

LESSON PLAN



Called by the Holy Spirit

OBJECTIVES

Help teens:

- understand the importance of belonging to the community of believers
- explore the responsibilities that are part of belonging to that community
- learn more about the Sacraments of Initiation
- become familiar with the RCIA process, and learn how candidates for Confirmation are taking similar steps
- view Church as a community that is calling candidates to deeper commitment and involvement

KEY IDEAS

- The Church celebrates three Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.
- Baptism is birth into the new life of Christ; Confirmation strengthens that life; and Eucharist nourishes Catholics so they can be transformed in Christ.
- Jesus established the Church as the way for everyone to be saved from sin and death.
- Jesus now lives and acts through the Church and the sacraments.
- As members of the Church, we are called to contribute to building up the Church and to bringing about the Kingdom of God.

Gifted with the Spirit

Confirmation

Called by the Holy Spirit

Confirmation calls you to a deeper commitment and involvement in the Church.

INSIGHTS

Confirmation: A Sacrament of Initiation

There are seven sacraments. Two are Sacraments of Healing. They are the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and the Sacrament of Penance, often referred to as Reconciliation. Two are Sacraments at the Service of Communion: Holy Orders and Matrimony.

There are three Sacraments of Initiation, and that is our focus here. The Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. In the early Church, these three sacraments were celebrated together as one. A person being initiated into the community would be baptized, confirmed, and receive the Eucharist—all in the same service. You may have seen adults initiated into the Church at the Easter Vigil in this same way.

Over the years of Church history and because of a number of complex reasons, the Sacraments of Initiation began to be celebrated at different times in an individual's life. The Sacraments of Initiation remain Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. An adult who is initiated will receive all three, in that order. An eighth grader may have been baptized as an infant, received the Eucharist in the second grade, and be preparing for Confir-

mation in the eighth grade. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains the importance of all three sacraments.

Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the “sacraments of Christian initiation,” whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For “by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1285

Preparation for Confirmation

Those who prepare young people for the Sacrament of Confirmation often feel an unspoken pressure. They know that, for many, Confirmation preparation marks the end of formal religious education. They feel the burden of making sure a candidate knows all there is to know. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* gives clear instruction on preparation for the sacrament.

Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit...in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands.

CCC, 1309

Candidate Unit 1 will develop the idea of what it means to belong. As catechists, we are striving to awaken within the Confirmation candidates entrusted to us a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ. With God’s grace, and through our actions, may these young people grow in more intimate union with Christ.



All: Lord, we are being called to grow in our faith, to accept new challenges and responsibilities. Sometimes this is exciting. Sometimes this seems frightening and confusing.

Reader 1: When the Apostles were asked to witness to Jesus’ Resurrection, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit to help them. (Reads Acts 2:1-4)

Reader 2: The Jews who saw the effects of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles were amazed. Peter promised them that they, too, could receive the gift of the Spirit. (Reads Acts 2:38)

All: Lord, we received the Holy Spirit at Baptism, and now this gift will be strengthened in Confirmation. Help us to remember that the Spirit is always with us. We thank you for the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Amen

Catholic

The Responsibilities of Belonging

Pam Schroeder, a talented young actor, tried out for the role of Aunt Abby in her middle school’s production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. She competed with eight other girls for the part. Each was asked to read two of Aunt Abby’s

Name of Group	No. of Persons Involved	How I Joined This Group	Why

2

Unit 1

Planning Unit 1

The Catechist Edition of *Confirmation: Gifted with the Spirit* offers a rich variety of strategies for effectively presenting the themes of the lessons. Catechists are able to choose approaches first to capture and hold their students’ attention and then to focus on abilities and interests that surface within their groups.

The ten steps that follow provide approximately 90 minutes of activities to present the themes of Unit 1.

For a **60-minute** session complete

- Step 1
- Step 4
- Step 5
- Step 7
- Step 8
- Step 9
- Step 10

For a **90-minute** session add

- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 6

For a longer session add

- **God’s Word** on page 8 of Candidate Unit 1.

