

ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 6

The Word of God in the Old Testament

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Our Sunday Visitor

The Body of Christ

Let Us Pray

Leader: You are our shepherd, O God;
we are the flock you tend.

“For he is our God,
we are the people he shepherds,
the sheep in his hands.” **Psalm 95:7**

All: Gracious God, keep us one in love, holy at heart, open to all, and united in faith. Amen.

Scripture

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common. **Acts of the Apostles 2:42–44**

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What Do You Wonder?

- Do the people in your parish feel like they are close?
- How did the disciples communicate with the early Church communities?

Catholic Faith Words

Epistles letters written by Paul and several of the other Apostles to new Christian communities that they established. There are twenty-one letters in the New Testament.

Keeping in Touch

How is God's message shared?

People have always needed to communicate. Over the years, they have shared thoughts and instructions in many fashions. Today, the Church uses many ways to communicate God's truths.

Sharing God's Word Today

God's message to us has not changed over the centuries. However, the ways we receive and share it have.

Today, the Church encourages bishops, priests, and others to use modern information technology to do her work. In the United States, almost every parish, religious order, and diocese has a website that shares vital information with God's People. Blogs, videos, and other forms of social media can also play a positive role in instructing and informing Catholics. After the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI in 2013, millions around the world waited for news of the Papal Conclave and the election of a new Pope. Social media networks were quick to report the election of Pope Francis and share his first messages to the Catholic faithful.

Even though the Church supports technology, it is still important to recognize traditional ways of teaching, such as sermons and personal interaction. The basic message, what Pope Benedict XVI called "God's loving care for all people in Christ," should be presented faithfully. This will give a "soul" to the Internet and be a fitting use for social media.



Letters of the New Testament

In the early Church two thousand years ago, communicating long distance was much different from the way it is now. Until the 1900s, people communicated primarily by letter. It may be difficult to imagine a world without television, Internet, or cell phones. But your great-grandparents waited months for letters to arrive from other countries to hear news of their families.

The Apostles and many disciples took long journeys to spread the Word of Jesus, and they started many new Christian communities. When they moved on, many of them wrote letters, or **Epistles**, to the new groups. God spoke through these letters, and many of them are now part of the New Testament. The letters of Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude tell the story of how the Apostles and others planted the seeds of Christianity.



A seller in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican holds a newspaper announcing the election of Pope Francis.

Share Your Faith

Reflect Read these passages to the right and put a checkmark by your favorite. What message does God have for you in that passage today?

Share your favorite passage with a partner. Explain your choice.

- Pray without ceasing ... give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**
- As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. **1 Peter 4:10**
- For just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. **James 2:26**
- Let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. **1 John 4:7**





Marks of the Church

What do the Marks of the Church mean?

The Church is the community of all baptized people who believe in God and follow Jesus. The Letters of the New Testament show that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. These four distinguishing characteristics are the **Marks of the Church** that have identified the Church from her beginning. You hear these Marks when you profess the Nicene Creed at Mass: “I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.”



1. Underline one time we hear the Marks of the Church.
2. Explain in your own words what it means to be one.

One

Paul taught that the faithful are like many parts of one body, with Jesus as the head. Each part relies on the other parts to work well together. Paul is telling you that even though people are different, we all can work together in unity as the **Body of Christ**. In fact, the Church is made up of many different people from all over the world who acknowledge one Lord, confess one faith, and celebrate one Baptism.

What Scripture Says...

One	Holy	Catholic	Apostolic
<p>“As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.”</p> <p>1 Corinthians 12:12</p>	<p>“Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”</p> <p>1 Corinthians 3:16</p>	<p>“And [God] put all things beneath [Christ’s] feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.”</p> <p>Ephesians 1:22–23</p>	<p>“So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone.”</p> <p>Ephesians 2:19–20</p>

Holy

The Church is holy because she is set apart for God and his purposes, and God is holy. Christ gave himself up to make the Church holy and gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to give her life. The Spirit fills the Body of Christ, giving the Church life and uniting her members. Thus the Church is called the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The presence of God's Spirit in each person doesn't mean that members of the Church are not sinners. Members can avoid sin with the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells within them or, if they sin, can accept the divine forgiveness available through the Church.



Catholic

The word *catholic* means “containing the whole,” or “universal.” The Church is catholic because through Christ she proclaims the fullness of faith and provides everything you need for salvation. Her mission is to all people of the world.

Apostolic

The Church is apostolic because the teaching authority of the Church comes directly from Jesus and his chosen Apostles. The bishops of the Church are direct successors of the Apostles.

