page 3.

Answers: **1.** *Open-ended, but may include Paul's travels and rejections, the preaching of the apostles, the decision to allow Gentiles (non-Jews) to become Christian without first converting to Judaism.* **2.** *Open-ended.* **3.** *Open-ended.*

**Definition: Epistle (page 5)** Have the students find and read this definition as a summary of the early Christians' ministry.

## Listen to the Gospel

**Objective: The young people will identify ways we remember Jesus.**

**Gospel: Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples (page 4)** Have eight students take the parts of Narrators 1 and 2, Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and Jesus. Assign two more as Other Apostles. Have them proclaim the Gospel. Discuss *TALK*. Answers: **1.** *John was present when Jesus did this before (see 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Gospel) and recognizes Jesus as source of the miracle.* **2.** *Through the miracle of the catch and the meal he feeds them; ask the young people to recall other meals Jesus shared with his friends, such as the multiplication of the loaves, the Last Supper, the Emmaus supper.* **3.** *His words, "Come and eat," and how he breaks and shares the bread.*

**Our Catholic Faith: Jesus Is the Lamb of God (page 5)** Have the young people read this background information on the meaning of calling Jesus the Lamb of God. The second reading for Sunday, Revelation 5.11-14, describes Jesus as the Lamb. If time permits, distribute Bibles and proclaim this reading as a class. Allow the students time to decode the message at the bottom of the page or assign it as homework. The code substitutes numbers for the consonants of the alphabet in sequence—B is 1, C is 2, etc.

## Build Christian Community

**Objective: The young people will plan ways to proclaim the good news of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.**

**Living the Gospel: Good News Mission to Star QS289P (pages 6-7)** This activity asks the students to project into the future the Church's Easter mission of spreading the good news of Jesus' resurrection. Read aloud the introduction and directions that begin at top left. Make certain the task in each of the four activities is clear. Brainstorm ideas for people to include among the New Twelve and for ideas about the Star System QS289P Creatures. Have the students complete the four activities in groups of three or four and present to the class what their group will do to pass on Jesus' message when it gets to Star QS289P.

**Attitudes: Besides Jesus, what character from the Bible do you relate to most? Why? (page 8)** Have your group respond to the question on their own; then compare their responses with those on page 8.

**Doctrine: We Meet the Risen Lord Jesus (page 7)** Read this summary of Sunday's Gospel concept.













## Dear Parents,

The liturgies of **Holy Week** have more for children to see and hear than any other liturgies of the year. In religion class children learn with other children. At liturgies the whole Church gathers—young and old. We see and witness others' faith. Watching other Christians worship tells children how adults value and express their faith.

Children learn concretely. Concrete symbols fill the Holy Week liturgies and make them memorable for young people. **On Holy Thursday the priest, and in some parishes the people, wash each others' feet just as Jesus washed his friends' feet—a concrete act of service.**

**On Good Friday we hear the long story of Jesus' passion and venerate the cross by touching or kissing it.** Some parishes have outdoor stations of the cross. We kneel again and again to pray for the people of the world and their needs on this day when Jesus gave his lifeblood for us.

**On Holy Saturday the liturgy begins with the new fire kindled in the dark of night to symbolize the resurrection.** Everyone processes into church in darkness and lights a candle from the new Easter Candle. The church fills with light. We hear Scripture stories that remind us of all God has done for us from the creation of the world until now. We baptize the catechumens into Jesus' new life. The priest sprinkles the whole community with newly blessed Easter water. The newly baptized put on white robes to be confirmed and receive first Holy Communion. Some of them may be children. The smell of Easter lilies fills the church. Alleluias fill the songs.

The *Pflaum Gospel Weeklies* have prepared your child to celebrate Holy Week. When you take part in these liturgies with them, you share with them your Easter faith and experience together the mystery of God's life-giving love for us. **Happy Easter!**





# How Earth-Friendly Are You?

On Earth Day (April 22) people all over the planet dedicate themselves to become more Earth-friendly. How Earth-friendly are you? Answer the following questions by checking Yes or No. Then write in your score for each answer in the column on the right. Finally, add the scores together for your total.