Tradition

speeches. Then they all waited anxiously to see who would get the part.

The next day Pam was surprised and thrilled to find that she had made the cast. At the bottom of the cast list was this message for all who had gotten roles:

*Please pick up your playbook today.
Rehearsals begin on Wednesday
at 3:15 pm in Room 121.
Please read through the first act
and be ready to start on time!*



Pam was excited to be part of the cast of the play. But she knew that being chosen for the role she wanted was only the beginning. Playing Aunt Abby would mean hours of memorizing lines and would include the tense moments that come with performing for an audience.



1 Write down information about groups that you are part of. Don't forget your family!



I Joined This Group

What the Group Offers Me

What the Group Asks of Me

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Candy Game

If a teen chose... You ask...

Baby Ruth..... What is your favorite movie of all time? Why?

3 Musketeers..... Who has taught you a valuable life lesson, and what was it?

Kit Kat..... What was the best gift you ever received or the best vacation you ever took? Why?

Pay Day..... If you could spend a day with any living human being, who would it be? Why?

Snickers..... If you could take your dream trip, where would you go? Why?

Hershey's Kisses..... What is your most embarrassing moment that is appropriate to tell and isn't too personal?

Butterfingers..... Where is your favorite spot to go to think or to be alone?

PROCEDURE

Step 1 (5 minutes)

Before young people arrive, create a prayer space. If possible, place a small table in a quiet area. There should be enough space to allow all participants to gather comfortably around the table. Preparation of the table can be as elaborate or as simple as you want. You may want to add an attractive table covering and flowers or a plant, but at the minimum, you'll want a candle and Bible on the table. Light the candle in the prayer space to signal the beginning of prayer.

Begin this first session with the **Call to Prayer**. Have the appropriate Scripture passages marked in the Bible for the readers. Ask for volunteers to be Reader 1 and Reader 2. If possible, allow the readers time to prepare their readings ahead of time.

Step 2 (10 minutes)

Depending on the size of your group, this activity may be done in the large group or in small groups, with a leader or facilitator for each group.

Use the Candy Game as an icebreaker. Have a bowl filled with different kinds of candy bars. Ask each teen to choose a favorite kind of candy bar. Each candy bar will represent a different question. When everyone has chosen, ask the appropriate questions. Each question may be asked more than once. Ask teens to pay attention to the answers that are given.

After each teen has had an opportunity to answer a question, help teens to get to know one another by asking questions of the group. For example, ask: Whose favorite movie was _____? Fill in the blank with one of the movies that was given as an answer. See who remembers who said this movie was his or her favorite. Or ask: What was _____'s favorite place to go to think? Fill in the blank with the name of one of the participants. Again, test everyone's memory.

This activity will enable every member of the group—those who have been together for a long time, as well as those who have only come together for Confirmation preparation—to get to know one another better. After the activity, tell teens:

Over the next few weeks, we will find ways to get to know one another better. As we do, we hope to get to know Jesus better, too.

Step 3 (5 minutes)

Ask students how they think Jesus would have answered these questions.

- Who taught you a valuable life lesson, and what was it?
- Where is your favorite spot to go to think or to be alone?

Step 4 (10 minutes)

Ask students to fill in the chart in **Activity 1**. (See pages 14-15.) When everyone has had a chance to finish, have students read Pam's story in "The Responsibilities of Belonging." (See pages 14-15.) Ask students how they think Pam would answer the questions in the chart.

Step 5 (10 minutes)

Have teens read the first two paragraphs of the text under the heading, "The Sacraments of Initiation." Then summarize the rest of the text on this page to give students a sense of how these sacraments have been celebrated over the years.

Using the text at the top of page 5, point out the process that adults participate in to become members of the Church.

