



The Early Church

Begin

Read aloud the unit title. **Say:** *The people we will read about in this unit can be considered pioneers.* **Ask:** *What is a pioneer? (the first person in a group to do something new) What qualities might a pioneer have? (Possible answers: courage, determination)* Discuss real-life pioneers and their accomplishments. **Say:** *Like all pioneers, the Christians we will learn about in this unit faced challenges. They were able to overcome these challenges because they were filled with faith and listened to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.*

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 1. **Say:** *Peter and Andrew took a risk when they chose to follow Jesus. They left behind everything they knew.* **Ask:** *Why were they willing to take such a risk? (Possible answer: They recognized that Jesus was special.)* Point out the vocabulary word *Messiah*. **Say:** *Jesus was anointed—chosen—by God to save all humanity.*

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saint Relates. **Ask:** *How have you been called to respond to Jesus' invitation to serve others? (Possible answers: by helping a neighbor with yard work, by speaking up for someone who was being teased)*

Turn to page 2. Have your child read aloud the title Peter in Scripture and the first two paragraphs. **Say:** *The Transfiguration had a significant effect on the three disciples. Once they experienced God's glory revealed through Jesus, they were inspired to share their experience with others.* Point out the word *Gentiles* and discuss its definition. **Say:** *As Christians we are Gentiles.*

Read aloud A Human Being and Martyred for His Faith. Read aloud John 21:15–19 from your Bible. **Ask:** *Who are Jesus' sheep? (his followers) How can we feed them? (Possible answers: help people in need, preach the Gospel)* Have a discussion about martyrs.

Have your child read aloud Past Meets Present. Emphasize that the pope does not lead the Church by himself. **Say:** *The pope exercises his leadership under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in conjunction with the bishops who are also responsible for leading the Church.* Have your child read aloud the directions in A New Name. Discuss words that best describe your child's personality and faith. Have your child complete the activity independently.

With your child add Peter's feast day, June 29, to your calendar. Reflect on the qualities that Peter needed as the first pope, such as strength, dedication, leadership, and an open heart.

Jesus' Message

Engage: Page 3

- ▶ Together think of ways different types of modern media, such as TV, radio, and the Internet, can be used to preach the Gospel message. Develop a jingle or catchy phrase that can be used for a "Preach the Gospel" campaign using one of these mediums.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *In this session we're going to learn about Saint Peter, who preached the Good News to others through his words and actions.* Explain that we can read Saint Peter's words in the two New Testament letters that are attributed to him.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 4–5

- ▶ Draw a two-column chart with the headings *Name* and *Meaning*. **Say:** *We have many names for Jesus, each of which expresses something important about him.* List names of Jesus and explain what each one tells us about him, such as Christ, "anointed one"; Emmanuel, "God with us"; and Jesus, "God saves."
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title *Preaching the Gospel* and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *What do you think it is that God wants us to know?* (Possible answer: Jesus is the source of our Salvation.) **Say:** *God fulfilled his plan of Salvation by sending Jesus, our Redeemer, to reconcile people with himself.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud *Ready for Confirmation*. Point out that for many of us, our commitment to follow Christ and his way of life was first made for us by our parents and godparents. **Say:** *As we prepare to celebrate Confirmation, we reflect on whether we are ready to make this commitment for ourselves freely.*
- ▶ Read aloud *The Our Father* on page 5. Remind your child that the Beatitudes were given to us by Jesus so that we can live happy lives. Read aloud from the Bible Matthew 6:9–14. **Ask:** *How does the Lord's Prayer relate to the Gospel message of love?* (Possible answer: The Lord's Prayer contains the heart of the Golden Rule—to love God and to love our neighbors.) Explain that God enters into conversation with us through prayers and other forms of Revelation, including Scripture, the sacraments, and ordinary events in our lives. Then emphasize that because we are children of God, we have a responsibility to care for one another's needs.
- ▶ **Ask:** *How can you help build up God's kingdom on earth?* (Possible answers: volunteer at a food pantry or clothing shelter, help an elderly neighbor with his or her yard work.) Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 6–7

- ▶ Discuss how aspects of nature, such as water, wind, and fire, are necessary to life but can also destroy it. Point out that these elements are often used as symbols in Scripture because they speak to us on many levels, both literally and figuratively.

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title and the first paragraph. **Ask:** *Why were the disciples afraid?* (They were fearful that those who had killed Jesus would try to kill them as well.) Point out that the Holy Spirit, sent by Jesus, gave the disciples strength. **Say:** *Jesus also sends us the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to live as Jesus' disciples.*
- ▶ Continue reading aloud the section Pentecost. Ask your child to read aloud the definition of the word *Pentecost* in the Glossary and then define it using his or her own words.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character. **Say:** *One definition of prayer is that it is an act by which we raise our minds and hearts to God.* Remind your child that prayer is a conversation that requires both listening and speaking.
- ▶ Read aloud Filled with the Spirit. Emphasize that the Holy Spirit that filled the disciples is the same Spirit that fills us today.
- ▶ Read aloud The Church on page 7. **Ask:** *What do you think it means to say that the Church is a visible society that is both human and divine?* (Possible answer: The Church is a community made up of people who love and honor God, follow the example of Jesus, and are strengthened by the Holy Spirit.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Point out that even the earliest disciples were sometimes filled with fear.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 8–9

- ▶ Read aloud the title and the first two paragraphs. **Ask:** *How do Christians enter into a close relationship with Jesus and with one another?* (through Baptism)
- ▶ Assign the Reader part and the Sides 1 and 2 parts to your child. Pray together a Prayer of Celebration. **Say:** *Let us remember that we can always call on the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to live as disciples in the world.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 9. Invite your child to brainstorm examples of voices that demand attention. **Ask:** *Which of these voices ask the most of us, and which ask the least of us?* (Possible answers: Parents and teachers ask the most; texts, TV, and the media ask the least.) *Which voices do you spend the most time listening to?* (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Whose Voice Do I Listen To? Remind your child that the voice of God is always listening to us and that it is up to us to take the time to listen.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud A Clear Voice and complete the activity independently. **Say:** *By taking time for prayer, we sharpen our ability to hear God's voice.*

Respond: Page 10

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the activity. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help finding the answers to the questions.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Discuss ways to be a disciple of Jesus' and have your child complete the activity. Encourage him or her to follow through with the ideas during the week. Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.