

ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 8

The Church

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Our Sunday Visitor

JESUS CHRIST



How does Jesus forgive our sin and call us to conversion through his Body, the Catholic Church?

CHURCH HISTORY TIMELINE

- 680 Third Ecumenical Council of Constantinople convenes
- 1054 The Great East-West Schism
- 1215 The Fourth Ecumenical Lateran Council ends
- 1517 Martin Luther posts his 95 Theses

Go to page 348 for more



Our Catholic Tradition

- As Church members, we look to Jesus as an example of friendship and respect for others. The first Christians demonstrated friendship in how they worshipped together, followed Jesus' example, and cared for each other. (CCC, 949)
- God offers forgiveness and eternal life to those who accept his grace by following his Son, Jesus, in faith. The Holy Spirit helps us recognize our past sinfulness and helps us overcome sin in the future. (CCC, 2009–2010)
- The Church is made up of Catholics united by a common creed, the Seven Sacraments, and the Pope's leadership. She is made up of people from different cultures who express their common faith in different ways. (CCC, 866, 868)

Our Catholic Life

- Jesus met many people in different circumstances. Even though his interaction with them varied, he welcomed them all, urged them to believe, and encouraged them to change their lives. (CCC, 543–545)
- We are justified by Jesus. We are forgiven and made whole again. We don't earn our own righteousness; it is God's free gift. (CCC, 2007–2009)
- A unity exists among all baptized Christians, and we pray and work toward the full unity that Christ desires for all his followers. (CCC, 855)

Encountering Christ

Let Us Pray

Leader: God our Father, through your Son, Jesus, we come to know about the relationship of love and friendship you want to have with us. May the example of Jesus teach us what it means to be accepting of others and to love them unconditionally.

“Blessed those whose way is blameless,
who walk by the law of the LORD.” **Psalm 119:1**

All: Jesus, may we be one in you.

Scripture

“I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you

gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me. Father, they are your gift to me.” **John 17:20–24**

Have you ever thought...

- What is Jesus' relationship with his Father like?
- Did Jesus have friends? If so, what did he expect from them?

Getting Started

In this chapter, you will learn about Jesus' closest friends, including the Twelve Apostles and his other disciples, and explore the ways that Jesus treated them; his family, and other people. You will also discover how the early Christians interacted with each other and spread Jesus' message.

Catholic Faith Words

- disciple
- Apostles
- Ascension

In the chart below, record some things you know about Jesus' family, his disciples, and the people he helped.



Jesus and His Relationships	
Jesus' Family	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Jesus' Disciples	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
People Jesus Helped	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

DESCRIBE

Take a Closer Look It can be easy to take our friendships for granted. Take a close look at two of your good friendships. Write words and phrases that describe these friendships.



What do you value most about these friendships?

How are your friendships a reflection of God's love for you?



The People Jesus Met

How did Jesus treat people?

Jesus was sometimes criticized for the kinds of people he spent time with. Being judged and facing the pressure not to be with a certain kind of person is not fun. Jesus is an example of how to rise above that kind of thinking.

Think of these words, found in the middle of the Lord's Prayer: "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Bringing the ways of the Kingdom from Heaven to Earth is exactly what Jesus did. In Heaven, everything is perfect. All are in complete happiness, and no one is left out. When we

Catholic Faith Words

disciple one who learns from and follows the example of a teacher. The disciples of Jesus are those who believe in him, follow his teachings, and put them into practice.

Apostles the twelve men Jesus chose to be his closest followers and to share in his work and mission in a special way

take care not to leave anyone out, that's one way of living the Kingdom here on Earth.

Jesus encountered many different people in his ministry. He saw their need and called them to have faith. He called out the names of some, not caring how other people treated them or labeled them. He spent time teaching and eating with them, asking them to believe and to change their lives. Those

Scripture

"Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" **Mark 2:16**

Bartimaeus ... sat by the road begging
"Master, I want to see." **Mark 10:51**

A woman known as a sinner wept on Jesus' feet, dried them with her hair, and anointed them ... Jesus [said] "So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love." **Luke 7:47**

Go to the Source

For more on these stories, read *Mark 10:46–52*, *Matthew 12:9–14*, or *Luke 7:36–50*.

who did become his disciples. A **disciple** is one who learns from and follows the example of a teacher. Disciples of Jesus, both then and now, believe in him, follow his teachings, and put them into practice.

Jesus called some disciples to be his **Apostles**, his closest followers. These twelve men traveled with him and shared in his work of preaching the Good News and the coming Kingdom. After the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles continued Christ's work and mission in a special way.

