



*At-Church
Support Materials*



Faith and Family Life
Catholic Ministries

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TIME IS HOLY

PARENTS

(For use when beginning Family Meetings at-home with Root. Parents and children will be separated for the first part of the session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Small Group Question 1/2 Sheet (1 per parent)
- Root for Parent Books and Root for Children Boxes
- Family Meeting Guide Videos ([Download Link](#))
- Candle
- Lighter
- Pens (1 per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Candle

GATHER

Thank you for joining us today. Our goal for this meeting is that you leave here feeling inspired and prepared to lead family meetings in your home.

The theme is: Time is Holy. How we spend our time matters.

Somehow I think we have been programmed to think holiness happens only at Church, or in Mass, or when we are reading the Bible. We matter to God all the time. His holiness is in the midst of life, all around us. I think he loves to see us laughing together, building with Legos at home, out at the park, at a birthday party, in a classroom, at work, and spending time with him.

We all know that time is finite, there is a limited amount of it and we can't get more. So we as parents have to decide how we want to spend it. We set schedules and decide what we feel is important for our children.

CHECK-IN

Keeping in mind our “time” theme - I am going to have you reflect on 2 questions. A paper with these questions and a pen to journal with are available at your place. Take a few minutes to reflect and write.

**How does your family rest and relax?
Personally, how do you rest, reflect, and evaluate?**

We will now take some time to share with one another. **Introduce yourself by sharing your name, the ages of your children, and a simple outline of your day so far, how you have spent your time.** Then discuss a couple of your answers to the reflection questions you just journaled about.

(Give them some time to pair share or share in their family pod or small group.)

Let's take a moment and look at how God spent his time as he was busy creating the world. God created the world for six days. He spent this time working, designing, dreaming, and creating. Then he took a day to rest, reflect, and be present to it. We call this day the Sabbath. The seventh day!

God knew we needed a seventh day, a sabbath, and he included it as one of the 10 Commandments: “Keep holy the sabbath.” A day to worship, to be with those we love, to rest, and rejuvenate. He knew how important this time would be for us to be happy, holy, and healthy.

Our Jewish brothers and sisters have taken to heart this message. At sunset on Friday evening, as the sun leaves the earth, the woman of a Jewish home gathers her family, lights her menorah (candelabra), and prays a special prayer over all of them. As she prays, she invites her family to make three circles with their arms, bringing the light from the candles toward themselves. Then, she asks them to cover their eyes with their hands, in order to be completely present to the light as she finishes the prayer. She tells them to be with God, the light of the world, who leads them through the darkness.

For the next 24 hours, they do not work. The food will have already been shopped for, the house cleaned, and the meals prepared. Sabbath is their time to stop and enjoy the most important things. To spend time eating around a table, to enjoy quiet time, to worship together, visit, and play. A time to let the rush and anxiety go. A Jewish young

TIME IS HOLY - PARENTS

adult once said, "When my mom lights the candles on Friday evening - I find myself again."

How do we as families find ourselves again? How do we center ourselves to be present to the most important things? How do we schedule time to be with the people we love and have conversations that help form and inform who we are? If we are honest with ourselves, I think most of us would agree that we really don't want "more" but we do want "meaningful."

But somehow Sunday's have become just another day. There are sports games, practices, shopping to do, work, etc. Sometimes it even seems difficult to squeeze in an hour for Mass. A complete 24 hour sabbath does not seem realistic for most of us, but maybe we can find moments to set aside for a "holy pause" throughout our week. Say that together with me: "Holy Pause." It just sounds good! Moments to sit in the same room together with your family and talk about things that are important, surrounded by God's presence.

You are being given resources that invite you into a "holy pause." Each time you engage the materials I want you to think...holy pause. This book and/or box will be your faith formation experience. It is intended to help you have meaningful moments with the people you love most! Will it be perfect, no. Will there be meltdowns, probably. But there also will be silly and profound things said, prayers read, and little voices sharing about who God is. Time well spent!

OPENING PRAYER

Before I introduce you to the resources I want to invite you into a holy pause. To pray for a few moments in the light.

(Light a candle.)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I invite you to make three circles with your hands, bringing the light towards yourself. *(Model it for them.)* Now completely cover your eyes with your hands. For a few moments be only with the light, completely in the presence of God. *(Model it for them.)*

TIME IS HOLY - PARENTS

God of light, light our paths and fill our homes. Help us to stay close to you as we parent and lead. God, you have given us the greatest gift, our children, and for that we are so grateful.

