

Liturgical Year Supplemental Lesson

Advent and Christmas

Correlated Materials

Student Text, pp. 135–36, 141–42
See introduction to Supplemental
Lessons on pp. xvi–xvii.

LESSON FOCUS

Through our participation in the liturgical year, we walk with Christ. In Christ we have hope for eternal life. Through the liturgical year, we come to know Christ. The liturgical calendar guides us through the Church year.

AIMS

- Students will be reminded that we have hope through Jesus Christ.
- Students will be reminded that through our participation in the liturgical year, we become a part of the story of salvation history.

MATERIALS

- Bible
- White board and markers
- Copies of liturgical calendar

WORDS TO KNOW

Note: there are no vocabulary words for this lesson.

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (10–15 minutes)

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

SCRIPTURE: Student Text, p. 135

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased” (Luke 2:14).

We give glory to God for giving us his only Son, Jesus Christ.

SACRED ART: Student Text, p. 136

Adoration of the Magi, Fra Angelico

We see the Magi giving honor and glory to the Christ Child, who gives us hope.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Act of Hope, Student Text, p. 148

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

Jesus Christ is the hope of mankind. We receive hope for eternal life through our participation in the liturgical year.

Lesson Explanation (35–45 minutes)

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

Focus 1: In Christ we receive hope for eternal life.

- **Is there any person in your life that you feel you depend on a lot?** (Parent, best friend, and others.)
 - **Do you feel like you can really trust that person because he builds you up, gives you hope, and makes a big difference in your life?** (Answers will vary.)

- We can all have such a Person in our lives; that Person is Jesus Christ.
 - *Why do you think that we say that Jesus Christ is the center of salvation history? (Because he fulfilled the promises of the Old Testament by redeeming mankind; we are saved through the graces received in Christ.)*
 - *Why do you think that it is important for the Church to celebrate the life of Christ? (So that we can walk with Christ; to remember that we are in need of our Savior, Jesus Christ; to remind us that Jesus fulfilled the promises made to us; by celebrating the events of Christ's life we can come to know and love him; Jesus is our hope for eternal life.)*
 - *How does the Church celebrate the life of Christ? (Through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, through liturgical seasons, and through other liturgical feasts.)*
 - *Why should we celebrate the liturgical year? (Through our participation, we walk with Christ and we are drawn closer to him; God's plan of salvation becomes our plan of faith, hope, and love.)*

Conclusion: Jesus Christ is at the center of salvation history. It is only through Christ that we are able to share in eternal life. But we must walk closely with him. We can do this by actively participating in the liturgical life of the Church. Through our participation in the events of the liturgical calendar, we can walk with Christ and receive hope for eternal life.

Focus 2: Liturgical Calendar

- Through the liturgical year, we can walk with Christ. **Explain** the Church calendar and liturgical year using the Teacher's Manual Appendix pages B-7 through B-10.

Conclusion: The liturgical calendar helps us to see the different seasons of the year. The various colors symbolize various truths and sentiments of the Faith. (See Student Text, p. 142, for a review of the symbolism of the colors.)

Review Supplemental Lesson—Liturgical Year: Advent and Christmas (3 minutes)

- In Christ we receive hope for eternal life.
- As we walk through the liturgical year, we walk with Christ; we become part of his love story.

Application (10–15 minutes)

- Through the seasons of the Church year, we participate in God's saving plan. **Have students reflect** on each season and then provide examples in their lives of how they have experienced these seasons. Students may share or write answers on paper.

- For each season (or just Advent and Christmas): *How do we walk with Christ and become closer to him? What can we learn in each season?*
 - Advent (*Waiting and preparing for Christmas and for our own conversion through prayer and sacrifice.*)
 - Christmas (*God always keeps his promises; our blessings, joy, new life, etc.*)
 - Ordinary Time (*Living out the spiritual trials and blessings of our daily lives.*)
 - Lent (*Sacrifice, self-giving love, repentance, forgiveness, mercy, etc.*)
 - Easter (*New life, joy comes through suffering, etc.*)

Celebration (5 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following.

- Pray the Act of Hope on Student Text, p. 148.
- Quiet students and listen to the refrain of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” in the *Adoremus Hymnal*, #301 (<http://www.ignatius.com/promotions/adoremus-hymnal/downloadable-mp3s.htm>).
- Remind students that December 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (celebrating that the Blessed Mother was free from Original Sin), a Holy Day of Obligation.

Angels We Have Heard on High

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

Luke 2:14

Legend has it that Saint Francis of Assisi put together the first manger scene for Christmas with figures to inspire devotion—and that was about eight hundred years ago. The story of the birth of the Son of God has an endless appeal. For, considering who Jesus is, he chose for himself the humblest possible birth. He had every right to be born in a palace; he was born in a stable. He had every right to many servants; at most he had an ox and a donkey.

The Son of God did not come into the world with power and glory. He did not come to establish an earthly kingdom. He came to redeem the human race from sin. His birth was the first step toward that end.

The Gospel tells us that the birth of Jesus came in "the fullness of time," that is, at the time God had chosen and prepared. He chose a virgin, Mary of Nazareth, to be the Mother of his Son, and let her remain a virgin before and after his birth. Isaiah the prophet had written: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel!" (Is 7:14).

God chose Mary from among all Jewish women to be the Mother of his Son. He also protected her from Original Sin, which has been passed on to every other descendant of Adam, except Jesus himself. Mary possessed God's grace from the first moment of her existence. It would not have been fitting for God

the Son to receive his humanity from a sinful woman. Mary's conception without Original Sin is called the Immaculate Conception. "Immaculate" means "pure" or "spotless."