Still others were his friends who did not go on the road, but were with him when he traveled through their towns. They, too, were his disciples, and welcomed him and the Apostles in their homes and at their tables.

What connects all of these different people who were part of Jesus' life? Jesus met each of these people where they were in life. Many ordinary people loved Jesus for his

open heart—not only because he made them better physically or emotionally, or brought them the peace of forgiveness. They also loved him because he cared about them. He took the time to acknowledge them and show them God's love. To Jesus, they mattered. They were important.

The Twelve Apostles

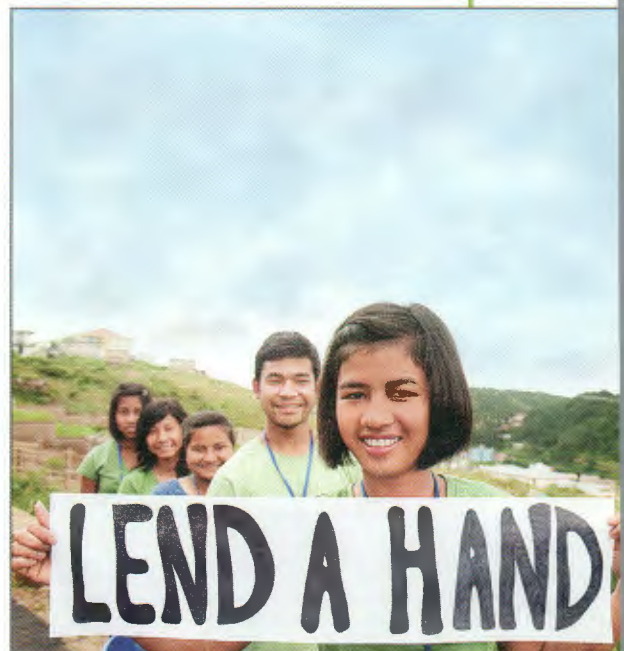
Simon (Peter)	Thomas
Andrew	Matthew
James	James
John	Thaddeus
Philip	Simon the Cananaean
Bartholomew	Judas Iscariot

For more information on the Apostles, go to page 363 of the Our Catholic Tradition section of your book.

COMPARE

Think about the different people in your life: acquaintances, close friends, or classmates. How are you different from them? How are you the same?

What are some ways you could be more open and accepting of them all, like Jesus?



Jesus' Closest Friends

How did people become friends with Jesus?

Close friends are the people we feel most comfortable with—people we love like family, and people we can pour our hearts out to. We learn from the Gospels that Jesus had such friends.

The Apostles Peter, James, and John were Jesus' closest friends. They were the only ones who

- saw Jesus' Transfiguration. (See Mark 9:2–8.)
- entered Jairus' home when Jesus raised his daughter from the dead. (See Luke 8:40–56.)
- came with Jesus when he went off to pray alone on the night before he was arrested. (See Mark 14:32–42.)

Mary Magdalene also was a close friend to Jesus. She was

- at the Cross when Jesus died. (See Matthew 27:55–56.)
- the first person Jesus appeared to after he rose from the dead. (See John 20:11–18.)



The Apostle Peter



Mary Magdalene

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Peter and Mary Magdalene's Actions

_____ When they arrested Jesus, I ran and told people I didn't know who he was.

_____ I was there at the foot of the Cross when Jesus died.

_____ Three times I denied being Jesus' friend.

_____ I was the first to whom Jesus appeared at the Resurrection.

_____ Jesus gave me the keys to the Kingdom.

1. Write the letter P next to Peter's actions and the letter M next to Mary's.
2. In the space below, write one question you would ask Peter or Mary about Jesus.



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Friends from Bethany

Lazarus, Martha, and Mary were a brother and two sisters who lived in Bethany. They were also close friends of Jesus.

Jesus settled an argument between them when Martha was busy doing housework while Mary just sat at Jesus' feet, listening to him and not helping her sister. (See Luke 10:38–42.) Jesus brought Lazarus back

to life after he had been in the tomb for four days. (See John 11:1–44.)

There were other women, besides Martha and Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene, who followed Jesus and provided for him out of their own resources. Joanna and Susanna are also named (see Luke 8:3), as well as the mother of James and John (see Matthew 27:56).