Right now I invite you to say the name of each of your children quietly. *(Pause and wait.)*

God I give you my children by name - I love each one so very much, as I know you do. Please help me lead them toward your light. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

TEACHING

We are now going to dive into the resources that you will be provided to help you facilitate holy pauses in your home with your family. These holy pauses will follow the pattern of a family meeting.

We will now watch a video that breaks this open more, with some real parents.

(Play Family Meeting Guide for Parents. After the video, if needed, talk to them a little bit more about their role and see if they have any questions).

ROOT FOR PARENTS

(When using, pass out books or refer to the digital version and introduce it with the following.)

You may feel ill-equipped or unprepared for the task of being the primary catechist of your children. Don't worry, you are not alone. That is a feeling many parents experience. We may be tempted to delegate this responsibility off to a trained catechist at-church, but the truth is that your voice is the most important in the life of your children. Even more important is the witness of your life. When your life and your words point to Jesus we can be sure your children will get to know him through you. *Root for Parents* is an investment in your life of faith. It is a self-led experience of six Mini-Series designed to help you come to a deeper knowledge of what God has revealed about himself and grow in relationship with him. Each module within a Mini-Series should take roughly 15-minutes to experience, leaving time for reflection questions and practical suggestions. It might be helpful to think of them as short magazine articles that you can engage in the midst of your life. The material included is a distillation of the contents of the first part of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) mixed with reflections and insights

from the writers. The purpose is to deepen your faith through study and equip you with the vocabulary to share faith with your children.

You will also be accompanied by a catechist or coach and pod or small group of parents who you will check-in with after each series to share your reflections, encourage each other on the journey, and have any questions answered. Each at-church session you will be given an opportunity to share your experiences with the Mini-Series and Family Meeting you recently completed. You will be asked: What is one thing you reflected on in the Mini-Series that resonated with you? What is one thing that challenged you? How did the Family Meeting go at-home? What went well? What was difficult? After you complete a series and reflect together as a group you will be invited to share what you have learned with your children. This will be done by leading a Family Meeting. We hope through this process that you will learn to share your faith with your family, not just as an idea, but as a lived experience. It may be awkward at first, but trust us, the results will be life-giving.

Take a moment to flip through the book as your children return to the room.

ROOT FOR CHILDREN

(Have the children join their parents and when sit at a new table all together.)

We are now going to experience a Family Meeting together with another real family through a video.

(Play Family Meeting Guide for the Entire Family. Pause and play as instructed. No additional supplies will be needed.)

Family Meetings can be fun and meaningful moments to connect as a family and learn about our faith. You will be sent home with a box full of Family Meetings. *(Pass out the Root for Children Boxes or have them on the tables.)* When you get your box, open it up and take a peek inside. Be sure to bring this box out of your car and into your home when you get back. Parents you may not remember, but I'm sure your children will.

We will now take a quick look at all the materials inside. *(Do a quick overview about the box with children present. Help the families to get excited, by highlighting certain parts. Let them know each lesson has something to learn and something hands-on to play or do. Their living room will be their "classroom" and their parent/s are the "teachers.")* It's going to be fun!

Time together, just your family, getting to know more about Jesus.

TIME IS HOLY - PARENTS

(Ask the children to help them out by listening and getting involved. Be sure to review the schedule for the Mini-Series, at-church Sessions, and Family Meetings including how they will complete the Family Follow Throughs, on Martha or another way. Let them know you are with them every step of the way. If they are struggling, or have questions, invite them to let you know. If needed, you can conclude by answering any questions. This may be difficult with restless children, read the room.)

CLOSING PRAYER

We will now conclude with a prayer as a group. Make one big circle around the room facing inward towards each other.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, bless all our families. Help us to grow closer to you and each other as we begin to find moments for holy pauses in our homes.

Please now turn around and face outwards (not looking at each other).

God, help us to take our faith and your love out of this room. Guide us as we share our faith with others outside these doors, with our friends, neighbors, in our classrooms, and workplaces. You send us out to be your hands and feet in the world. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Add any last minute announcements. If possible, be at the door to say goodbye as families leave. This can be tough, usually people want your individual attention about something. Your team members can also be at the doors to say: "Goodbye, we can't wait to see you next time! Don't forget to get the box out of your car. We are praying for you." etc.)