Step 6 (15 minutes)

Invite an adult who has recently come into the Church to share his or her faith journey with the group. Encourage the person to share his/her story as freely as is appropriate. Be sure to allow time for teens to ask questions.



Catholic Tradition

The Sacraments of Initiation

In Baptism, we become members of the Church. But Baptism is only a beginning. Our faith must grow after Baptism.

The Catholic Church celebrates three Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. These three sacraments are signs and celebrations of a Catholic's membership in the Church. Baptism is birth into new life in Christ. Confirmation strengthens that life, and the Eucharist nourishes Catholics with Christ's Body and Blood so they can be transformed in Christ.



In the early years of the Church, all three sacraments were celebrated at the same time—at

the end of a process of initiation that could take years. People who wanted to join the Church were called *catechumens*. Members of the Church served as sponsors for the catechumens, helping them to learn about the life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus.

The catechumens learned how Jesus continued to be present in the community of his followers—the Church. They learned how members of the Church receive and share the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and they participated in serving the Church's needs. At various stages in this process of initiation, the catechumens were interviewed to see whether they were making progress in learning and living the Christian way of life.

Finally, after sundown on Holy Saturday, the catechumens were baptized at the Easter Vigil. As a symbol of their dying with Christ in Baptism, they walked down into a pool and were immersed in the water. As a sign of the new life in the risen Christ that they received in Baptism, they were dressed in new white garments when they walked out of the pool. As a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives and as a symbol of their mission to bring God's love and life to others, they were anointed with oil. They continued their initiation by participating in the Lord's Supper for the first time. In sharing the Body and Blood of Christ, they celebrated their unity and oneness with the whole Church.

These three separate sacraments—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist—were all celebrated together to initiate the catechumens into full membership in the Church. In the Eastern Catholic Church, Confirmation is still administered right after Baptism and both are followed by participation in Holy Communion. This shows the unity of the three sacraments.

Slowly, over many years, these sacraments became separate celebrations. Today, most Catholics are baptized as infants. They may receive First Eucharist and celebrate Confirmation when they have reached the age of reason. But the *catechumenate*, the process of initiation for adults who wish to become members of the Church, has been restored. This renewed celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation is known as the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).

In one important way, your preparation for Confirmation will be different than that of most RCIA candidates—you have already received the gift of God's life in Baptism. But as you prepare to receive the strengthening of that gift in Confirmation, you will take steps similar to the stages of the process that RCIA candidates experience.

● Inquiry

As you begin, you'll want to ask questions about what it means to be a member of the Church. You'll want to hear the stories of adult members of the Church, and you'll want to know that other members of the Church are supporting you as you prepare for Confirmation.

● Catechumenate

You'll still be asking your own questions, but you'll also be receiving formal instruction to prepare you to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The goal will be to help you recognize the presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in your life, in the Church, and in the world.

● Enlightenment

Prayer—both private and communal—reflection, and other experiences of community will be important during this stage. You may be asked to participate in

a retreat, and you will certainly be asked to use your gifts in service to the community.

● Initiation

This is the actual celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation with the community. For those involved in RCIA, this celebration will take place at the Easter Vigil. For you and other candidates in your group, the celebration will occur when you receive Confirmation.

● Mystagogia

This Greek term implies a continuing of a journey. With the grace of Baptism and Confirmation, you will be ready to continue your lifelong journey in faith. You will be ready to grow ever more aware of the presence and power of Jesus in your life and to become ever more completely a part of the life of the Church. With all the baptized, you have been called to strive for holiness and become saints.

What is grace?

Grace is a gift from God that makes us holy and allows us to respond to his call to become his adopted children. Sanctifying grace, a share in God's own life, is received in Baptism. But grace also includes the help God gives us to live in keeping with his call.

Belonging to the Church

In some ways, belonging to the Church is similar to belonging to other groups or organizations. But in important ways, belonging to the Church is very different because the Church is much more than any other human community. We can see this in one of the names the Church is given—the People of God.

