

Grade 6

Introduction to Salvation History

Note to catechist: See Salvation History Overview in Introduction.

LESSON FOCUS

This lesson will introduce students to one another and to the theme of their book, *Following Jesus*. God provides ways for us to follow Jesus and to prepare us for eternal life. Out of love God gives us the Ten Commandments so that we can love him and our neighbor. He also gives us the Holy Mass in order that we will receive the grace necessary for our salvation. Moses plays a key role in the story of salvation, which is presented in this level textbook. Through Moses, who prefigures Jesus, we see that God delivers his people from slavery in Egypt. Through the Mass Jesus delivers his people from sin. God makes a covenant of love with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. This covenant is fulfilled through Jesus Christ, his Church, and the Sacraments.

AIMS

- Students will be introduced to one another and to the Grade 6 book, *Following Christ*.
- Students will understand that God gave us the Ten Commandments and the Mass to help us on our journey to heaven.
- Students will learn that Moses prefigures Jesus.

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (5–10 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

SCRIPTURE:

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him”
(1 Corinthians 2:9).

We cannot even begin to imagine the beauty of eternal life with God.

SACRED ART: Student Text cover

Triptych with the Ascension of Christ, Last Judgment and Pentecost (detail), Fra Angelico

We see Jesus ascending into heaven. Each of us is called to follow Christ; in doing this we will be led to eternal life.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Glory Be, Student Text, p. 147

Welcome (25–35 minutes)

- Optional ice breaker: Take As Much As You Want!

Before you begin your lesson, have a roll of toilet paper on hand! Explain to the children that they will need this for the next activity. Tell students that you’re going to pass around the roll. Invite students to take as much as they want, telling them, “Take as much as you need to complete the job.” Do not tell them what the job is though! After everyone has had a good laugh over the amount of paper they took, explain how the game works.

For *every piece* of toilet paper the students ripped off, they must tell the class one thing about *themselves*. Some will realize they took quite a bit of toilet paper, but with a little prompting and probing from you, they will find things to share. As an extra twist, you might have students say what their favorite thing about going to religious education is when they get to the last piece. This activity provides a nice

MATERIALS

- Bible
- White board and markers
- Grade 6 Student Text, *Following Christ*

Optional:

- Toilet paper (see Welcome Activity)

WORDS TO KNOW

salvation history: the story of God's plan to save each of us from the consequences of sin. Salvation history began with Creation and will continue to the end of time. Each of us is a part of this love story in our own lives. As the story unfolds, God's love and mercy become evident through his Son, Jesus Christ, as well as through the Church and grace received in the Sacraments.

way to find out about students' personalities, families, likes, and dislikes—and the students really love it!

- Welcome students to their sixth grade class. Explain that this year they are going to be focusing on the Ten Commandments, prayer, the Beatitudes, the Mass, and the New Covenant established by Jesus Christ.
 - Spend some time going through the layout of their textbook (see Table of Contents): the Ten Commandments, the Holy Mass, and the Last Things: heaven, hell, and purgatory.

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

God provides ways for us to prepare for eternal life. Out of love God gives us the Ten Commandments so that we can love him and our neighbor. He also gives us the Holy Mass in order that we will receive the grace necessary for our salvation.

Lesson Explanation (20–30 minutes)

Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.

Focus 1: God has a plan for each of us so that we may share in eternal life.

- God gives us everything we need for our salvation.
 - *Have you ever gone to camp or on a trip somewhere?* (Answers will vary.)
 - *Did you or your parents pack up everything you would need to make the trip?* (Yes.)
 - *Do you think that God put us on this earth without providing all that we would need to survive, and most importantly to get to heaven?* (No.)
 - This year we will study two very important things God gave us for our salvation: the Ten Commandments and the Mass. We received the Ten Commandments through Moses; we also celebrated the first Passover through Moses. The Passover prefigures the Mass; Moses prefigures Jesus. Let's take a step back and look at the big picture.
- **Review** briefly the story of God's saving plan using the timeline below. For students new to *Faith and Life* this year, the story may need to be told without questions.

