



School and Religious Education Program Invitation

Lesson Plan

Grade 4

Preparation

Personal Reflection: So that you have a better understanding of the need for and purpose of this lesson, read Archbishop Perez's pastoral letter regarding the *Nothing Compares to Being There Initiative*. It can be found at <https://archphila.org/nothingcompares/>. Explore the additional information and links found on the web site.

Catechesis at this level includes emphases on the Commandments, Liturgical Year, and Prayer. Please review the guidelines for the Fourth grade found on the web site for the Office of Catechetical Formation: <https://phillyocf.org/elementary-religious-education/>

Learning Objectives/Goals

- The students will realize that the season of Advent is a good time for them to focus on Jesus coming to them in the Eucharist.
- The students will gain a deeper understanding of the Mass as a form of prayer and will learn various forms of prayer such as the Jesus Prayer, Prayers to say at the Elevation and Prayer Journals.
- The students will learn that attendance at Mass on Sunday is an important way of following the third Commandment.

Activities

1. Explain to the students that we are now in the season of Advent, a time that we recall the many years that people waited for the coming of the Savior since the time of Adam and Eve. Ask if they can recall any of those who were among the people who "waited" for the Savior. Begin a Jesse Tree to recall the Old Testament figures.
2. Recall with the students that during that time God gave the Commandments to Moses as a Covenant with God: outlining our duties to God and to neighbor. Note that the first three commandments relate to our duties to God and the other seven relate to our duties to others. Spend some time focusing on the third Commandment.
 - Read the third commandment from scripture: *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.* (Ex. 20:8-10)
 - Ask the students which day is the Sabbath day. Give them a little background on the Biblical references to the Sabbath: Biblical Sabbath. Sabbath is first mentioned in the Genesis creation narrative, where the seventh day is set aside as a day of rest (in Hebrew, shabbat) and made holy by God (Genesis 2:2-3). Observation and remembrance of Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments. We have an obligation to obey the commandments.
 - Ask the students how they can keep the Lord's Day holy. Among the responses, place an emphasis on participation in the Mass and prayer.
 - Review with the children the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Tell them that the word "Liturgy" comes from a Greek word meaning "to work" and that in order to participate fully, they need to pay attention and focus on what is being said and done. They should not be passive participants.
3. Tell the students that, during the Elevation of the Host and Elevation of the Chalice, Bells are rung to draw their attention to the sacred event happening at that time. They should focus on the altar and whisper a silent prayer such as the JESUS PRAYER (simply the name of Jesus or "*I love You, Jesus.*") Pope Pius X recommended the prayer, "*My Lord and my God!*" This is also a good time to teach the prayer often used in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, "*O Sacrament most holy! O Sacrament Divine! All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine!*"

On a regular basis, review the following with students at this level:

- How do I prepare for Mass?
- How do I participate in Mass?
- How do I show reverence in Church during Mass?
- How do I receive Holy Communion?
- What is the Communion Fast? Why do we fast?
- What is the relationship between Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation?
- How do I receive the Sacrament of Penance?
- How do I make an Act of Contrition?
- How should I participate in Benediction?

Incorporate the prayers of the Mass, the Jesus prayer, other prayers offered in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the Divine Praises and the Act of Contrition into daily times of prayer so that the children will gain adequate experience in saying these prayers.

Follow - Up Activity

Journal Keeping

This *prayer form* (tool) enables a student to reflect on the goals and directions of his/her life, and to appreciate and deepen a personal relationship with a loving Father. It provides a method to assess these experiences.

Help the students to begin a prayer journal reflecting on their weekly participation in Mass and on how they observed the Lord's Day. Clear guidelines for setting up a prayer journal are found in the guidelines for this level.