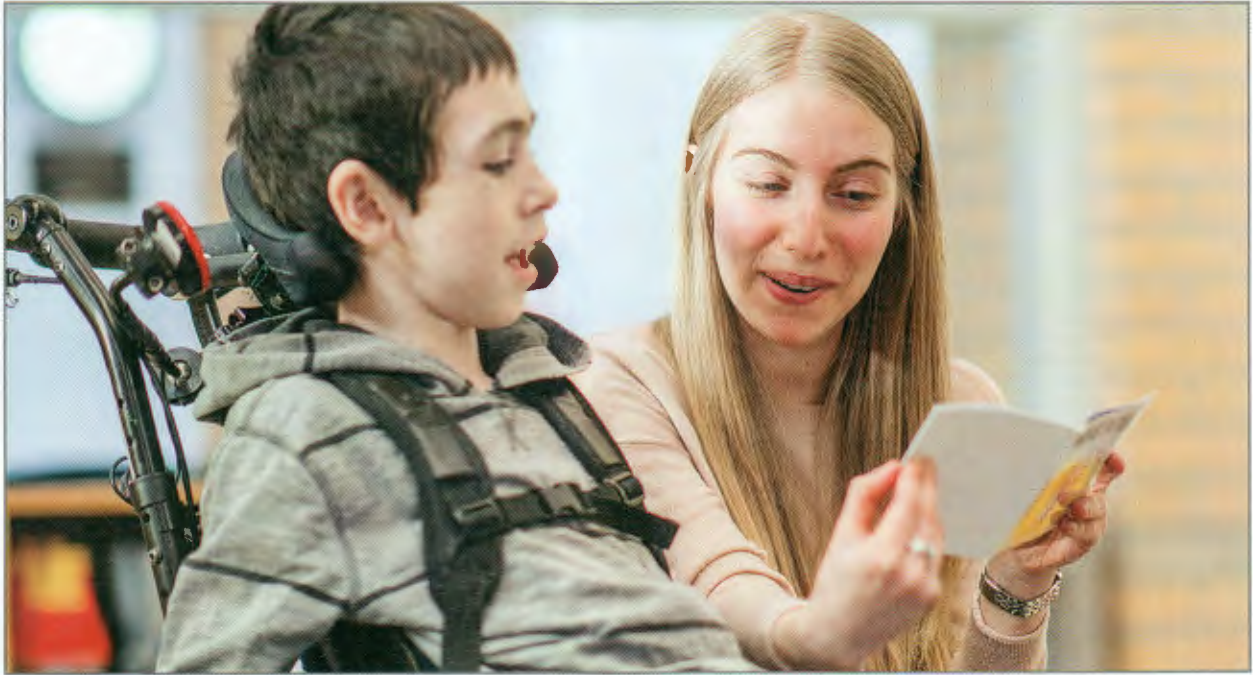
CONSIDER

If Jesus asked you to pick three of your friends to be his Apostles, which of your friends would you pick? Write down the initials of each friend and the reason(s) why you selected him or her.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



“Wherever we go ... we are at home, we are with our family, we are brothers and sisters.” —Pope Francis

The First Church Members

What can we learn from the early Christians?

Have you ever had to say goodbye to a close friend whom you will probably never see again? If so, then you know that it is a very sad, lonely feeling.

That’s how Jesus’ followers and friends must have felt after his **Ascension**, when the Risen Christ was taken up in glory to his Father in Heaven. They watched him ascend into Heaven.

Jesus had promised that they would not be alone, that the Holy Spirit would come upon them. They would be strengthened to be Jesus’ witnesses throughout the world. But they probably felt lost, not knowing how they could possibly keep his message alive.

Then the Holy Spirit came to them on Pentecost. Wind, tongues of fire, and an inner strength came from God and made

them a changed group of people, filled with courage and understanding.

- They became a united community.
- They looked after each other.
- They opened their homes to each other; they discussed Jesus’ teachings together and motivated one another to tell others about him and his message.
- They broke bread together as Jesus commanded at the Last Supper.
- They shared their money, their food, and their possessions.

In short, they helped each other out in every way possible. Their community showed us what solidarity looks like, sharing more than material things by providing

Catholic Faith Words

Ascension the event of the Risen Christ being taken up into Heaven forty days after his Resurrection

for one another's spiritual needs, too. These women and men demonstrated true Christian friendship: trust, loyalty, generosity, hospitality, concern, joy, and hope. If we

follow their example, we will embrace everyone as part of God's family, no matter whether they have different backgrounds or different kinds of personalities.

Who Were They?