Catholic Faith Words

Marks of the Church the essential characteristics that distinguish Christ's Church and her mission: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic

Body of Christ a name for the Church of which Christ is the head. All the baptized are members of the body.

Connect Your Faith

A Letter to Paul Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12–22. Imagine that Paul has written one of the messages in this passage to your group. Answer him below, and tell him how the group has been following his requests.

Dear Paul,

Your friend,

Our Catholic Life

How do the members of the Church live out their faith?

The Church is often described as the Body of Christ. The Church lives in Christ and for Christ. You can view the Church as one large body with many local churches all over the world. You can also view the Church as individuals, all working together to make the body function. You are one of these individuals. You are the hands, mouth, ears, and feet of Jesus in the world.

The Church truly comes alive when members like you are living their faith. The New Testament letters offer some good advice to Church members.

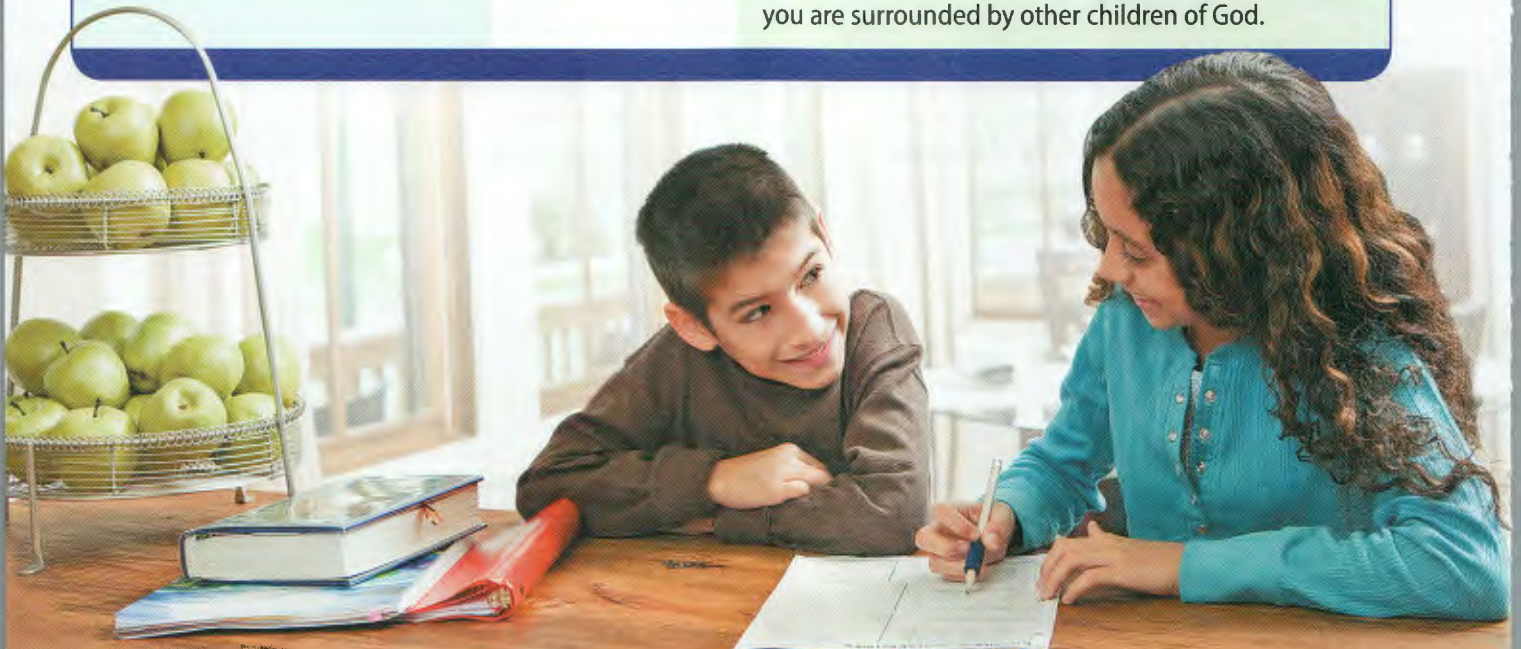


1. Match the advice with its explanation in the chart below.
2. Draw a star next to the piece of advice you most need right now.

Advice from the New Testament

Beatitudes	Meaning
Love one another ●	● This is one important way in which the Church expresses and lives out her faith.
Worship God ●	● Put on the armor of God to fight against evil. This is God's protection for you against evil and sin.
Use your gifts for others ●	● Jesus said that everyone would know we are his disciples if we do this for one another.
Be strong and courageous in your faith ●	● God has given you these things, and he intends that you use them to help others. To do this, you must first think of yourself as a good, valuable, and beloved child of God. Then you can look around and see that you are surrounded by other children of God.

