

# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 1

1. Have your child ask five people, including members of your family, why they think it is important to read the Bible. Discuss the answers together with your child.
2. Read Psalm 92 with your child. Then, have him or her use it as a model to write a prayer praising and thanking God for his faithfulness and protection.
3. Have your child read Jeremiah 7:23. Then, discuss together what God tells us we must do to enjoy life with him.
4. Every night for a week, read a short passage from the Bible with your child before you go to bed.
5. Discuss with your family what this Sunday's readings tell us about God.
6. If your family has a special Bible, look through it together. Talk about why the Bible is special and where it can be placed in your home to honor its important role in your lives. If your family does not have a Bible, make arrangements to purchase a family Catholic Bible and display it in a place of honor in your home.



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## Chapter 2

1. The original Sacred Scriptures were written in Hebrew or Greek. There are many English translations of the Bible done by different groups. Each group gives its version a name. The New American Bible (NAB) is the official Catholic translation of the Bible. It is the Bible translation we hear proclaimed in the readings at Mass. See which Bible you have at home. If you do not have a family Bible, consider getting one. Your parish priest can help you.
2. If you have a family Bible, take time with your child to note some of its special features. Family Bibles are often very old, because they are passed on from one generation to the next. Look at the copyright date. How old is your Bible? Many family Bibles have a family tree or pages to record the births and deaths of family members. They may also have a table of contents, an index, a list of abbreviations, and a Bible dictionary. Does your Bible have special family pages? Does it have maps, interesting art, or special prayer pages? Talk with your family about what makes your family Bible unique.
3. With members of your family, play a game of 20 Questions. Have one person secretly choose the identity of a well-known person, such as a community leader or celebrity. Then, have other players ask yes or no questions until they determine the name of the person or until 20 questions have been asked. When you have finished playing, talk with your family about how this game involves revelation—the revealing of information that leads to discovery. Talk about how God reveals himself to us in the Bible.



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## Chapter 3

1. With your family, read about creation in Psalm 104. Talk about the similarities and differences between Psalm 104 and the passages about creation that you read in Genesis 1:26–30 and Genesis 2:7,18–23.
2. Have your child make a creation poster based on a poem like the one on page 21 of the Student Book.
3. With members of your family, take a walk and name all the things you see that God created. List ways you can use these items properly or help to save and protect them.
4. Talk with your family about how you can all become stewards of God's creation. Think of things that your family can do together.
5. Arrange a family visit to a zoo, an aquarium, or a planetarium. Talk together about the wonderful things God has made. Ask your child to write a prayer about one thing that impressed them.



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## Chapter 4

1. Work with your child to find online news stories that show the effects of sin and the people who are affected most by it. Talk as a family about these stories. Discuss the choices the people involved made and what they might have done differently as children of God. Then, work together to make a list of intentions. Keep these intentions in your prayers.
2. You might read about Saint Bernadette of Lourdes in *Little Lessons from the Saints* (Loyola Press) with your child. Then, talk together about how Bernadette met the challenges of public criticism and chronic illness with love and unshakeable faith.
3. Pray Psalm 100 together with your child.
4. Ask your child to read these stories from the Bible. Then, discuss together the choices the people in each story made and how their choices affected them and their society. Also talk about God's response to those choices.
  - Adam and Eve: Genesis 3:1–24
  - Cain and Abel: Genesis 4:1–16
  - The Flood: Genesis 6:5—9:17
  - The Tower of Babel: Genesis 11:1–9
5. Talk with your child about the importance of being a minister of reconciliation at home and at school. Talk about ways you can be a peacemaker, helping others to resolve conflict.
6. Talk with your child about making good moral choices. Tell them about the people who helped you to form your conscience.