TIME IS HOLY - PARENTS

How does your family rest and relax?

Personally, how do you rest, reflect, and evaluate?

Share your name, the ages of your children, and a simple outline of your day so far,
how you have spent your time.

TIME IS HOLY - PARENTS

How does your family rest and relax?

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Share your name, the ages of your children, and a simple outline of your day so far,
how you have spent your time.

TIME IS HOLY

CHILDREN

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Clock Craft Sheet (1 per child)
- Clock ([Purchase Here](#))
- Candle
- Religious Images or Statues
- Music & Speakers
- Markers ([Purchase Here](#))
- Scissors ([Purchase Here](#))
- Glue Sticks ([Purchase Here](#))
- Brad Pins ([Purchase Here](#))
- Prize for the Game

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Religious images or statues
 - Clock

GATHER

(Welcome and gather children together as they are being dropped off and parents are moving to their own meeting space. Set a clock in the center of a table with a candle.)

Welcome everyone! We are so happy to spend this time with you. I have set a clock on our prayer table today, because we are going to talk about time and the different ways we spend it.

GAME

To begin our time together we are going to play a game. God's word, in the Bible from the book of Ecclesiastes, tells us that he has provided us with a time for every purpose under heaven. He has given us time for so many different and important things! There is a time to be born, a time to be silent, a time to talk, a time to laugh, and even a time

TIME IS HOLY - CHILDREN

to dance. We are going to celebrate these different times by sharing and acting some of them out.

God has given us a time to dance:

(Have a short freeze dance. Play Pharell Williams' song "I'm Happy" or a Christian song children can move to. Let them dance and then periodically stop the music and have them "freeze" in place. You can work towards a winner by having children sit out if they move, or just keep playing all together.)

God loves to see us rejoicing! In the Scriptures we know Jesus attended weddings and celebrations and I'm sure he danced with his family and friends, too.

God has given us a time to laugh:

(Ask if anyone has a funny joke to tell. Have them share a few. Prepare a few in case no one volunteers.)

Giggling and laughing together is an important use of our time. God made a world that has funny moments in it!

God has given us a time to be born:

(Have the children share with the person next to them when their birthday is. Give whoever has a birthday closest to today a small gift/prize.)

God decided perfectly the day and time each of us would be born, and what family we would be born into! Our Birthdays help us to always remember our first "birth" day.

God has given us a time to speak:

(Have the children share with the person next to them what their favorite time of the day is and why).

Aren't you glad God gave us language so we can have conversations with one another? Life would be really boring if no one ever talked. Thank you God for allowing us to get to know each other with our words.

God has given us a time to be silent:

(Gather children and challenge them to be silent for 1 minute. Then you can double it to 2 if possible, deciding the time length based on the age of the children).

We know Jesus took time on earth to be quiet and talk to God when he was troubled and worried. Prayer is the time we can talk quietly to God.

Jesus knows how important all of these different "times" are in our lives. He knows because he lived on this earth and spent time experiencing them, as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, thank you for this time we have to spend with you. Help us to remember that you are with us every second of every day. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ACTIVITY

We have talked about some of the ways we spend our time, now we are going to do a craft where we each make a clock.

The middle of our clocks say: "Time is Holy", this reminds us that Jesus is present in everything we do. He loves to see us laugh and play, he also knows our sadness and disappointment.