Peter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the first to speak after receiving the Holy Spirit (See Acts Chapters 2 and 3.) • was imprisoned, but escaped when an angel caused the doors to open and his chains to fall off (See Acts 12:1–19.)
Stephen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one of the first seven deacons to the Apostles (See Acts 6:1–7.) • the first martyr, giving up his life for believing in Jesus (See Acts 7:55–60.)
Saul, also known as Paul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persecuted the disciples and was present when Stephen was stoned to death (See Acts 7:58 and 8:1.) • changed his life after he was temporarily struck blind and heard the voice of Jesus asking him why he persecuted Jesus (See Acts 9:4–5.) • wrote many of the letters of the New Testament and was a great leader
Lydia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • was a businesswoman, a dealer of purple cloth, in Philippi (See Acts 16:14.) • offered her home to Paul and Silas; when they left prison, they returned to her home (See Acts 16:40.)
Prisca and her husband Aquila	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • were tentmakers, as was Paul; they spent time working together, while Paul stayed with them at their home in Corinth (See Acts 18:1–3.) • used their home as a Church center for the faith community (See 1 Corinthians 16:19.)
Phoebe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a woman who served the Church at Cenchrae (See Romans 16:1.) • was a friend of Paul; he recommended that she be received "in a manner worthy of the holy ones" (See Romans 16:2.)



Saint Paul

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IN SUMMARY Catholics Believe

As members of the Church, we look to Jesus as an example of friendship and respect for others.

- Jesus met many people in different circumstances. Even though his interaction with them varied, he welcomed them all, urged them to believe, and encouraged them to change their lives.
- Jesus called some disciples to be his Apostles, his closest followers. These twelve men traveled with him and shared in his work of preaching the Good News and the coming Kingdom.
- The first Church members demonstrated true Christian friendship by the way they worshipped together, followed the example of Jesus, and took care of one another.

Our Catholic Life

Friendship is a gift. When we become friends with people, we share in their happiness and their sadness, and we support them as they support us. Jesus' friendships shared these traits, but they were different in one important way: **Jesus' friendship and love were given unconditionally.** He didn't need friends, but he chose to have them and enjoyed their company, just like they enjoyed his. His friends learned from him, ate with him, traveled with him, and extended his friendship and messages to others they met both before and after Jesus' Death. Jesus' friendship and love transformed the lives of his friends. We, too, can have that kind of impact on the friends we make, by acting as good examples of Christian love to those we meet.



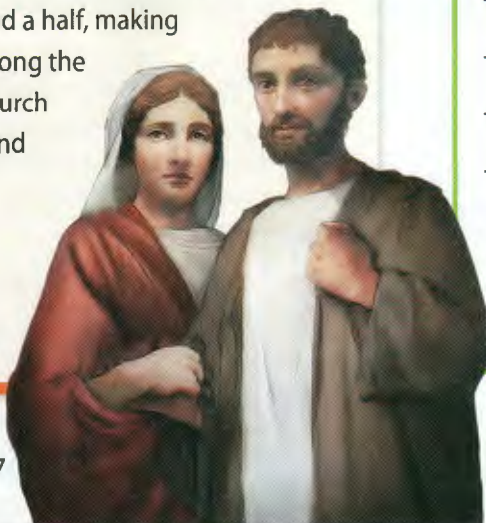
➤ How has friendship with Jesus changed you?
How do you share his friendship with others?