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## Chapter 6

1. As a family, share the story of Abraham. Stories about him can be found in Genesis 13:1–13 and Genesis 18:20–33. Discuss what you can learn about Abraham from these accounts.
2. Work together as a family to list qualities that make a good and loyal friend. Talk about which of these qualities Abraham showed in his relationship with God. Discuss which qualities you show toward your friends and family.
3. Abraham was a man of faith who responded to God’s call with generosity and prompt obedience. Have family members tell about times when they each were called upon to practice great faith.
4. Invite pairs of family members to make covenants with one another. Each person should agree to do a certain favor for the other. After a few days, check to see how well each person has kept his or her commitment. How is your covenant similar to the covenant between God and Abram? How is it different?
5. Work together with your child to write the story of Abraham and Isaac as seen through Sarah’s eyes. Discuss how it is different from the story you read in Genesis.



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## Chapter 7

1. Have your child read aloud Jacob's prayer in Genesis 32:9–13. Guide him or her to image how afraid Jacob was as he went to meet Esau and to think about the words he used to pray to God for help. Then write your own prayers asking God to help you with something that you are afraid of.
2. Guide your child to ask for God's blessing each morning. Each night before he or she goes to bed, tell your child to think about how he or she has continued the life and work of Jesus during the day.
3. Jacob's story has many colorful episodes. Choose an episode from Jacob's life. Discuss with your child how another person in the story might feel about the events of the story.
4. The people God chooses are not perfect. Jacob had his faults and so do we. Ask your child to choose a famous person, such as a saint or one of his or her personal heroes, who did much good despite a particular weakness. Have him or her write a report about that person.
5. Discuss with your child why you chose his or her name.
6. Talk with your child about his or her Baptism. Talk about who was present, where it took place, and what it meant to your family.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 8

1. Guide your child to take some time each morning to think about how God has been active in his or her life. Suggest that he or she conclude his or her reflection by praying the Morning Offering (located on the inside front cover of the Student Book).
2. Find stories on television or news websites that show God's Divine Providence. Discuss with your child how God is active in the events of the story.
3. Read aloud Jesus' words about Divine Providence in Luke 12:22–32. Discuss with your child how he or she can incorporate this message into his or her life.
4. Share the story of Joseph together with your child. Talk about what lessons can be learned from Joseph's life. Have family members talk about times in which God's Divine Providence took care of them.
5. Talk with your child about ways you can, as a family, practice solidarity with people who are in need. Discuss ways that your family can pray for and work to address the needs of people in your community and around the world who are suffering.
6. Work with your child to design a small prayer card that takes the lines of the Lord's Prayer and includes the descriptions of each line as outlined in the activity **Thy Will Be Done** on page 72 of the Student Book. Decorate the prayer card and make a commitment to pray the Lord's Prayer daily.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 10

1. Read with your child in Exodus 1—15 more about how God called Moses and saved the Israelites. Discuss with your child his or her thoughts about what you have read.
2. Research together with your child the Jewish celebration of Passover. Talk about how each of the following are used in the celebration: matzoh, bitter herb, haroset, wine, Seder plate, Haggadah.
3. As a family, think of ways that you can open yourselves to God's plan for your lives. Talk about how opening yourselves to God helps you to become God's people.
4. Prepare as a family in a special way for your celebration of the liturgy this week. Pay close attention to the readings for the Mass. Discuss with your family the message God has for you in each.
5. Have your child find in their Bible the answers to the following questions.
  - Which two cities in Egypt were built by Hebrew slaves? (Exodus 1:11) **Pithom, Raamses**
  - How many years had the Israelites been in Egypt? (Exodus 12:40) **430**
  - Why did God lead the people by a roundabout way to the Red Sea? (Exodus 13:17–18) **Because "If the people see that they have to fight, they might change their minds and return to Egypt."**



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 11

1. Ask your child to imagine what it might have been like for the Israelites to travel through the desert without water. Discuss how easy it is for you to get fresh, clean water compared to the many people in the world who do not have access to fresh water every day. Invite your child to write a short prayer for those people and pray it together with your family.
2. Guide your child to draw or make a model of the ark of the covenant based on the description in Exodus 25:10–40.
3. Discuss with your child the concept of a time capsule. Then ask him or her to imagine that he or she is one of the Israelites who experienced the Exodus. Have your child list what he or she might include in his or her time capsule and write a short description telling why the items were important during the Exodus.
4. Talk with your family about the precepts of the Church on page 263. Discuss how your family follows these church precepts (laws).
5. Have your child make a list of ways he or she sees people breaking the First Commandment. Use the following questions as a guide: What do people tend to worship in our society? To what or to whom are people devoting themselves? What are some things that say they can't live without but don't actually need to live?