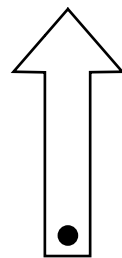
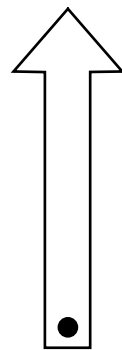
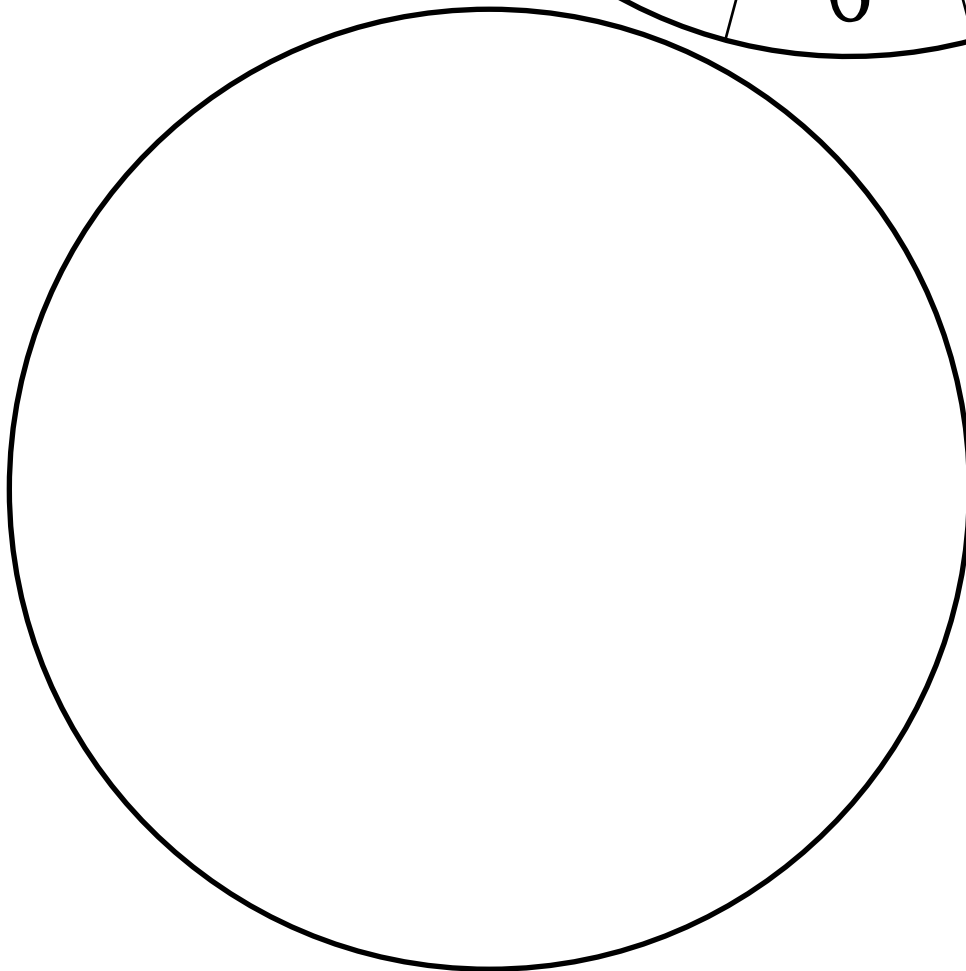
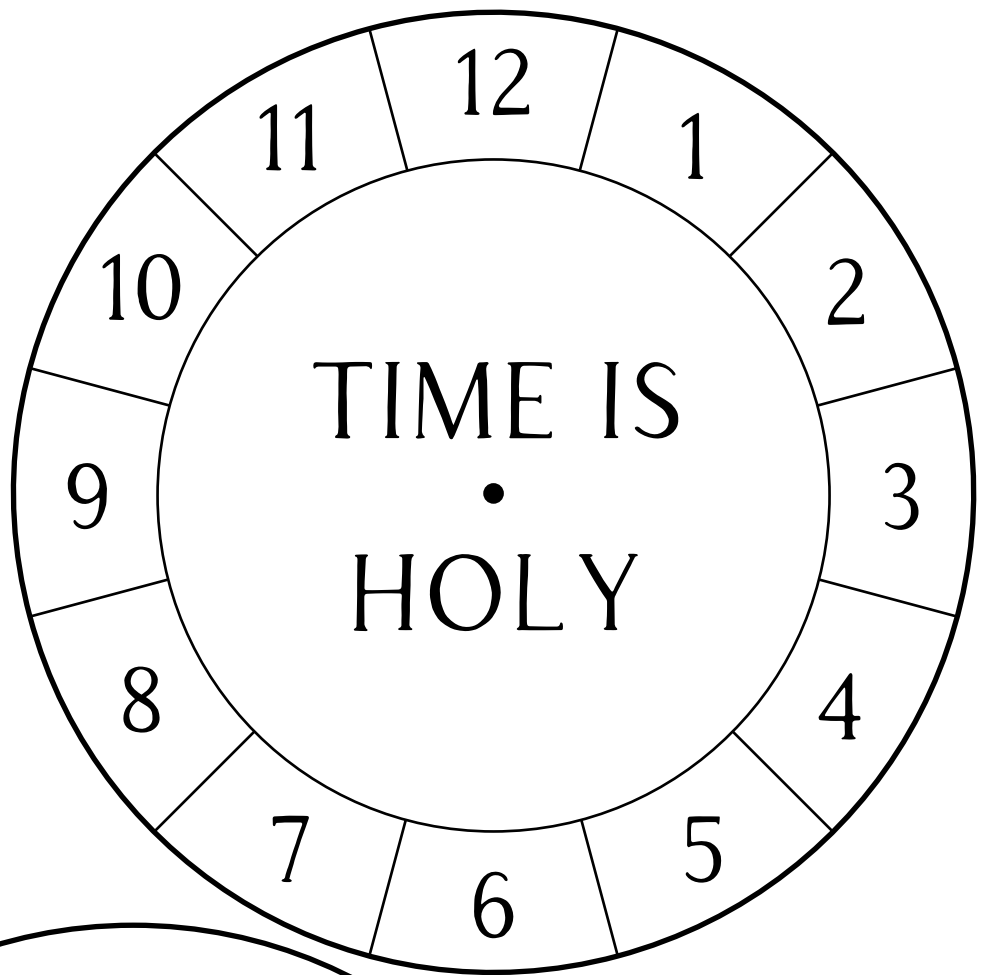
(Lead the children in completing the Clock Craft. Instructions can be found on the printable PDF. You may need to provide some examples, such as: if you eat dinner when it's dark outside it's probably 6:00, if you go to baseball or dance after school it's probably 4:00, if you say bedtime prayers that's probably at 7:30, etc. Children may not know exact times, and that's okay!)