1. Do you recycle aluminum?  
 **YES** *Add 10 points.*       **NO** *Subtract 10 points.*
2. Did someone drive you someplace that was fewer than three blocks away during the last week?  
 **YES** *Subtract 10 points.*       **NO**
3. Do you recycle cardboard, newspaper, and/or computer paper?  
 **YES** *Add 5 points.*       **NO** *Subtract 5 points.*
4. Do you use both sides of a sheet of paper before discarding it?  
 **YES** *Add 5 points.*       **NO**
5. Did you buy a product in a foam container during the past week?  
 **YES** *Subtract 5 points.*       **NO** *Add 5 points.*
6. In the past week, did you turn off lights, TV, CD players, stereos, or radios in an empty room?  
 **YES** *Add 10 points.*       **NO** *Subtract 10 points.*
7. Do you recycle glass and/or plastics?  
 **YES** *Add 10 points.*       **NO** *Subtract 5 points.*
8. Have you planted a tree or shrub in the past 2 years?  
 **YES** *Add 5 points.*       **NO**
9. Have you volunteered to help out at a recycling drive, litter pick-up, or other environmental concern in the last year?  
 **YES** *Add 10 points.*       **NO**
10. Have you visited a nature area—park, river, trail, prairie, etc.—in the past year?  
 **YES** *Add 5 points.*       **NO**
11. Do you make an effort to buy products that come in packaging made from recycled materials?  
 **YES** *Add 5 points.*       **NO**
12. Do you use fluorescent bulbs to save electricity?  
 **YES** *Add 5 points.*       **NO**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____

**Check your score**

- 40 points or higher: You are definitely Earth-friendly.
- 39-30 points: You are aware and caring for Earth.
- 29-20 points: You need to give more thought and effort toward caring for Earth.
- Below 20 points: You are part of the problem.

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ Points

# How Am I Doing?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## A. Multiple Choice Questions

Circle the letters beside all the correct answers.

- The Acts of the Apostles follows the journeys of
  - Peter.
  - Paul.
  - Andrew.
  - Matthew.
- When we reflect on our life and the choices we make, it is called:
  - daydreaming.
  - an examination of conscience.
  - prophesizing.
  - wishful thinking.
- What did Jesus say to those who wanted to stone the woman caught committing adultery?
  - Forgive and forget.
  - You shall not kill.
  - Let the person without sin throw the first stone.
  - Love your enemies.
- Which Old Testament prophet sees God making a road home for us?
  - Jeremiah.
  - Ezekiel.
  - Micah.
  - Isaiah.
- On what day of Holy Week do we wash one another's feet?
  - Holy Thursday.
  - Palm Sunday.
  - Good Friday.
  - Holy Saturday.
- Which sacraments do we celebrate at the Easter Vigil?
  - Confirmation.
  - Reconciliation.
  - Eucharist.
  - Baptism.
- Fill in the blank: Mary Magdalene is \_\_\_\_\_, not a prostitute.
  - a shepherd.
  - a prophet.
  - an apostle.
  - a magician.
- What did the risen Jesus ask Peter to do after fishing all night and catching nothing?
  - Go to the market to buy some fish.
  - Lower your nets on the other side of the boat.
  - Get better bait.
  - Give up.
- What sacrament seals us with the Holy Spirit?
  - Confirmation.
  - Baptism.
  - Holy Orders.
  - Marriage.

## B. Vocabulary Words

Match the following vocabulary words from your *Visions* lessons with their definitions.

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Holy Spirit               | a. A message or letter.   |
| 2. Examination of Conscience | b. Reviewing actions we have done and praying for ways to grow and change.          |
| 3. Mercy                     | c. A fixed way of thinking about a person or group.                                 |
| 4. Passover                  | d. The Jewish feast that remembers God saving the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. |
| 5. Resurrection              | e. An act of compassion or forgiveness to someone.                                  |
| 6. Epistle                   | f. A leader who acts as a shepherd.   |
| 7. Pastor                    | g. God raising Jesus from death.  |
| 8. Stereotype                | h. The third person of the Trinity.   |

## C. Write or Talk

1. What is an important ritual in your family life? Tell about it.

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2. What is one new way you have learned to recognize and alleviate the suffering of another?

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