

What happens to us when we become followers of Christ?

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the students should be able to

- recognize we are one with the Holy Trinity.
- identify ways we are expected to act as Christians.
- define conscience as the Holy Spirit speaking to us in our hearts so that we know how to follow God's way.
- explain that the Scriptures teach Christians how to be faithful to their calling.

For the Catechist

When Christians "live their baptism," they recognize, first, that they are united to God as children and heirs of His kingdom (see Romans 8:14-17). Second, they see that they are one with all others who share the same relationship. If Christians truly understand this unique relationship to God that is theirs in Christ, then the call to "love God" has meaning because God is their Father. Likewise if Christians see that they are children of God, they know that they are related to each other as brothers and sisters and do not have to be told to love each other. In daily life, they learn to recognize the call of the Holy Spirit to serve each other often in the humblest of ways.

This lesson asks the children to see their Christian life in terms of this relationship to God and their neighbor. They need to learn to care about God and their neighbor always. Regretfully, if they do not learn to care about God and their neighbor, they will avoid both. The emphasis of this Grade 5 text, *We Are God's People*, is to help the children learn that the gifts given to them through their Baptism and Chrismation must be put to use every day. Their love of God and neighbor will help them grow in the image and likeness of God—a process that takes a lifetime!

Materials Needed

Opening and Closing Prayers: Prayer page

Review: Paper, pens, and notecards from previous lesson's summary

Introduction: Plastic cup with a rock in it, a shoe box with a hat in it (anything that shows something is not in its proper place).

The Message: New Testament, paper, pencils, note cards

Application: Pens or pencils, note cards

Icons and Pictures

Come Bless the Lord: The Trinity

Plan Ahead: Invite your priest to the class for Lesson 6 for an interview. Call him or write an invitation that tells him the date and the time—ten minutes planned at the beginning or the end of class. (More information is in the section "Planning Ahead for 'Today's Witnesses to Christ'" that is found on the back of the Unit 2 title page.)

Connections

1. Opening Prayer (2 minutes)

Invite the class to stand by the icon and remain silent for a few seconds before making the sign of the cross.

- Pray or sing "All you who have" [If the students made the banners in Lesson 2, carry them around the room while singing.]

2. Review (3 minute)

Use the review cards made during the "Summary" section from the last lesson. Have the students form 2 teams. Ask the questions, and let the students work together as a group to give the answers.

Alternate: Work in two groups. Each group is given a sheet of paper with the terms Baptism and Chrismation on it. Give them two minutes to write all the words they can think of associated with each term. Then have them read their words aloud. The group with the most words wins. Ask them to explain the reason the words are on the list.

3. Introduction (2 minutes)

Materials: Plastic cup with a rock in it, a shoe box with a hat in it (anything that shows something is not in its proper place)

Ask the students what is wrong with the items on the table. Ask: *Why are we bothered by seeing something that we do not expect to see?* Continue the discussion by telling the students that there are certain things we expect from people too. Ask: *What are some qualities that you would expect to find in a doctor? How do you expect a student in class to act?*

Alternate: Ask the students to think of something that would look out of place or some activity for someone that would be out of place.

Connect this discussion to the idea that there are certain expectations for Christians also.

Notes for the lesson:

(Use this space to write helpful hints to use each year)

The Message

4. Our New Life (8 minutes)

Materials: notecards and pencils

a) Have the students read aloud or silently the first three paragraphs.

Ask: *What would happen if they did not? Would the next year's flowers be affected?* [Let the students share.]

b) Read the remaining paragraphs aloud or silently.

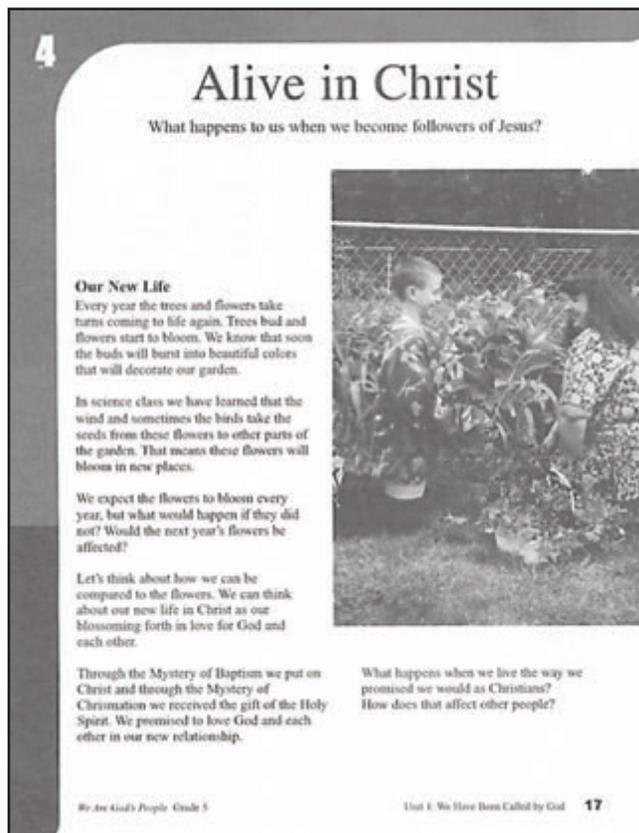
[Remind the children that they are older than they were last year. They can do more than before to live a Christian life.]

Divide the class into two groups and have them list two ways people their age can act that would show they are Christian. Then have them exchange papers and write how other people are affected by these actions. Let them share.

Supplementary Activity:

(Activity 1 on the back of the unit page) Write the question for this lesson on the board or on a poster board: *What happens to us when we become followers of Jesus?* Write the following answers after you read them in the text:

1. We become one with the Holy Trinity.
2. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide us.
3. We spend our life following God's way.



Background Reading:

(Baptism and Chrismation)

"Baptism gives us the divine life of the Trinity. Chrismation bestows on us its perfection. Here we find the characteristic of chrismation. We already received the Holy Trinity in baptism. Chrismation is the sacrament of spiritual progress through the gifts of the Holy Spirit" (*The Sacraments of Christian Initiation* 46).

5. The Divine Life

(6 minutes)

- a) Invite the students to look at the icon of the Trinity and remain silent for a few seconds before beginning the reading.
- b) Read the first paragraph. Have the students look at the icon again and ask them to see themselves at the table.
- c) Have the students read the remaining paragraphs.

Ask: *What do you think our Church Fathers are telling us to do?* (We are to be one in the Holy Trinity; we are to give our lives completely to God.)

6. Let us remember that...

(3 minutes)

Ask the students to read the information about the Church Fathers on this page. Ask the students to say a short prayer to thank God for our Church Fathers. [Or you can ask them to say aloud words of thanks to God for our Church Fathers.]

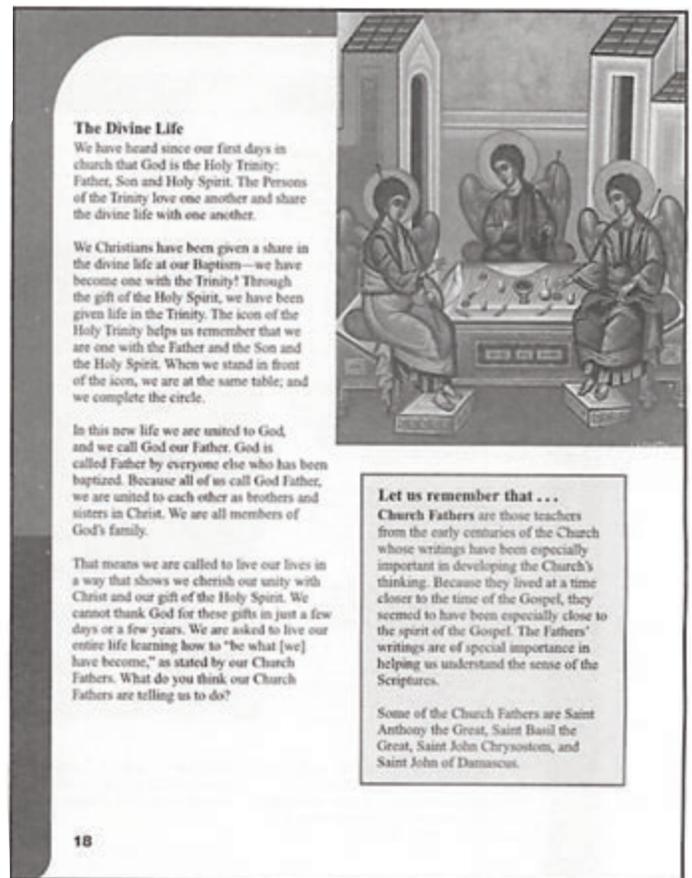
Supplementary Activity:

(Activity 2 on the back of the unit page) Have the students make note cards to be used for review.

Background Reading:

(The Trinity)

"God invites us into a relationship with Himself, but He reveals Himself as a community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are invited into this primary community. The famous icon of the Holy Trinity under the form of the hospitality of Abraham (cf Gn 18:1-15) portrays three angels seated around a table. By the harmony and blending of the lines of their bodies they form a circle, a unity open, inviting us to join this community of life and love. By our hospitality to one another we become god-like. The psalmist exclaimed, 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is, when brethren dwell as one!' (Ps 132/133:1). The distinguishing mark of the Christian faith remains love for one another (cf Jn 15:17; 1 Jn 4:7-13) in the image of the Trinity" (LLI 6)



The Divine Life
We have heard since our first days in church that God is the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Persons of the Trinity love one another and share the divine life with one another.

We Christians have been given a share in the divine life at our Baptism—we have become one with the Trinity! Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, we have been given life in the Trinity. The icon of the Holy Trinity helps us remember that we are one with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. When we stand in front of the icon, we are at the same table; and we complete the circle.

In this new life we are united to God, and we call God our Father. God is called Father by everyone else who has been baptized. Because all of us call God Father, we are united to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. We are all members of God's family.

That means we are called to live our lives in a way that shows we cherish our unity with Christ and our gift of the Holy Spirit. We cannot thank God for these gifts in just a few days or a few years. We are asked to live our entire life learning how to "be what [we] have become," as stated by our Church Fathers. What do you think our Church Fathers are telling us to do?

Let us remember that . . .
Church Fathers are those teachers from the early centuries of the Church whose writings have been especially important in developing the Church's thinking. Because they lived at a time closer to the time of the Gospel, they seemed to have been especially close to the spirit of the Gospel. The Fathers' writings are of special importance in helping us understand the sense of the Scriptures.

Some of the Church Fathers are Saint Anthony the Great, Saint Basil the Great, Saint John Chrysostom, and Saint John of Damascus.

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7. Our Christian Life (8 minutes)

a) Have the children open their New Testaments to the scriptural reading (Galatians 5:16-17) and check to see if everyone found it. After some silence, begin the reading of the first two paragraphs.

Have everyone read the scriptural passage aloud. Read the part they need to write aloud again slowly as they write the words.

b) Have the children complete the reading.

Ask: *What are some ways we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us?*
[Make a list on the board.]

Supplementary Activity:

Divide into two groups. Tell the students to think of two activities or jobs that their parents or any other adult expects of them (cleaning their rooms, doing homework, helping with siblings). Tell them to discuss the way they would behave if they did not want to cooperate. Then, discuss what should be their Christian response.

Let them role play a few scenes for the entire class

Our Christian Life
Christians are expected to live a certain way because Christ's life is in them. But living a Christian life is not easy.

Let's turn to the New Testament to read what happens to us in our daily life. Turn to **Galatians 5:16-17** and complete the following:

"I say, then: live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want -

We Christians know that the Holy Spirit dwells within us to be our guide. The Holy Spirit speaks to us in the depths of our hearts so that we now know how to follow God's way. This is often called our conscience.

Through prayer, we learn to listen to the inner voice of the Holy Spirit Who guides our conscience.

Many times our lives are so busy and noisy that we do not take the time to pray and to listen to the Holy Spirit. Those are the times we do not make the most Christ-like choices.

When you talk back to your dad or mom, you are not showing the respect for them that God asks of you. If you laugh at someone who falls in the cafeteria, you are not helping your brother or sister in Christ. Every time you complain about going to church, you are not honoring God. These are the times you are not listening to the Holy Spirit.

Each day we have to remind ourselves, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25). Through prayer we ask the Holy Spirit to help follow Jesus in everything we do.



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Background Reading:

(Living Gospels)

"All Christians are called to bear witness to the world, to be martyrs. By living out the Christian life, we are living Gospels, announcements of who and what God is, living evidence of His saving presence and activity. And this Christian life makes us servants to God, to one another and to the world. . . We do not have to wait until an absolute maturity is reached in the life of the Spirit to begin serving and being used by the Lord. Quite the contrary: by serving, we grow. By growing, we become capable of even more service" (LLIII 25).

Application

8. Heroes of Eastern Christianity (Egeria) (10 minutes)

Read the first three paragraphs. Ask: *Do you think you would have gone on this pilgrimage if you knew it took so long? How long does it take you to come to church? Do you ever complain that the trip is too long?*

Complete the reading on this page. Give the students time to answer the questions aloud or in their books.

Complete the reading on this page and have the students write their answers for the "What do you think?" section.

Optional Activity 1 (Life of Egeria)

Materials: White paper, construction paper, glue, scissors, copy of the icon.

Have the students write a summary about the life of Egeria. Paste a copy of her icon on a sheet of construction paper, and under it paste the summary. Display this page in the classroom or on a church bulletin board. Also, the page can be laminated and placed in a notebook or folder that can be called *Our Book of Christian Heroes*.

Optional Activity 2 (Your Questions)

Have the students work in groups as they answer the following questions:

- *What question would you have asked Egeria if you could have talked to her when she was alive?*
- *What do you think she would have answered?*

Let the students share their answers with the entire class.

EGERIA

Heroes of Eastern Christianity

Egeria, a Pilgrim to the Holy Land
For many years after Jesus' death and resurrection, Christians living in the Holy Land tried to remember the places where He had lived. Finally, when the Roman Emperor became a Christian, people began to build beautiful churches in these places. People from all over the Empire began to travel to the Holy Land to visit these shrines.

One pilgrim who left us a diary of her journey was a Spanish nun named Egeria. In the year 381 she traveled to the Holy Land and wrote about what she saw. Egeria wrote letters to the nuns in her monastery back in Spain. She also kept a diary of her pilgrimage, which we can still read today.

Egeria's trip was long and hard. Traveling was not as easy as it is today. While we could fly from the United States to Jerusalem in ten or twelve hours, Egeria's trip took three years!

Egeria spent one Pascha in Jerusalem and wrote about how people were baptized there. Many adults who were not Christians had come to prepare for Baptism.

The Church would not allow people to be baptized unless they could prove that they were serious about following Christ. The following is what Egeria saw:

"I must also describe how those who are to be baptized at Pascha are instructed. Whoever gives his name does so the day before the Fast, which they keep here for 40 days, begins. On the first day of the Fast a throne is set up for the bishop in the center of the principal church. The priests sit on both sides and all the other clergy stand around. One by one the candidates are led forward with their sponsors.

"Then the bishop questions each of them about the candidate. 'Does he lead a good life? Does he honor his parents? Is he a drunkard or a liar?' And he asks about other, more serious vices too.

"If the person is shown to be innocent in these things, the bishop adds his name. If not, the bishop tells him to go. 'Let him amend his life,' the bishop says 'and when he has done that, then let him come to the baptismal font.'"

Egeria tells how seriously the Christians in Jerusalem took Baptism. A person had to be deeply committed to living the life in Christ before he or she could even be baptized.

What do you think?

1. What is most surprising about the description Egeria wrote?

2. Identify one good action you try to do every day that shows you are following Jesus.

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9. Action Plan (10 minutes)

Use this page to help the students think about their actions and the consequences of them.

Have them work in groups. Tell them to choose one answer to share with everyone.

[Remember to stress that any action has consequences. Help them realize the importance of every decision.]

11. Summary (8 minutes)

Give out two note cards to every person. On one they are to write a question about the lesson; on the other they are to write the answer.

Collect the cards. Place all the questions on one table and the answers on another. Have the students match the cards.

12. Closing Prayer (2 minutes)

Read the Divine Liturgy prayer that is part of this lesson—"Remembering..."

Action Plan

We Are Christians

I. Read the following situations and be prepared to discuss the consequences of the three choices of action. Work in groups as you discuss the consequences.

1. Catherine is walking from her classroom to her locker in the school hall. Near the locker area she finds a wallet. No one is around. What would happen if Catherine

- A. Keeps it?
- B. Asks other students if they lost it?
- C. Takes it to the principal's office?

2. John and Peter were playing football in the house even though that was not allowed. Accidentally, their mom's antique lamp fell and cracked. Their dog, Pierre, was also playing with them. What would happen if they

- A. Tell their mom who did it?
- B. Tell their mom that Pierre did it?
- C. Blame their sister Ann for it?

II. Think about some of the things that happened last week at home, at school, or on the bus. Write about one time that you were led by the Holy Spirit to do something or not to do it. Explain how your action showed that as a Christian you are following Jesus.

Suggestions: I helped a new student find the correct classroom; I played with my brother and sister; I did not make fun of the way some students dress; I did not go to a movie that was not for my age.

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Prayer

(From the Great Litany)

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

People: To You, O Lord.

The Melkite Greek Catholic Church

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(From the Great Litany)

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Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, together with all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and each other and our entire lives to Christ our God.

People: To Thee, O Lord.

The Romanian Greek Catholic
Diocese of Canton

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People: To You, O Lord.

The Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic
Metropolitan Province

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People: To You, O Lord.

The Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of
Saint Josaphat

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(From the Great Litany)

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People: To You, O Lord.

The Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of
Saint Josaphat

Prayer

(From the Great Litany)

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People: To You, O Lord.

The Ukrainian Catholic Synod

Prayer

(From the Great Litany)

Remembering our most holy and immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary together with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.
People: To You, O Lord.

The Ukrainian Catholic Synod