Because he loves us, God wants us to be with him. But our sin stood in the way. So God sent his Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins. By freely accepting suffering and death on the Cross and then rising from the dead, Jesus redeemed us from our sins and made new and eternal life available to us. Through Jesus, we receive a share in God's life—grace. Through grace, the free and undeserved gift of God, we become his adopted children. Jesus tells us we can call God our Father.

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Step 7 (10 minutes)

To help students come to an understanding of what it means to belong to the Church, have them consider several names of the Church.

Ask them to form groups of 3 or 4. Assign each group one of the following questions, and provide copies of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for each group.

- Why is the Church called the People of God?
- Why is the Church called the Body of Christ?
- What is the Kingdom of God? (Think of the words of the Our Father for clues.)

Direct groups discussing the first question to paragraphs 802-804 of the *Catechism*. Groups discussing the second question can find help in paragraphs 805-807. Have the group discussing the third question read paragraphs 541 and 543-546.

After about 5 minutes, ask each group to report to the large group. Note the groups' answers under the headings "People of God," "Body of Christ," and "Kingdom of God" on the chalkboard or on newsprint.

Then point out that each of these terms tells us about what Jesus wants the Church to be and to do. Ask teens to find examples in the text under the heading "Belonging to the Church." (See pages 17 and 18.)

Resources

Reading for the Leader

Ciernick, Bernard and Louis Santiago, *The All-Purpose Hands-On Confirmation Director's Manual*, Pflaum Publishing Group, Dayton, OH 45439 (800-543-4383) pflaum.com (Provides background theory, theology, and history, plus parent and sponsor meeting plans, detailed designs for candidate retreats, 30 reproducible handouts: letters, flyers, registrations forms, prayers, activities, evaluation forms, and more. Comes with a CD that contains downloadable files for the handouts and forms.)

Music

This section will suggest songs to complement prayer for each unit.
"I Am the Vine," from the CD *I Will Not Sing Alone*. GIA Publications (800-442-1358)

"Lead Me, Guide Me," from the CD *Lead Me, Guide Me*, Volume 1. GIA

"We Are God's Work of Art," from the CD *Wondrous Love*. GIA

Reading for Teens

FAQs About Confirmation: What You Want to Know. Pflaum Publishing Group (Answers Confirmation candidates' most commonly asked questions. Helps sponsors and parents understand their roles as the candidates' spiritual mentors. Journaling pages assist the candidate's decision-making process.)

Catholic Tradition

Jesus' Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension is called the Paschal, or Easter, Mystery. The Paschal Mystery is at the heart of the Good News that Jesus brought to the world. After his Death and Resurrection, when he returned to his Father, Jesus gave his Apostles the responsibility to spread the Good News of salvation to all people. He told them, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). The Apostles became the foundation of the Church, whose mission is to spread the Good News through all generations.

Jesus established the Church as the way for everyone to be saved from sin and death. The Church is the beginning of the Kingdom of God that we hear about in the Gospels. It is the Church's work to continue Jesus' mission to the end of time, when Jesus will come again in glory and the Kingdom of God will be fulfilled.

Jesus knew that after he ascended to heaven, the Apostles would need help in accomplishing their mission. So he sent the Holy Spirit to strengthen the Apostles. We see the powerful results in the story of Pentecost. When the Holy Spirit came to the Apostles, they were changed from disheartened followers of the crucified Jesus to courageous witnesses to Jesus' Resurrection.

To keep the Apostles and the members of the growing Church connected to the Paschal Mystery, Jesus established the sacraments as "efficacious signs of grace" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 1131.) This means that the sacraments are signs of grace that actually bring us grace when we celebrate them as our Lord intended. The central, or most important, sacrament is the Eucharist, which Jesus instituted at the Last Supper. In the Eucharist, the Church joins in and celebrates the Paschal Sacrifice of Christ, and Catholics receive strength from the nourishment of the Body and Blood of Christ. All the sacraments have been entrusted to the Church as her work.

