

Sunday Gospel Background

Sunday's Gospel shows Jesus in the synagogue reading a Scripture passage that announces God's mercy. Jesus then announces that he has come to carry out that word. Jesus literally brings God to the people. He not only tells Good News but *is* the Good News.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** "Loving God, thank you for neighbors. Please bless them and us. Help us to be loving and caring neighbors too. Amen."
- Story • Patrick's Neighborhood** Invite your child to listen to a story about neighbors in different places.

Patrick lives in Calgary in Canada. His cousin, Christopher, lives in Florida. One day, Patrick's mom called Christopher's mom. When they finished talking, Patrick talked to Christopher.

"What did you do today?" Patrick asked.

"We had fun!" Christopher said. "It was clean-up day in our neighborhood. Dad mowed lawns. Mom had a garage sale. I helped paint a fence. Robbie and Abby planted flowers. We had a picnic with hot dogs and ice cream. I won a prize for my poster about keeping our neighborhood clean."

After the cousins said good-bye, Patrick told his mom about the neighborhood party in Florida. "Can we have a party like that?" Patrick asked. "Sure," said his mom, "we'll have a winter party with snow instead of flowers."

Patrick's neighborhood had a Winter Fix-Up and Clean-Up Day. Moms and dads shoveled sidewalks for older people. They shoveled away the big piles of snow on street corners. Big kids chopped up ice that had made sidewalks slippery. Children shook heavy snow from tree branches and filled bird feeders. Families made snowmen for a contest. When all the work was finished, everyone gathered in the community center for cocoa and marshmallows and to sing songs. Patrick's family won first prize for their snowman.

When Patrick went to bed that night, his mom said: "I'm proud of you, Patrick. You helped make our neighborhood a happy, caring place. Tomorrow, you can tell Christopher all about it."

Ask: How are the neighborhoods alike? Different? *Alike in wanting to help one another make their neighborhood a nice place. Different in the kinds of things they did, temperature.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

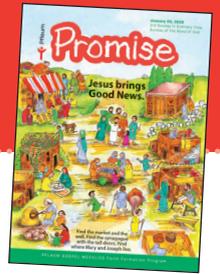
- Sunday Gospel • Jesus brings Good News. (page 1)** Explain that Jesus grew up in a town called Nazareth. He lived in a neighborhood where he played, went to celebrations, did chores, studied, and worshiped. When he grew up, Jesus read from Scripture (books of the Bible) at Sabbath services. Invite your child to imagine they are in the synagogue when Jesus stands up and reads from Scripture.

One Sabbath day, Jesus went to the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth. He stood up to read the reading. He was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Jesus unrolled the scroll and found this reading:

"The Spirit of God has come to me and anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He sends me to let slaves go free, to

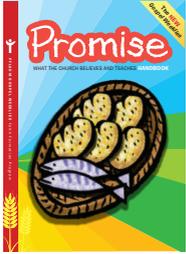
give sight to the blind, to lift up all those who suffer, and to announce a year of God's favor."

Jesus rolled up the scroll, handed it back, and sat down. Everyone was looking at him. He spoke again and said, "What you have heard me read has come true today."



Ask: What did Jesus mean when he said the reading had come true? *He is the one who is bringing Good News.*

- **Word of the Week • mission (page 4)** Help your child find the Word of the Week or print the word *mission*. Share this definition: *A mission is being sent to love and help other people.* Explain that Jesus' mission was to bring the Good News of God's love. This is also our mission as his followers.



- **Open** the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 12. Read about God's promise to Abraham. He is our "father in faith" because he is the first person to believe in the One God. **Ask:** How many stars are there? *Too many to count.* God was generous to Abraham. Read the directions and give your child time to find and circle the six stars.

Read about God's promise to Moses. **Ask:** What does it mean to be God's People? *We keep our promises to follow God, and God keeps his promises to take care of us.*

Read about God's promise to all people. **Ask:** How did God keep this promise? *God sent Jesus to save us.*

Read about the People of God today. Use this fingerplay: "Here is the church. Here is the steeple. Open the doors and see all the people." The building is the church. The people are the Church, the People of God.

(Optional activity: Draw some stars on cardstock and have your child cut them out. You might cover one side with foil or glitter and write your family's names on them. Punch a hole in one point of each star and use thread or fishing line to hang them over your prayer space.)

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Promise, pages 2-3.

Live the Gospel

- **Activity • I can be a good neighbor. (pages 2-3)** Turn to pages 2-3 and point out some of the neighbors on the game board. Use a coin to take turns moving around the board. When your child lands on a neighbor space, look at the circles on page 3 and invite your child to find a way to be a good neighbor to that person. Your child may move backward or forward to meet all the neighbors.

Ask: How have you been a good neighbor this week? Commend your child for making your neighborhood a happy place.

- **Activity • Good Neighbor Award (page 4)** Help your child recognize someone who is a good neighbor. Read the activity directions and words in the word bank. Give your child time to write and color the message.
- **Closing Prayer** Include the name of the good neighbor your child identified in the activity as you pray: "Loving God, we thank you for the people in our neighborhood, especially _____. Help us to be good neighbors too. Amen."



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture