

THE CHURCH

Community – Part 1



Many of us grew up with the idea that the Church is just the building where we go for Mass on Sundays. But she is *so much more*. The Church is the family of God, and we are all a part of this family. In this session, teens began to examine what it means to live as a member of the Church.

The CONNECT section of the parent sheet connects you with the information that was presented to your teen in our last small discipleship group. The DISCUSS section contains questions that you can use to start meaningful discussion on the topic covered and how it relates to your teen's life. The COMMIT section explains to you the commitment or challenge that your teen committed to as a way to grow in his or her faith.

CONNECT

Like earthly families, God's family has certain characteristics that define it. In this session, we unpacked the mystery of the mystical Body of Christ, and pointed out some of the defining characteristics of God's family, known as the four marks of the Church: she is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic (CCC 811-870).

The discipleship group also discussed how, as a Communion of three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—God is like a family. He has given us the Church as the means to invite us into this family, and it is a mystery, or a truth that we can live in and experience although not fully comprehend. God became man so that we could become sons of God. Jesus has made it possible for the Holy Trinity to live within us; this is sanctifying grace and our share in divine life. When we cooperate with grace, individually and as a community of faith in the Church, we become more like Jesus.



“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing... By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

—John 15:4-5, 8-11



“Now as [Saul] journeyed he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him. And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ And he said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; but rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.’”

—Acts 9:3-6



DISCUSS

The Church is the family of God. Making us members of this family is part of God’s plan of salvation for us. The *Catechism* says, “[God] has... willed to make men holy and save them, not as individuals without any bond or link between them, but rather to make them into a people who might acknowledge him and serve him in holiness” (CCC 781).

Here are some conversation starters to help you engage your teen in discussion about today’s session. Be sure to share your perspectives as well.

- » What do you think Jesus would look like if He walked among us today?
- » Share an experience when you were welcomed into someone else’s family. What did they do to make you feel like you were part of that family?
- » How is the Church the family of God?
- » What is one way we can share our experience of the Church as community with others?

 **COMMIT**

This week, teens were challenged to pray a rosary for Christian unity, with the intention that people who are not Catholic (as well as Catholics who have fallen away from the faith) may come to see that the Catholic Church is God's true, good, and holy plan for the salvation of the world.



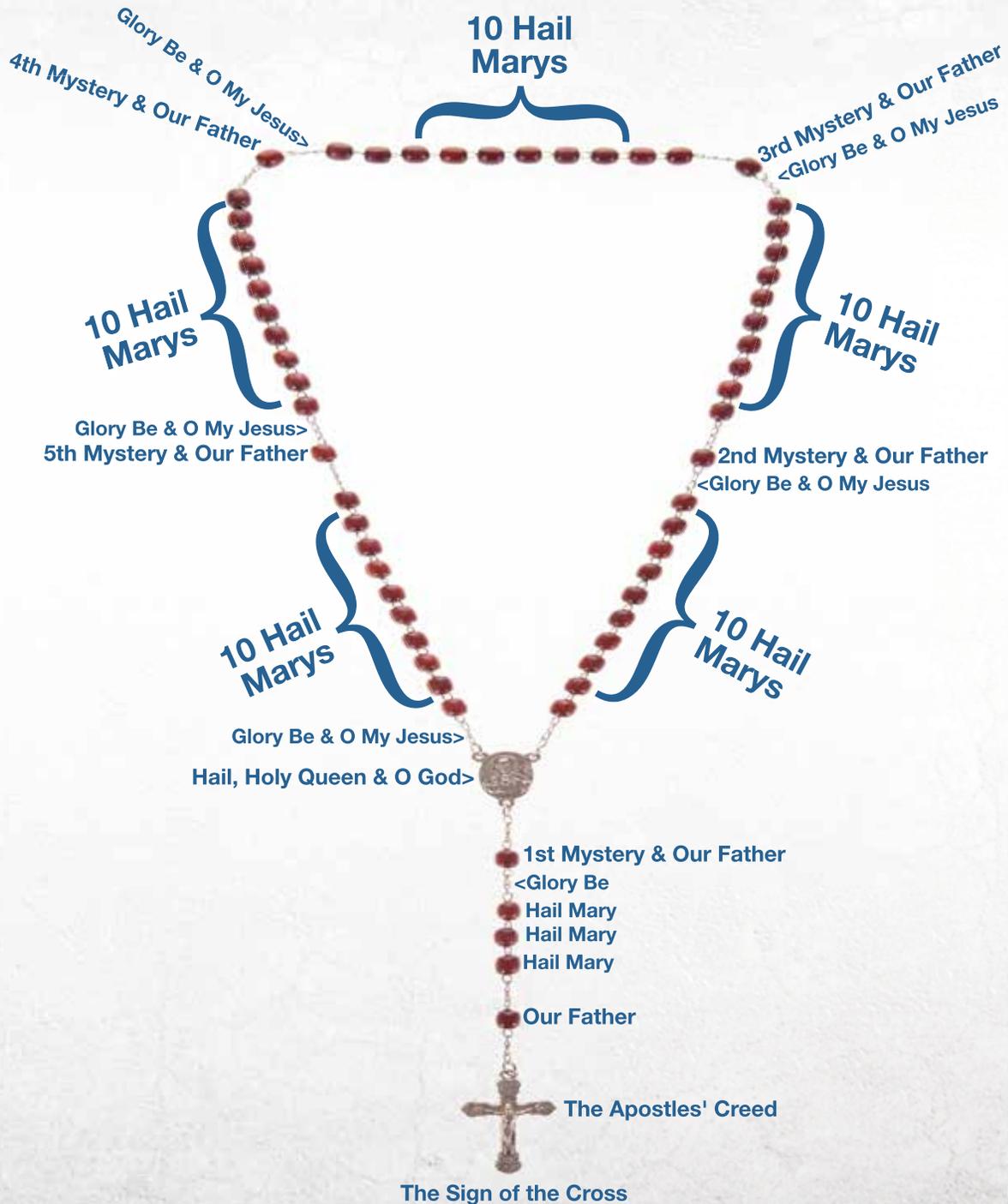
“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.”

—1 Timothy 2:1-6



TIP FOR THE WEEK

HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY



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MYSTERIES AND PRAYERS

The Joyful Mysteries (Monday and Saturday)

1. The Annunciation of Gabriel to Mary
2. The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth
3. The Birth of Our Lord
4. The Presentation of Our Lord
5. The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple

The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesday and Friday)

1. The Agony of Our Lord in the Garden
2. Our Lord is Scourged at the Pillar
3. Our Lord is Crowned with Thorns
4. Our Lord Carries the Cross to Calvary
5. The Crucifixion of Our Lord

The Luminous Mysteries (Thursday)

1. The Baptism of Our Lord in the River Jordan
2. The Wedding at Cana, when Christ manifested Himself
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration of Our Lord
5. The Last Supper, when Our Lord gave us the Holy Eucharist

The Glorious Mysteries (Wednesday and Saturday)

1. The Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord
2. The Ascension of Our Lord
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
4. The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty. He shall come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

OUR FATHER, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

GLORY BE to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

O MY JESUS, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy. Amen.

HAIL HOLY QUEEN, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us. And after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Amen.

O GOD, whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death, and Resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant, we beseech Thee, that by meditating upon these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

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