



We Belong

Begin

Read aloud the unit title. **Say:** *Imagine that a visitor from another planet wanted to move to our town.* **Ask:** *What rules would that person need to follow to be a successful member of our community?* Together make a list of rules. Explain that in this unit, your child will learn what it means to be a member of the Catholic Church. **Say:** *As members of the Church, we have both rights and responsibilities that help us live out Jesus' teachings. Today we're going to learn about two saints who established communities for men and women.* Point out that the members of these communities followed a specific set of rules that helped them live as disciples.

Introduce the Saint

Ask your child to read aloud the paragraph on page 45. **Say:** *Think of a time when you were scared, stressed out, tired, or hungry. Try to recall what your instincts pushed you to do.* **Ask:** *Why might it be easy to forget about God during hard times?* (Possible answer: because we are worried about our basic needs) **Say:** *Why is it crucial for us to remember God during hard times?* (Possible answer: Only God can save us and comfort us.)

Invite your child to read aloud How the Saints Relate. **Say:** *We are like Saint Benedict and Saint Scholastica when we choose to participate in communities whose members nourish one another and build up God's kingdom by performing acts of service.*

Turn to page 46. Have your child read aloud the section Forming a New Community. **Ask:** *Why did Benedict move to the cave on Mount Subiaco?* (He became discouraged by the immoral lives that many people around him in Rome were living.) *What did he do while he lived there?* (fasted and prayed so that he could better discern what God was asking of him) *Why did other men join him?* (They were interested in a more contemplative way of life.) *Why was it important for the monks to live together in community?* (Possible answer: so that they could support one another in their life of prayer and manual labor)

Read aloud Saint Scholastica. Share your own stories of being reunited with family members, such as at holiday reunions with cousins who live at a distance.

With your child, add Benedict's feast day, March 21, and Scholastica's feast day, February 10, to your calendar. Celebrate their lives by learning more about Benedictine monasteries and identifying how you can follow the example set by Benedictine monks and nuns.

We Believe

Engage: Page 47

- ▶ Give your child a few moments to reflect on how a person models Christian discipleship. Provide art materials and ask your child to make a card thanking this person for the examples that he or she sets in your child's faith story. Encourage your child to give or send the card to the intended recipient.
- ▶ Read aloud the title and discuss the text in the blue box. **Say:** *As Catholics we belong to a family of faith that has a particular story. In this session we are going to learn about decisions made by early Church leaders that have continued to shape our faith story.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 48–49

- ▶ Play the game 20 Questions. Pick an item in the room and have your child guess what the item is by asking no more than 20 yes/no questions. **Say:** *You used clues to try to solve a mystery. In this article we are going to learn how disciples in the early Church used clues to understand the Incarnation.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the title The Early Ecumenical Councils, the first paragraph, and the section The Council of Nicaea. **Ask:** *What teaching did the bishops affirm at the Council of Nicaea?* (that Jesus is consubstantial with the Father, that Jesus Christ is God from all eternity, that Jesus was not created)
- ▶ Read aloud the Council of Constantinople. Point out the word *Trinity*. Draw a triangle, and label each point with one of the Persons of the Trinity. Use this image to emphasize that the Three Persons of the Trinity are connected as one being. Remind your child that the Nicene Creed is the Profession of Faith that we pray together during Mass.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Council of Ephesus on page 49. Emphasize that God entered the world in the Person of Jesus through Mary's willingness to say yes to God.
- ▶ Together read aloud The Council of Chalcedon and An Important Question. Point out that Eutyches believed that Jesus' divine nature negated his human nature. **Ask:** *What did the bishops teach at the Council of Chalcedon?* (that Jesus shares a divine nature with his Father in Heaven and that he also shares a human nature with the human family)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Explain that a basilica is a Church that has received special honor and is often a pilgrimage location.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 50–51

- ▶ **Say:** *A mission statement is an overview of an organization's purpose and core beliefs.* Display and read aloud mission statements from various organizations. Invite your child to write a personal mission statement. **Say:** *Now we're going to learn about the Nicene Creed, a statement that summarizes the beliefs of the Church.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the title Professing Our Faith and the first paragraph. **Say:** *After Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, many people became Christians.*

- ▶ Read aloud The Nicene Creed. **Say:** *Here the word Person refers to the three different ways that we, in our limited state, can understand and relate to God.* Point out that we celebrate Jesus' Incarnation at Christmas and that the most important celebration of Jesus' Paschal Mystery happens during Holy Week.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Our Catholic Character on page 51. Explain that when we pray aloud the Nicene Creed, we profess from our heart our belief, or faith, in the Church and its teachings.
- ▶ Read aloud Ready for Confirmation. **Ask:** *How can we live out our personal commitment to God?* (Possible answers: pray, attend Mass, celebrate the sacraments, follow Jesus' example) Explain that when we renew our baptismal promises by saying "I do," we are making a public declaration of our faith.
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 272 in the back of the book. Pray aloud the Nicene Creed together. Explain that a statement of faith is a sentence or phrase that expresses a central belief of our faith. Name some of the statements of faith that are part of the Nicene Creed. Give your child time to complete the activity I Believe.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 52–53

- ▶ Read aloud the title and the paragraphs in the left column. Tell your child that the word *Amen* means "so be it" or "truly."
- ▶ Explain that some of our communal prayers, such as the Nicene Creed, can also be used during our personal prayer time. Begin praying aloud the Creed together. Ask your child to pray aloud each reflection and allow time to pray silently before praying the next part of the Creed.
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph of Where Do I Fit In? on page 53. **Ask:** *Who are you?* (Possible answers: I am a son. I am a basketball player. I am a musician.) **Say:** *As you continue to grow into adulthood, one of your biggest responsibilities will be to discover your identity. As a member of the Church, you have a head start.*
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud Who Am I and What Do I Believe? **Ask:** *How does the author describe some of the things he did as a teenager?* (stupid, not me) Point out that it is important to pay attention to this feeling because if we ignore it, the feeling will eventually go away. **Say:** *When we listen to this feeling, we are listening to our conscience.*
- ▶ Invite your child to complete the activity and share his or her personal identity symbol and its meaning with you.

Respond: Page 54

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and complete the activity. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help completing each sentence.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? After your child completes 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.