

Background for the Catechist

The Holy Family Visits Jerusalem

Jesus was born into and grew up in a loving family that worshiped God and celebrated the traditions of the Jewish faith.

While Matthew and Luke tell us about the infancy of Jesus, Luke's account of the visit of the Holy Family to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover is our only glimpse into the boyhood of the Savior. (See Luke 2:41–52.) This Gospel narrative, which appears only in Luke's Gospel, vividly reminds us that Jesus was both human and divine and that he came to do the work his Father sent him to do.

As she was told to do by the angel, Mary named her only Son Jesus, which means "Savior" and identifies the work his Father sent him to do, namely, to bring about the Salvation of the world. It was in the Holy Family that Jesus lived and "advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man" (Luke 2:52) as he prepared to accomplish the work his Father sent him to do.

For Reflection

In what ways has my family life prepared me and supported me to live my Baptism? What can I consistently do with the children to help them grow in "wisdom, age, and grace" before God and their families?

More Background

For further reading and reflection see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §§ 512–518, 531–534; *Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church* §§ 101, 104; *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* pages 79–87.

About the Children

Young children learn affection primarily from their family. The love, trust and care children receive within their family serve as the beginning and basis for a child's relationship with God, with their teachers and other people outside their family. When parents and teachers have shown them love, children learn to love. Regardless of how they act, all young children need warmth and caring from the adults around them in order to learn to show warmth to others. When parents and teachers show them warmth and respect consistently, children learn the importance of and want to imitate those behaviors.

A Few Suggestions . . .

You, as a teacher, are a significant person in the lives of the children in your class. Treat all children with love and respect. Focus on the positives. Children make mistakes and misbehave. Correct them gently and positively and move on. Children crave attention. If you give too much attention to what they do wrong, the children will do more of it to get your attention. If you point out and affirm and applaud what they do right, the children will be eager to please you by striving to continue those behaviors.

Lesson Planner

Faith Focus

Jesus grew up in a family. The family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is called the Holy Family.

Bible Story

"The Boy Jesus in the Temple" (Based on Luke 2:41–52)

Enriching the Lesson

- RCL Benziger *Stories of God's Love* Music CD and companion Songbook, Song 9
- Visit our preschool Web site www.RCLBenzigerPreschool.com this week.

Chapter Objectives

After this week's lesson the children should be able to:

- recall the Bible story "The Boy Jesus in the Temple."
- discover things the Holy Family did together.
- share ways the members of their family love and care for one another as the Holy Family loved and cared for one another.

Materials Needed

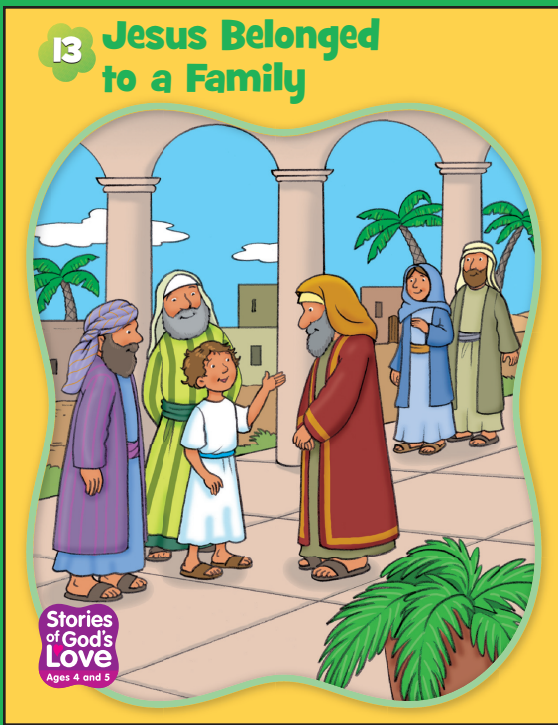
In addition to the general supplies named on page 9 of this guide, you will need the following materials for teaching this lesson:

- ice cream sticks or wood pieces
- 6-inch by 6-inch pieces of sturdy paper
- closed Bible with bookmark placed at Luke 2:41–52
- 8.5-inch by 14-inch legal size paper for a banner with heading "The Holy Family" on the left half and the heading "My Family" on the right half, one sheet for each of the children

Prayer

Father,
we are the family and the friends
of your only Son, Jesus.
Unite us in respect and love.
Help us live in joy and peace with others.
Amen.

BASED ON OPENING PRAYERS
FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY



The Boy Jesus in the Temple

In Jesus' time Jewish families traveled every spring to the Temple in the city of Jerusalem. The Temple was the main place where Jewish people worshiped God. While they were in Jerusalem, they would celebrate a special meal. At the meal they thanked God for his love and for taking care of them.

When Jesus was twelve years old, the Holy Family walked many miles from their home in Nazareth to Jerusalem. Jesus, Mary and Joseph are the Holy Family. Many of their relatives and neighbors made the trip with them.

When the time came for them to go back home to Nazareth, Mary and Joseph discovered that Jesus was not with them. They quickly went back to the Temple where they saw Jesus with the teachers. Jesus was asking them questions and listening to them. Mary and Joseph were very happy when they found him.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph joined their family and neighbors for the trip back to Nazareth. The Bible tells us that as he grew up in Nazareth Jesus was loved by God and all the people.