Old Covenant



New Covenant

Creation

Adam/Eve, Noah,
Abraham, Moses,
David

Jesus Christ
Church
Sacraments

Eternal Life
(Heaven)

A Short Summary from the Passover to the Last Supper

Moses delivered the Israelite people out of Egypt. After the Israelites were in Egypt for four hundred years, they cried out to God to deliver them from their bondage to slavery. The Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go. God sent ten plagues. For the tenth plague God said that all of the firstborn sons in the land would die. However, God told the Israelites that their firstborns would live if they sacrificed an unblemished lamb and had a feast in which they would eat the lamb with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. They also had to take the blood of the lamb and place it over the doorpost with a hyssop branch. When the angel of death “passed over” the homes with the blood of the lamb, the firstborn of those households would be saved. This was the first Passover; this feast was celebrated every year afterward. The night before Jesus died he was celebrating the Passover feast. During the Last Supper Jesus became the “Lamb of God,” whose blood would be shed for the forgiveness of sins. Moses delivered the people from their bondage to slavery—he prefigures Christ, who delivers us from our bondage to sin. The Last Supper is the first Mass. Jesus consecrates the bread and wine to become his Body and Blood.

- **Why did God create us?** (*God created us out of love, so that we can be with him in heaven one day.*)
 - The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God so the gates of heaven were closed; death entered the world.
 - **Did God abandon us then?** (*No; God promised to save mankind by reopening the gates of heaven. He promised to do this by sending a Savior.*)
- God reveals his story of salvation through the Bible. The Old Testament tells the story of God’s promises for mankind before Jesus came.
 - **In the Old Testament, who else did God make covenant promises to besides Adam and Eve?** (*Besides Adam and Eve, God made covenant promises to Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.*)
 - **In the New Testament, who fulfills God’s plan and how does he redeem mankind?** (*Jesus Christ redeems mankind through his life, death, and Resurrection.*)
 - Jesus opens the gates of heaven. **But does this mean that we will all automatically go to heaven?** (*No.*)
 - **What does Jesus leave us with to guide us to heaven?** (*The Church.*)
 - **What does Jesus give us to nourish our souls with his life—that is, his grace?** (*The Sacraments.*)

Conclusion: God’s plan is for us to share in eternal life. The story of salvation tells the story of covenant love; each covenant points to Jesus Christ who leads us to heaven.

Focus 2: Moses: Many important events during salvation history occurred during the life of Moses.

- This year we will be studying about the Ten Commandments, which were given to Moses. We will also be studying about the Mass. Jesus was celebrating the Passover feast when he instituted the Eucharist.
- **If time permits**, discuss the connection between the Passover and the Last Supper. (See sidebar.)

Conclusion: During the life of Moses, God gave us the Ten Commandments and, Moses celebrated the first Passover, which prefigured the Mass. Both of these are important for our salvation.

Review Supplemental Lesson—Introduction to Salvation History

- God has a plan for each of us so that we may live in eternal life.
- Moses played an important role in the story of salvation history. We received the Ten Commandments through Moses.

- Moses delivered the people from slavery in Egypt. Jesus delivers us from our slavery to sin.

Application (5–10 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following for discussion.

- God’s plan for us is eternal happiness with him in heaven.
 - **What has God provided us to help us attain eternal life?** (Jesus Christ; the Catholic Church and Sacraments; guardian angels; our parents and teachers.)
 - **How should we respond to all that God has given us for our salvation?** (We should respond in thanksgiving for all that God has given us, through prayer, love of God and our neighbor, by receiving the Sacraments, by living a life of holiness, by trusting in God’s mercy, etc.)
- **Looking at the front cover of the Grade 6 Student Text, what event of Christ’s life does this picture depict?** (Jesus’ Ascension into heaven.)
- The name of our textbook is *Following Christ*. **Once Jesus ascended into heaven, what did he leave with us to ensure that we would be able to “follow him” to heaven?** (He gave us the gift of the Church, the Sacraments, and the guidance of Holy Spirit.)
- By following the Ten Commandments, we know how to love God and our neighbor. Through the Eucharist we will receive the grace that is necessary to follow the Ten Commandments.
 - Look at the list of the Ten Commandments on page 15. **How do you think that you will learn to follow Christ more closely this year?** (Answers will vary.)
 - Look at the picture of the chalice on page 103. **Why do you think that the chalice used at Mass is made of a precious metal such as gold?** (Because it will hold the Blood of Christ.)
 - **Do you realize that through the Blood of Christ, our sins are forgiven and we receive grace so that we are able to better live out our lives?** (Yes.)
 - **Do you think that you will be able to follow Christ more closely this year as you gain a better understanding of the Mass?** (Yes.)

Celebration (5 minutes)

- Pray: Dear Jesus, thank you for inviting us to enter eternal life. Thank you for the gift of the Church, the Ten Commandments, and the Mass, which guide us to attain eternal life. Thank you for this year, in which we will learn more about following you in what we do and how we pray. Amen.