People of Faith

Prisca and Aquila, first century

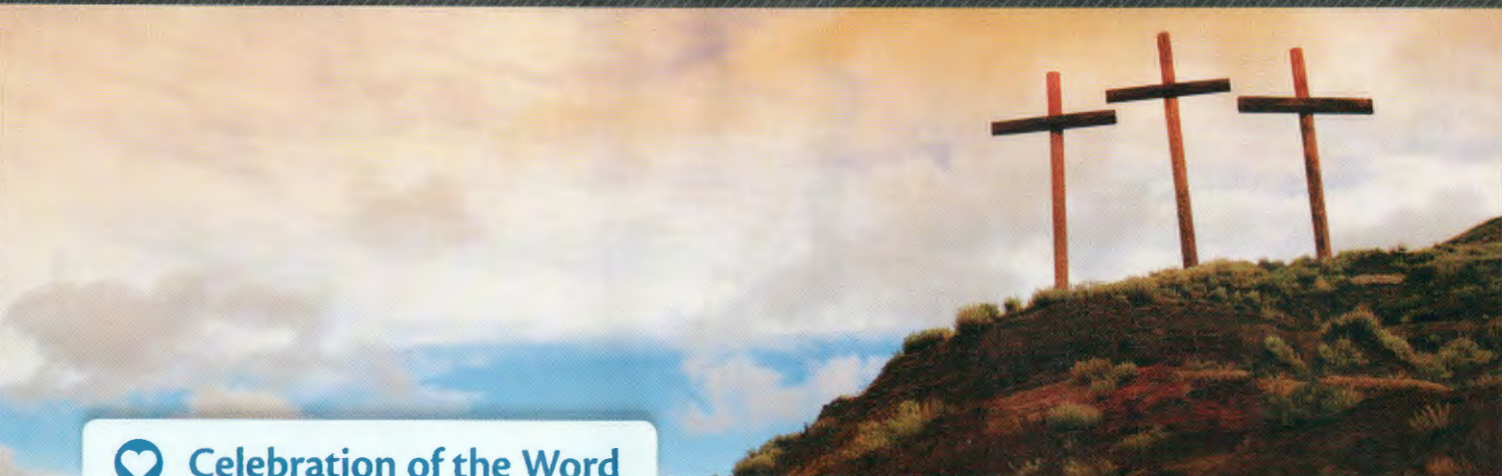
Prisca and Aquila lived in Corinth, Greece. They were Roman Jews who had been banished by the Emperor Claudius because of their faith. Aquila and Saint Paul were tentmakers by trade and worked together while Paul stayed in Corinth. In the spirit of Jesus, Prisca and Aquila opened their hearts to Saint Paul in friendship. He expressed his thankfulness in letters he sent to his followers. Paul stayed with Prisca and Aquila in Corinth for about a year and a half, making many converts among the Jews there. The Church celebrates Prisca and Aquila's feast day on **July 8**.

For more, go to
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RANK

What is your "Top Five" list of qualities needed for friendship? Begin with five and work your way up to the most important characteristic of friendship at number one. Then rank them in the order of importance you think Jesus would place on each.



Celebration of the Word

Leader: We know and believe that when two or more gather, Christ is with us. Let us take this time to listen to all he has to say to us through the Scripture reading.

Reader 1: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Read Luke 19:1–10.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader 2: As Jesus welcomed and called Zacchaeus down from the tree, help us to welcome and seek out all those among us who sit on the outside of our circle of friends, who are different, and who are in need of comfort and friendship.

Reader 3: As Jesus welcomed and healed the man who was born blind, help us to welcome and comfort all those among us who have illness or disability and are in need of a friend.

Reader 4: As Jesus, who on the day of his Death welcomed the criminal into paradise with him, help us welcome and forgive all who have hurt us.

Leader: Gracious Father, send the Holy Spirit to walk with us and guide us in all our choices.


Be with us in the times when it is easy to serve you and in the times when the pressures around us make it seem almost impossible.

Help us to know that you love us.

Remind us always and often that you are the God who welcomes all.

We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus, our brother and friend.

All: Amen.

 *Sing or play "You Stand Knocking"*

 Go to aliveinchrist.osv.com for an interactive review.

A Work with Words Circle the letter of the choice that best completes the sentence.

1. A person who learns from and follows the example of a teacher is called a(n) _____.
 - a. Apostle
 - b. disciple
 - c. assistant
 - d. lieutenant
2. Jesus brought ____ to life, after being in the tomb for four days.
 - a. Mary
 - b. Martha
 - c. Jairus
 - d. Lazarus
3. Jesus' ____ were the twelve men who shared in his work and ministry in a special way.
 - a. friends
 - b. disciples
 - c. Apostles
 - d. companions
4. The event of the Risen Christ being taken up into Heaven is called the _____.
 - a. Annunciation
 - b. Absolution
 - c. Assumption
 - d. Ascension
5. ____ was the first martyr, the first person to be killed for believing in Jesus.
 - a. Stephen
 - b. Peter
 - c. Paul
 - d. Timothy

B Check Understanding Indicate whether the following statements are true or false. Then rewrite false statements to make them true.

6. Matthew, James, and John were the only disciples who came with Jesus when he went off to pray on the night before he was arrested. **True/False**

7. Peter was the first person Jesus appeared to after he rose from the dead. **True/False**

8. The Holy Spirit came as tongues of fire and made the disciples a united community. **True/False**

9. The disciples shared their money, their food, and their possessions. **True/False**

10. Priscilla was a businesswoman in Philippi, who offered her home to Paul and Silas. **True/False**

C Make Connections Write a one-paragraph response to the question. Think about someone you know who might feel left out—someone at school, at church, or in your community. How would Jesus respond to that person and what can you learn from his example?