Through the action of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the Church and the sacraments, God's life, or grace, is continually available to us. The grace of the sacraments can have powerful results. Through

grace, we become adopted children of God. And also through grace, we are able to respond to God's gift to us—to live as God wants us to, in a way that will lead to our eventually being with him forever.

Jesus Christ now lives and acts through the Church and the sacraments. Through the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's action in the sacraments, Jesus Christ has established the members of the Church as his own Body. As members of the Church, the Body of Christ, we are called to contribute to building up the Church, to bringing about the Kingdom of God—a Kingdom of justice, peace, and love.

The Church also received from Jesus Christ a command to spread the Good News of salvation to all the nations. All members of the Church strive to support that missionary effort. Through the Church and the sacraments, we receive the grace that we need to work toward this goal. The Holy Spirit continually builds and strengthens the Church as she moves toward the fullness of the Kingdom that will come at the end of time, when God has conquered all evil and when Christ will come in glory.

"We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church."

This statement from the Nicene Creed describes the marks, or attributes, of the Church.

- The Church is *one* because of her source and founder, the one God, and because of the Church's own unity.
- The Church is *holy* because Christ sanctifies the Church.
- The word *catholic* means universal. Christ has sent the Church on a mission to the whole human race.
- The Church is called *apostolic* because she was founded on the Apostles and because the authority of the Apostles continues today and into the future through all the bishops, especially the pope, who is the successor of Peter.

6

Unit 1

Video

The Lion King, Buena Vista Pictures
Use the video *The Lion King* to illustrate how important the process of initiation is to the community. Show the segment of the film in which Simba is presented to the community. Before showing the video, point out that what teens will be seeing is much like what happens in Baptism, when we are introduced to the community as we begin the process of initiation. Each of us is anointed "priest, prophet, and king." These roles, as does the role of Simba, come with responsibilities.

Allow time after the video for teens to discuss how what they have seen

compares with their experiences of Baptism. End by pointing out that during their preparation for Confirmation, teens will be learning more about the connection between Baptism and Confirmation and about their responsibilities to their faith community.

Web Site

www.disciplesnow.com
This is the Web site of Disciples Now, a Web-based ministry to young people. The site features information on the Catholic faith—the lives of saints, Church teaching, Scripture, as well as reviews of contemporary films and music.



Work as a large group to answer these questions and learn about the Church. If you need help, refer to the paragraphs of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that are listed.

Appoint someone to record your answers and ideas on the chalkboard or on newsprint.

Members

Who is called to join the Church? (CCC, 781)

Purpose

What does the Church want to accomplish? (CCC, 737 and 824)

Slogan

Write the Church's purpose in the form of a slogan that members can easily remember.

Leadership

Who are the leaders of the Church? (CCC, 935-939)

How are these leaders selected? (CCC, 1577, 1579)

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Meetings

When do the members of the Church meet? (CCC, 1167)

Members' Responsibilities

What are members of the Church asked to do? (CCC, 2041-2043)

Logo

Design a logo that will represent the purpose and work of the Church.

Step 10 (10 minutes)

Close with the **Recall to Prayer**.

Before beginning prayer, ask: What should we ask God for? By answering this question, teens will be creating personal intercessions. Write down teens' answers as they are given. Teens may, for example, want to pray that we will know what others need, that we will become better disciples, that God will provide what the Church needs throughout the world, and that God will provide what our parish needs.

Ask a teen or teens to read the intercessions the group has created where the prayer service allows for teens to add their personal intentions.



Being a follower of Jesus and a member of his Church means learning to live as Jesus did. In the Gospels, Jesus explains how to do this.

Read **Matthew 25:31-40**.

Discuss these and any questions of your own with your group and your catechist.

- Who do you think the King is?
- Who is the King's Father?
- What does it mean to "inherit the kingdom"?
- Who does Jesus say will be blessed? Why?
- What do you think "the least of these" means?
- Who are the members of the King's family?