We are going to meet back up with your parents. They too have been talking about "time". You are going to hear about something called a "holy pause" that you will be doing together as a family. You will be given a special box to help with this. Listen closely because you are going to be an important part of helping your mom and dad share this time with you! Don't forget to share your experience and the clocks you made with your parents.

(Return to parents.)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Color then cut out all of the pieces.
2. Cut the lines between the numbers on the clock.
3. Glue the clock to the back circle.
4. With the brad pin attach the clock arrows to the center.
5. Write some things you do at the different times behind the numbers.



ROOT AT-CHURCH

It is important to have parents gathered periodically throughout the *Root* process. We have created a full version for use with *Root* for Parents and *Root* for Children combined. We have also created a simplified version for use when only using *Root* for Children.

The goal of gathering is to:

- Break open the series of reflections they have been working on independently.
- Find out what is going well and what they are struggling with in the *Root* Box Family Meetings.
- To prepare them for the next family meetings with any tips, inspiration, or information that will support them.
- To meet and hear from other parents on a similar journey. There is wisdom in any room of adults, especially parents!
- To provide experiential activities to help support and bring to life the studying they have been doing.
- To pray together - for each other and for their families.

This resource has been provided to support you in facilitating family sessions held at-church throughout the *Root* experience. The sessions include separate experiences for parents and children, and a combined family prayer experience to close your sessions.

There is plenty of content to fill a 1-1.5 hour time frame. This material could be used from start to finish or you can use different sections to supplement things you may have already planned. We realize each of our directors have different gifts; some are wonderful teachers, some are storytellers, others are better facilitating small groups, some are gifted in finding volunteers to present. Use your strengths to lead your family sessions, and look for others who can take the pieces you are not as confident in. It takes a team!

There are some things that need to be pulled together to help bring these lessons to life. We have given you supply lists. We have also suggested ways to set a mood in the room; candles, music, dimming the lights etc. We feel it is critical to set holy spaces to lead parents into deeper intimacy with Christ and themselves. The children's sessions always begin with gathering around a prayer table covered with different items for each

lesson to help draw them into the experience. Depending on the size of the group, you may decide to break the group up into classrooms led by catechists and helpers. We can not over emphasize the impact of simple but beautiful decor, great hospitality, and intimate prayerful spaces. Your attention to detail tells everyone this is important, we prepared for you!