BASED ON LUKE 2:41-52

Welcome

- Provide a 6-inch by 6-inch piece of sturdy paper for each child and ice cream sticks or small wood shapes and glue for the children to share.
- Greet the children and direct them to the Welcome Center. Remind them that Jesus was born into and grew up in a family. Tell the children that Joseph was a carpenter. Have them say the word *carpenter* aloud with you and explain to them that a carpenter is someone who makes things out of wood. Call the children's attention to the materials in the Welcome Center and have them work alone or with a partner to use the wood and other materials to make something.
- Walk among the children as they are working and talk about Jesus belonging to a family, learning from Mary and Joseph, helping Mary and Joseph and playing with other children.
- Summarize by sharing with the children that Jesus, Mary and Joseph are called the Holy Family.

Gather

- Play the gathering song to signal that it is time for the children to clean up and move to the Story Time Area.
- Tell the children about your family. If possible, show them a picture of your family. Children enjoy talking about their family and they will enjoy hearing about yours. Play verse two of song 9 on the *Stories of God's Love* Music CD. Conclude by telling the children that today you will tell them a story about Jesus' family.

Teach

Introduce the Bible story.

- Show the children the illustration on the teaching poster or the cover of the children's leaflet.
- Tell the children the title of the chapter, "Jesus Belonged to a Family." Remind the children that Jesus, Mary and Joseph are called the Holy Family. Point to the illustrations of Jesus, Mary and Joseph and tell them that the picture is a picture of a special trip the Holy Family made. Invite the children to listen to discover what happened to Jesus in this story.

Tell the Bible story.

- Invite a child to come up and open the Bible to the place marked by the bookmark, Luke 2:41-52.
- Take the opened Bible, place the children's leaflet inside and tell the Bible story on the For My Family Page of the leaflet to the children.

Recall the Bible story.

- Help the children recall key details of today's Bible story by playing a remembering game with them.

- Explain that you will read sentences aloud and that each sentence will have one missing word. Tell them that after you read each sentence, you will stop, and they are to tell you the missing word that completes the sentence correctly. Remember to give the children clues if they have difficulty supplying the correct word.
- Begin by demonstrating the activity. Read the first sentence aloud. Then say the missing word.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph are called the ____ family. (*Holy*) When he was twelve years old, Jesus went to the ____ in the city of Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph. (*Temple*) They went there to thank ____ for everything he did for them. (*God*) When it was time to return home, Jesus was not with Mary and Joseph. They found him in the Temple talking and listening to the _____. (*teachers*) The Holy Family then returned to their ____ in Nazareth. (*home*)

- Praise the children for remembering the story so well.

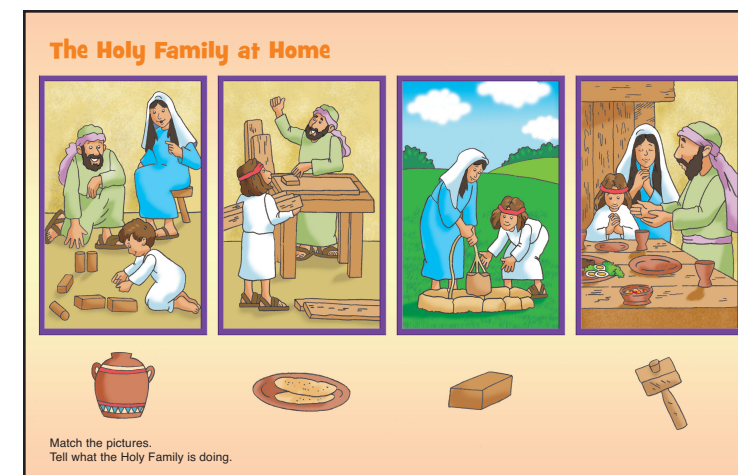
Apply

Work on the children's leaflet activity.

- Distribute the children's leaflet for chapter 13 and have the children open them. Share with the class that the pictures on the pages show things the Holy Family might have done together.
- Explain the activity and have the children draw lines to match the pictures. Be sure to provide clues, if necessary, to help the children.
- Ask the children to name the picture matches they made. Conclude by reminding the children that Jesus grew up in a family and did things with his family as they do in their family.

Make Holy Family and My Family banners.

- Provide markers and crayons for the children to share, and a piece of legal size paper on which you have printed the heading "The Holy Family" on the left half of the page and the heading "My Family" on the right half of the page.
- Ask the children to draw a picture of the Holy Family on the left half of the page and a picture of their family on the right



- half of the page. Walk among the children and talk with them about their pictures as they are working on them.
- Collect the completed banners and display them in the room the next time you gather with the children for religion class.
- Be sure to write their name and date on their work.

Connect with the child's life.

- Ask the children to name some of the favorite things they do with their family at home. Thank them for their responses.
- Tell the children to take their leaflet home and share the Bible story on the For My Family Page and the activity with their family.

Pray

- Gather the children at the prayer table.
- Introduce the prayer by explaining to the children that in today's prayer they will pray the "Thank you" words of the prayer aloud after you.
- Invite the children to quiet themselves for prayer, using the breathing gestures. (*Pause.*)
- Lead the children in prayer. Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Teacher: God, you blessed the Holy Family.

Children: *Echo the words of the prayer.*

Teacher: Bless my family.

Children: *Echo the words of the prayer.*

Teacher: Thank you, God.

Children: *Echo the words of the prayer.*

Teacher: Together let us pray, "Amen."

All: Amen.

Additional Activity

Make Holy Family place mats.

Use this activity to help the children discover that the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is called the Holy Family.

- Provide crayons and markers for the children to share, and a copy of the prayer place mat activity master on page 164 of this guide for each child.
- Invite the children to color and decorate their place mats. Optional: Laminate or use clear contact paper to cover each place mat.
- Tell the children to take their place mats home and share them with their family.
- Optional: If you do not use this activity in class, send it home with the children with instructions for families to work on the activity with their children.