- Name individuals or groups you know who are working to help others.
- What can you do to help?

Work with a partner to answer these questions. If you need help, begin by talking to your parents, teachers, or members of your parish's human concerns committee. Check your local telephone directory for listings of social service organizations. Then prepare a report on the work of one person or one group. Be ready to present your report at the next meeting of your Confirmation group. Remember that a helpful report will provide answers to:

Who?	Where?
What?	How?
Why?	When?



Leader: God, our loving Father, as we prepare to become fully initiated members of the Church, we pray for your help.

Reader 1: Reads *Ephesians 3:14-19*

Reader 2: That we may feel the support and comfort of your great love for us,

All: We pray to the Lord.

Reader 3: That we may grow to be more aware of the presence of your Spirit in our lives,

All: We pray to the Lord.

Reader 4: That we may follow Jesus as our model,

All: We pray to the Lord.

Reader 5: That we may make a sincere commitment to grow in our faith,

All: We pray to the Lord.

Reader 6: That we may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit,

All: We pray to the Lord.

Add your personal intentions at this point. Repeat the same response for each intention.

Reader 7: Reads *Ephesians 3:20-21*

Imprimatur: †Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan, Archbishop of Milwaukee, May 17, 2005

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ISBN 978-1-935042-11-2
T2910

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Unit 1



Confirmation

Gifted with the Spirit

Handout 1—Modern Beatitudes

Blessed is (are)...	Who...	May...
John	volunteers at a soup kitchen	he never be hungry for another's love
Maria	is a nurse for those who are terminally ill	she be filled with hope
Firefighters	who go into dangerous situations to save strangers	they know a peace and joy that fire cannot destroy
Peaceworkers		
Musicians		
Priests		
Teachers		

Sample Handout from Unit 2



Confirmation

Gifted with the Spirit

Handout 10—Great Moments in Scripture

<p>Wisdom is not the same as having information and facts. Wisdom gives us the ability to think deeply about a situation or problem and to make the best decision from the information that we have. Wisdom helps us to see with the Holy Spirit's eyes. That vision helps us discover God's will so that we will make the decision that will be best for everyone.</p>	<p>Luke 12:16-26, the parable of the rich fool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This man thinks he is wise. What does he do to show that he is a fool?• How does Jesus show us what it means to be truly wise?• Who do you know, or know of, who is a truly wise person? In your opinion, why is this person wise?
<p>Understanding helps us open our ears, minds, hearts, and hands to the people around us. The gift of understanding helps us become aware of what we can do to help others.</p>	<p>1 King 3:5-13, Solomon's prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If God appeared to you tonight in a dream, what would you ask for?• Solomon asked for understanding—an important gift for a leader at any level—a coach, teacher, or parent. Give examples of times in which you have experienced the understanding of a leader.
<p>Right judgment, or counsel, gives us the ability to judge between right and wrong, good and evil. The Holy Spirit enables us to see what is truly important, what brings life and happiness. The gift of right judgment helps us to decide against those things that bring sadness, depression, worry, death, and darkness.</p>	<p>1 Kings 3:16-28, Solomon's wisdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does King Solomon exercise right judgment in this story?• Think of a time in which you had to make a difficult decision. What factors influenced your judgment?
<p>Courage, or fortitude, might be called personal conviction—the courage to stand up for what we believe in. Peer pressure is all around us. Saying no when “everyone else is doing it” takes courage. This gift of the Spirit helps us to be true to ourselves, dare to be different, and live according to what we know to be right.</p>	<p>Acts 7:54-60, the stoning of Stephen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stephen is an amazing man and the Church's first martyr. How did he show courage in this story?• Think of a time when you had to stand up for someone or something you believed in even though doing so wasn't popular. Describe the situation.• Who is the most courageous person you know? Why?

Sample Handout from Unit 5