As a Church we are just beginning the journey of calling parents into the opportunity of forming their children and themselves more deeply. We realize parents are in all different places and stages in their own faith journeys. We have written sessions we feel best take into account today's parents. The majority of the parents we encounter have very little theological background, but have the wisdom of their own lives to reflect on. We have found that when given helpful prompts and time to process, they do very well in sharing with each other. Parents, for the most part, are coming to these sessions because they've been told they have to, and probably aren't expecting anything that will truly impact their lives. It is our hope that these sessions meet them where they are at and slowly lead them into something more. Feel free to scale the material up or down. It is most important that families leave with a positive experience of Church and community, feeling like they have a place in it.

SESSION 1

PARENTS FULL

(Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
- Bamboo ([Purchase Here](#))
- Large rock (1 per group table) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Pens (1 per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Large rock (1 per group table)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Bamboo

GATHER

Welcome to our first session for Root! Thank you so much for making the time to be here! We know life is full and we value your time. We gather together to root ourselves in Jesus and our community so we can all be inspired and supported as we work to help our children plant their roots in Jesus. The work is hard, but worthwhile, and we are all together in it.

(Bring in a piece of bamboo.)

Let's begin by reflecting on an image of bamboo. Bamboo is strong, hard to break, survives in all types of temperatures, and is very resilient.

One type of bamboo is known as Giant Timber Bamboo. This type of bamboo grows to be immense—90 feet high! For this type of bamboo to grow, farmers have to put seeds in the ground and water them everyday for five years, and nothing grows! Nothing! They water dirt everyday! During the fifth year, the bamboo shoots begin to pop up

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS FULL

through the soil, and when they do, they grow 90 feet high in six months. That's more than 1.5 feet per day! We may wonder, "What was it doing for the first five years?"

To grow something so strong, unbreakable, and resilient, the bamboo had to grow down first. It had to establish an incredible root system to support what was to come up.

The name of this resource is *Root*. We are putting a root system in our children right now. We are developing their conscience, their values, what they see as important, what they believe in, etc. We might not see all of the fruits from it for a while, but whatever is in the soil will become a part of our children. The same goes for us—as we learn and teach in our homes we establish deeper roots as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we continue on with finding community and encouragement here, let's pray together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, give us strong roots for ourselves and for our children—roots that can hold our family through joys and storms. Help us as we learn more about you and share you with our family. Take each of us exactly where we are and grow us down as you raise us up. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

Let's take a few minutes to share your experience with the Mini-Series you recently completed. If you haven't had a chance to engage the Mini-Series yet, we really encourage you to try and carve out the time. You are worth the investment.

What is one thing you reflected on in Mini-Series 1 that resonated with you? What is one thing that challenged you?

(If possible, have a parent share with the large group about how they felt receiving the Root for Parents Book: How and when are they using it? What are they learning?)

Today, we will do a few activities and some sharing to process the information from

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS FULL

Mini-Series 1, and offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 1.

One of the questions that begins the series is: “Why am I here?” Another way to ask that could be “Why are you here on earth?” This question—“Why am I here?”—is a fundamental question every human being must ponder. We are all on a journey to realize this for ourselves.

REFLECT & SHARE

I invite you to take a few minutes to reflect and journal about the questions that can be found on the print at your place. After you reflect, talk about the reflection questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you).

**Where are you as you reflect on the question: “Why am I here?”
What would you tell your child if they asked you “Why am I here?”
How does God fit into your answer to this question?**

Our families and this parish community are all on this journey of life together. While we all sometimes consider questions like “Why am I here?”, we also get caught up in the day-to-day. We have a hard time slowing down and letting ourselves sit with the deeper questions of life. We want this space to be one where you can come as you are, rest, and begin to plant your roots so that you can walk with your children as they begin to ask some of life’s big questions.

Our answers to life’s big questions can change and evolve as we too are learning and growing. We find ourselves in various life seasons at different times. Think about what it takes for the earth we stand on to grow something. In summer the ground rests, in autumn it lets go, in winter it dies or goes dormant, and in springtime it blooms again. In our own personal seasons we reach for God in different ways. To thank him, to hold on to him, to rejoice in him, to trust in him. Our personal seasons, where we are at any given time, can have a lot to do with our answers to the questions posed at the beginning of our time together.

ACTIVITY

To dig deeper into where we each are in this season of life, we are going to do *lectio divina* with a Scripture passage from the book of Ecclesiastes. *Lectio divina* is an ancient practice in the Church where we read a Scripture passage several times to see where

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS FULL

God is speaking to each of us.