Mary's soul, then, was pure and spotless. She was "full of grace" because God had saved her from Original Sin and all actual sin. She never sinned—not once, not even in the smallest way. She loved God so much. Mary was first in importance, after Jesus, among all the people who played a major role in God's plan of redemption. But she was not an earthly princess. She lived with her parents in a small town of Nazareth. She was betrothed to a man named Joseph, a carpenter.



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Mary was still a young girl, betrothed to Saint Joseph, when God sent an angel to her on a very special mission. She must have been startled. The archangel Gabriel told her not to be afraid. He told her that she had found favor with God and had been chosen to be the Mother of the Savior. He told her that she would conceive the Child by the power of the Holy Spirit; thus, she would always remain a virgin. Furthermore, the Child would be called "Son of God."

Mary's answer was: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38).

Then the angel left her, and God worked the miracle in which his only Son was conceived in her womb without an earthly father. When it became clear that Mary was going to bear a child, the same angel, Gabriel, told Joseph, Mary's betrothed, that Mary was with child by the Holy Spirit. This Child, he told Joseph, was to be named Jesus, because he would save his people from their sins. The angel told Joseph not to be concerned.

Joseph was relieved to hear the angel's message. He had been anxious about his life with Mary. He had not understood about Mary

conceiving a child without a human father, and he had wondered about God's plan for him as Mary's husband. Now Joseph and Mary together prepared for the Child's birth.

Not long before the Child was due, the Roman emperor decreed that there should be a census of the whole empire. Joseph had to take Mary with him to Bethlehem, the town of his ancestors, to register there for the census.

This involved a trip of about ninety miles, which must have been uncomfortable for Mary in her condition. Then, after the dusty, crowded roads, they found the houses and hotels in Bethlehem already filled. After asking everywhere, Joseph led his beloved wife to a stable, a cave in a hillside where she would be out of the cold night air and have privacy; and there, in that stable, the Son of God was born. There he gave his first cry and was laid down to sleep on some straw in a manger. He was wrapped in strips of cloth called swaddling clothes.

In the fields on some nearby hills, unusual things were happening. Angels came to some shepherds and told them to go to the stable to see the newborn Savior of the world. When the angels disappeared, the shepherds did what they had been told and found the Child. They were the first to see him. These shepherds weren't very powerful or important people, but they had what is always needed to find Jesus: humility. When they saw him, Luke tells us, they "understood" what they had been told about the Child.

Who Is Jesus?

When Jesus cried, or felt chilled, or became hungry, it was God crying, or feeling chilled, or becoming hungry. He is the Son of God made man—that is, true God and true man. Before becoming man, he had eternal, infinite life with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit in the Blessed Trinity. This life was never interrupted; even after becoming man he remains God.

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Liturgical Colors and Vestments

ALB: a full-length white tunic worn by the priest when offering Mass.

AMICE: an oblong piece of white cloth worn by the priest under the alb covering his shoulders.

CHALICE: the cup-shaped vessel used at Mass to contain the Precious Blood of Christ.

CHASUBLE: the outer garment worn by the priest celebrating Mass.

CIBORIUM: a vessel with a lid used to hold the consecrated Hosts which we receive in Holy Communion.

CINCTURE: a cord tied around the waist of the alb.

COPE: a large semi-circular cloak worn by the priest at Benediction and in processions.

CORPORAL: a square white linen cloth on which the paten and chalice are placed during Mass.

CRUETS: small bottles or vessels that contain the water and wine used during Mass.

DALMATIC: the outer garment worn by a deacon at Mass or other liturgical celebrations.

FINGER TOWEL: a cloth used by the priest to dry his hands during the Mass.

HUMERAL VEIL: a long, oblong piece of cloth worn like a shawl over the priest's shoulders during Benediction when the priest holds the monstrance.

LAVABO DISH OF FINGER BOWL: a shallow dish for the water used when the priest washes his hands at Mass.

PALL: a stiff, square card covered with white linen used to cover the chalice at Mass.

PATEN: a plate of precious material on which the Body of Christ is placed during Mass.

PURIFICATOR: a small white linen towel used by the priest to purify the chalice and paten after Communion.



alb



amice



chalice



chasuble



ciborium



cincture



cope



corporal

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STOLE: a long, narrow strip of cloth worn around the priest's neck during Mass; it is the same color as the chasuble.

VESTMENTS: special garments worn by the clergy at all liturgical celebrations. At Mass these include the amice, alb, cincture, stole, and chasuble. For Benediction the cope and humeral veil are used.

LITURGICAL COLORS

The different colors used throughout the liturgical year for vestments and decorations in the Church symbolize various truths and sentiments of the Faith.

WHITE: symbolizes purity, joy, innocence, holiness, and glory; it is used during the Christmas and Easter seasons, for feasts and commemorations of Christ (other than the Passion) and for feasts and memorials of Mary, the angels, and saints who were not martyrs, and it may be used for Masses of the dead.

RED: symbolizes fire and blood; used for celebrations of the Passion, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, for Pentecost, for feasts of the Apostles and evangelists, and for feasts of martyrs.

GREEN: symbolizes life and hope; used for days which are not feasts during Ordinary Time (the time after Epiphany up to Ash Wednesday and after Pentecost up to Advent).

VIOLET: symbolizes penitence and sorrow; used during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent. It may also be used for Masses of the dead.

ROSE: is an indication of a more joyful celebration, and is used on Gaudete Sunday during Advent and Laetare Sunday during Lent.

BLACK: symbolizes mourning; it may be used in Masses for the dead and on All Souls' Day.



cruets



dalmatic



finger towel



humeral veil



pall



paten



purificator



stole

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