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 12

1. Write on separate note cards each of the Ten Commandments. Write each commandment's number on the back of its card. Have your child use the cards as flash cards to help him or her memorize the commandments. When your child knows the commandments by heart, challenge him or her to recite them without using the cards.
2. Have your child interview adult family members, including grandparents, godparents, aunts, and uncles, about how they spent Sundays when they were children. Then ask him or her to compare Sunday customs of the past with those of today and prepare a short presentation.
3. Ask your child to list all the acts of love that he or she observes for one day from the time he or she wakes up until the time he or she goes to bed. Have him or her share with your family what he or she observed. Together say a prayer of thanks for all the goodness in your lives.
4. Talk as a family about the effects that words can have on people. Discuss how words can bring happiness and hurt others. Then work together to list ways that your family can use words to bring happiness to others.
5. Challenge your child to memorize one of the following Scripture passages: Mark 12:29–31, John 13:34–35, or Matthew 5:1–10. Have him or her read aloud the passage to your family, and discuss the ideas and lessons it conveys.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 13

1. Review with your child the steps for moral decision making on page 117. After watching a TV program together, discuss the decisions that the characters made. Did they consider God's moral law and Jesus' teachings? Did they consider the consequences of their decisions? Did they consider how their choices affected their relationships with God and others? What principles did they base their decisions on?
2. Read aloud together the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5—7). Then pick three principles to discuss that are important in the life of a Catholic.
3. As a family, discuss when you have struggled to live Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount. Then spend a few minutes praying together for the strength to help build up God's kingdom on earth. Pray a Hail Mary as a reminder that we are all sinners in need of forgiveness.
4. The Law required the Israelites to tithe, or give 10 percent of all they owned as a religious tax. Some of the tax was used to provide for the needs of the poor. Discuss how your family can support the Church's efforts and the efforts of your parish to help those who are poor or vulnerable.
5. Discuss with your child the consequences you have faced because of a difficult decision you made. Discuss the principles you followed or ignored when making your decision.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 14

1. Find out when your parish celebrates the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Have your child do an examination of conscience (see page 265) in preparation for celebrating the sacrament. Ask your child to make a commitment to practice the penance your priest suggests as a way of repairing the harm caused by sin.
2. Have your child ask a close friend or family member what he or she thinks is your child's most outstanding virtue. Then lead your child in prayer thanking God for this gift and asking God to help you make it grow even stronger.
3. Ask for an old missalette from your parish. Ask your child to cut out the prayers of the Mass that call us to reconciliation. Have him or her put each one on a card and label it. Discuss as a family what each prayer means and why it is important.
4. Challenge your child to memorize Psalm 65 and to pray it whenever he or she thinks of God's loving forgiveness.
5. Pray the Stations of the Cross (see page 257) as a family. Take turns having family members pray each of the 14 stations along the Stations of the Cross.
6. If your family does not have a cross or crucifix (a crucifix is a cross with the body of Jesus on it), make arrangements to acquire one. Display it in your home as a reminder of how we are healed through Jesus' Death on the Cross.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 15