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People of Faith

October 28

Saint Jude, First Century

Most of the Epistles in the Bible were written by Saint Paul, but one was written by Saint Jude. He calls himself a “slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James.” We know that his brother was a relative of Jesus, maybe a cousin, so Saint Jude was one of Jesus’ cousins, too. In his letter, he tells us to be careful of people who lie. He also reminds us that the Church is a community of people. But most of all, he wants us to do whatever Jesus wants, just like a slave would do for a master.



Discuss: How do you do what Jesus would want?



Learn more about Saint Jude at aliveinchrist.osv.com

Live Your Faith

Consider Romans 12:9–21 tells you how you can act as Jesus did toward others and build up the Church. Unscramble the words to complete descriptions of love.

1. Let love be S E R E N I C _____ .
2. T H E A _____ what is evil.
3. Hold on to what is O D G O _____ .
4. Love one another with L A U T M U _____ affection.
5. Show R H O O N _____ to one another.
6. Contribute to the D S E N E _____ of others.
7. Exercise T Y I S O H T A L I P _____ .
8. J R E E C I O _____ with those who E J C I E R O _____ .
9. E P W E _____ with those who P W E E _____ .
10. Do not be T G H A H U Y _____

Respond Which attitudes or actions do you find harder than others? Choose one to focus on this week.

 Let Us Pray

Baptismal Promises

Gather and begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: Joined together as one community, we are called to one faith.

Reader: A reading from the Letter to the Ephesians.

Read Ephesians 4:1–6.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Let us renew the faith of our Baptism.
Do you believe in God the Father?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life?

All: I do.

Leader: Let us pray.

Bow your heads
as the leader prays.

All: Amen.



Sing "Yes, Lord,
I Believe/Sí Señor Yo Creo"

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YOUR CHILD LEARNED >>>

This chapter identifies and explains the Marks of the Church and reflects on passages from the Epistles about the early Christian community.

Scripture



Read **Acts of the Apostles 2:42–44** to find out about the early Church community.

Catholics Believe

- The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.
- The Church is a community of people, united in faith, working together to share the Gospel and become closer to God.

To learn more, go to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #811–813, 830–831 at usccb.org.

People of Faith

This week, your child learned about Saint Jude, who was both Jesus' follower and one of his cousins.

CHILDREN AT THIS AGE >>>

How They Understand the Church Community At this age, your child is more able to participate in the larger parish community. He or she can assist in the liturgy (as a choir member, altar server, greeter, etc.) or help with a service project. Still, children this age are most likely to associate the community with their group of peers. Therefore, it is important that your child foster friendships in the parish through middle school activities or, in smaller parishes with no middle school youth group, through arranged activities between families.



CONSIDER THIS >>>

Whom do you rely on to support and encourage you in challenging times?

When we find ourselves struggling we often long for someone to give us an answer, someone who can tell us what is right or what we need to survive. As Catholics, we look to the Church to teach us what God intends. "The Church is built upon the foundation of the Apostles, who were chosen by Christ himself, and at whose head he placed Peter. The entire community of Christians received the Apostles' proclamation of the Gospel, and so the Church in her entirety is called 'apostolic'" (*USCCA, p. 132*).

LET'S TALK >>>

- Ask your child to tell you two things about the New Testament letters.
- Discuss what advice your family can benefit from most right now.

LET'S PRAY >>>



Dear God, give us your grace so that we can serve you faithfully like Saint Jude. Amen.



For a multimedia glossary of Catholic Faith Words, Sunday readings, seasonal and Saint resources, and chapter activities go to aliveinchrist.osv.com.

Chapter 12 Review

A Work with Words Complete each sentence with the correct term from the Word Bank. Not all terms will be used.

Word Bank

apostolic letters faith communities
belief Christ holy love
universal Spirit salvation local

1. The four Marks of the Church indicate that it is one, holy, catholic, and _____.
2. Paul taught that the faithful are like many parts of one body, with _____ as the head.
3. The word *catholic* means _____.
4. New Testament _____ were written to tell Christian communities how to follow Jesus.
5. A creed is a statement of _____.
6. Let us love one another, because “_____ is of God.”
7. The presence of the Holy Spirit and the love of Christ make the Church _____.
8. Through Christ, the Church proclaims the fullness of _____.
9. “Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the _____ of God dwells in you?”
10. The Apostles and many disciples spread the Word of Jesus and started new Christian _____.