- 1.** Every person is meant to be a leader in some way. One way is leading by example. As a family, brainstorm ways you can be leaders in your parish, school, and community. Challenge your child to share your list with his or her classmates.
- 2.** Moses and Joshua were good leaders because they prayed. Consider praying together as a family if you do not already do so. Set aside specific times each week to pray together and to pray for specific intentions.
- 3.** During family prayer time, remember to pray for the leaders of the Church. Consider inviting your parish priest or deacon to visit your home for dinner and to participate in your prayer time.
- 4.** Both Moses and Joshua were good leaders. Go through the story on page 131 and have your child list the leadership qualities that Moses had. Then talk with your child about leadership qualities he or she shares with Moses and how he or she can help these qualities grow.
- 5.** Have your child identify leaders at home, at school, in his or her extracurricular activities, and in your community. Discuss with your child the leadership qualities these people have that he or she would like to strengthen in himself or herself.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 17

1. Ask your child to interview an adult about his or her heroes. Guide him or her to ask these questions:
  - Who is someone you admire?
  - Why do you admire this person?
  - What have you learned from this person about life or about yourself?
2. Read Judges 8:22–23 with your family to find out what Gideon said when the people asked him to rule over them. Talk about why Gideon's response shows that he was a good leader.
3. Ask your child to imagine that he or she writes for an online news service. Have him or her write an article about Samson and some of the mistakes he made. The article should include at least two positive things, ideas, or behaviors that came from each mistake or failure.
4. Choose a night of the week that you watch TV or movies as a family. Make a list of the characters in the TV shows or movies that you watch. Talk about which characters display strong faith or morality. Discuss the qualities of each character that you and your family might model.
5. Ask your child to choose a judge from the Book of Judges, either from this chapter or from his or her own reading. Have your child draw a series of pictures that tell the story of that judge. Then, talk with your child about how that judge showed faith in God or learned an important lesson.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 18

1. Pray together as a family that the leaders of our country will follow God's ways and make wise and just decisions.
2. Invite your child to read the biography of a great leader, such as Saint Mother Teresa, Saint Oscar Romero, or Dorothy Day. When he or she is finished, ask your child to share the following:
  - how that person showed concern for others
  - what your child liked best about the way the leader worked with others
  - what difficulties the leader faced and how he or she overcame them
3. Read aloud with your child the story of Samuel's calling by the Lord. (1 Samuel 3:1–10) Then guide him or her in silent reflection, asking your child to think about how God may be calling him or her.
4. With your child, read about the friendship between David and Jonathan in 1 Samuel 18:1–5; 19:1–7; 20. What qualities of friendship do the two men show?
5. Lead your child in an internet search to identify nations that are ruled by a monarch. Learn about how the people of those nations view their king or queen. Then discuss with your child what it means for us to think of God as our king.
6. With your child, do a search of your house for various kinds of oils—for example, cooking oils, oils for lamps, and skin care oils. Consider the different uses of these oils and talk with your child about what anointing with oil symbolizes in the sacraments.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 19

1. Review the Book of Proverbs as a family. Have each family member, including yourself, write a favorite proverb on a card and then cut the card into a shape or symbol. String the proverb shapes onto a hanger to create a “Wisdom Mobile.” Display the mobile in a prominent place in your home.
2. Nathan taught David a lesson by telling him a story. Jesus did the same thing when he told parables. Ask your child to imagine that he or she knows someone who hurts others by teasing them too much. Have him or her write a parable that he or she might tell to help that person learn a lesson.
3. Review with your child 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, and 1 Kings. Work together to list examples of how David and Solomon showed, or failed to show, the following qualities:

obedience	service
fairness	courage
wisdom	self-control
4. Review the Book of Psalms together as a family. Choose several psalms and make a chart that identifies different occasions and moods addressed by each psalm. Talk about how you might use the chart to include a psalm during your family prayer time.
5. Search online to find pictures and information about the Western Wall of the Temple in Jerusalem. Note the custom of writing prayer notes on small pieces of paper and placing them in cracks in the wall. Then have family members write their own prayer requests on small sheets of paper. Put the prayers in a special place as a reminder that you have placed your prayers in God’s hands.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 21

1. Review as a family the description of a prophet on page 183. Discuss ways that parents are prophets for their children. Then talk about ways that children may be prophets for their families.
2. Read aloud Psalm 72 with your child and pick out the verses that tell about God's justice. Pray the psalm together with your family, keeping in mind the needs of the poor.
3. With your child, make a list of ways that your family can practice social justice. For ideas, look at the works of mercy listed on page 266. Illustrate one of these ways.
4. Collect magazine and newspaper articles about people working for social justice or giving Christlike service to others. Divide the articles into two groups: people working on their own and people working with an organization. Share these stories with your family and discuss how you might model yourselves on these people.
5. Our bishops carry out a prophetic role. Find out what issues they have addressed recently in documents and letters to the Church and discuss them as a family.
6. Discuss with your family making handmade gifts for birthdays or Christmas instead of buying expensive gifts.
7. Ask your child to research some of the things he or she uses every day, such as toys, food, or clothes. Challenge him or her to do without or find alternatives to those things made by companies that are unfair to their workers or that abuse or destroy God's creation.
8. Devise ways to participate as a family in activities for social justice, such as bike-a-thons, marathons, or marches. Write letters to national and community leaders and encourage others to promote just laws that will protect the poor and vulnerable.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 22

1. Invite your child to ask two or three people to share a story about a time they felt close to God. Then discuss with your child the advice those people gave for staying close to God.
2. Listen together as a family to a recording of Handel's *Messiah*. Many of the lines are from Isaiah.
3. We use many readings from Isaiah during Advent, and we use many readings from Second Isaiah during Lent. Choose from the Lectionary one or two selections from Isaiah. Read them aloud with your family and talk about why these readings are appropriate for those times.
4. Read chapter 53 of the Book of Isaiah with your child. List phrases that seem to refer to Jesus and discuss them.
5. The next time you are at Mass, challenge your child to pay attention to the number of times that the word *Amen* is used. Remind him or her that the prophet Isaiah referred to God as the "God of truth" or the "God of Amen." Discuss how you can live life with more trust in God.
6. Ask members of your family to describe people in their lives who are holy. Ask them to explain why they consider those people to be holy. Talk about how we are all called to be holy and what that means for each family member in your daily lives at work, home, and school.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 23

1. Ask members of your family to share a story about an experience when something good came from a disappointment or a failure. Talk together about the lessons they learned from these experiences.
2. Ask your child to read about someone who courageously spoke out against an injustice. Challenge him or her to imagine being that person and then write a journal entry from that person's point of view.
3. Have your child choose one of the people listed below and find out how he or she helped people whose rights were not being respected:  
Catherine of Siena                      Damien of Molokai  
Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini      Katharine Drexel
4. Ask your child to imagine that he or she is on a parish committee searching for guest speakers for an Advent or Lenten program. Have him or her research the backgrounds of Jeremiah and Ezekiel as potential speakers. Challenge your child to write a report summarizing each prophet's message and how that message would be received by your parish.



# Things to Do at Home



## Chapter 24

1. Show your family the timeline on page 212. Then work together to create your own family timeline. Ask adults in your family to recall a significant date, such as the wedding of parents or grandparents, to start your timeline. Talk about which important family events to include. When you have finished, pray together to thank God for his loving care of your family.
2. John the Baptist prepared for his mission in life by prayer, penance, and fasting. Ask your child to consider how he or she can prepare for his or her mission in life. Guide your child to think about what goals he or she has for the future and list the steps he or she will have to take to accomplish those goals. For help and ideas, have your child talk to adults in your family about how they prepared for their jobs or special training they might have received to achieve a specific skill.
3. Watch together as a family one or two TV programs. Talk about whether any characters practiced self-discipline. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:
  - How did the character(s) display self-discipline? What was the result of this practice? Was it difficult for the character(s) to practice self-discipline? How was it worth the effort?
  - In what ways did these or other characters not practice self-discipline? What was the result of not practicing? What might the character(s) have done differently to achieve more positive results?
4. Guide your child in researching Mary and her privileges, her feast days, her appearances, or her shrines. Challenge him or her to write a short report of the topic of his or her choice and share it with your family.