To get settled, I'm going to invite you to get quiet, let go of any distractions in the room or from the day, close your eyes and breathe in and out slowly:

*Breathe in peace
Breathe out chaos
Breathe in love
Breathe out anger
Breathe in stillness
Breathe out rushing*

(Read this passage from Ecclesiastes slowly one time through.)

*There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair under the heavens.
A time to give birth, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to tear down, and a time to build.
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them;
a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away.
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to be silent, and a time to speak.
A time to love, and a time to hate;
a time of war, and a time of peace.
What profit have workers from their toil?*

I have seen the business that God has given to mortals to be busied about. God has made everything appropriate to its time, but has put the timeless into their hearts so they cannot find out, from beginning to end, the work which God has done. - Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

I am going to read the passage again. This time, listen for a word or phrase that speaks to you. Also consider this question: What season do you find yourself in and how does that affect how you currently see God?

(Read the passage again.)

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS FULL

Share the word or phrase that spoke to you from the Scripture and the season you find yourself in with the person next to you. (2 minutes)

(Put a large rock in the middle of each table or have one there from the beginning.)

WITNESS

We also want this time to help you prepare for your at-home Family Meetings. So, let's start to look at the theme for the Family Meeting based on Mini-Series 1.

The Root Box focuses on the Creed, the written summary and foundation of our faith. Each time you meet with your children, you will give them an image of God to try and relate to. By talking about the upcoming lesson together as parents, we can learn from each other's experiences.

The first image is God as rock.

We are going to hear from a member of our community on their experience of God as their rock.

(Have a parent be prepared to share for a few minutes on God as rock in their own life, and how they learned to build on God. How they have relied on him and his unchanging love and mercy that is always there for each of us. Try to also tie in thoughts from "why am I here.")

TEACHING

We experience rocks as unchanging—the same today as tomorrow. A rock survives through every season. There is something very solid about that because we know what to expect. We can return to it, and it will be there. We can also use the word "foundation" when we talk about images that rocks bring up. Scripture talks about a man who builds his home on sand, and another who builds on rock (Matthew 7:24-27). The water sweeps away the home built on sand as a storm comes in, but the house built on rock survives. Scripture also describes God as rock (Psalm 18:3). These images and experiences remind us how God wants us to see and experience him. God is faithful, always there, always ready to be a stable place for us—even when we don't see or feel his presence.

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS FULL

Take a moment to reflect and journal about the following question and then share together with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

**Who is one person that has been a “rock” for you? How do they make you feel?
How can these Scriptures help your children see God as rock? (Matthew 7:24-27 and
Psalm 18:3)**

**What are the storms that may come in, especially in family life, how can our faith in
God anchor us?**

As you have your Family Meetings at-home, try to take a few quick notes after each to record what went well, what was difficult, questions that arose, “aha” moments, any God moments? Try to remember to bring those notes to our meetings. Our shared experiences can support and encourage each other.

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

Your children are returning. They have planted something. As this plant is fed it will begin to grow roots. Take it home and water it together and be reminded of the rooting you are doing.

CLOSING PRAYER

(Have each parent/child hold together the little planted seed the children brought back with them.)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, our children are like these little seeds. They need time and care to root and grow, and they need your Son, the light of the world. Help us as parents to water them with your love, and to root them in your word and truth. Help us all to grow! Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Last thing before you leave-everyone needs to name their plant. *(Give them a moment to discuss together.)* Now take it home and remember to water your plant and each other!

Have a great week!

REFLECT & SHARE

Where are you as you reflect on the question: “Why am I here”?

What would you tell your child if they asked you “Why am I here”?

How does God fit into your answer to this question?

TEACHING

Who is one person that has been a “rock” for you? How do they make you feel?

How can these Scriptures help your children see God as rock? (Matthew 7:24-27 and Psalm 18:3)

What are the storms that may come in, especially in family life, how can our faith in God anchor us?

SESSION 1

CHILDREN FULL

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Coloring Strips (1 per child)
- Tennis Balls (1 per small group) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Pots (1 per child) ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#)) or Plastic Cups
- Seeds that Grow Quickly (a couple per child) ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Soil (enough for each pot) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Baby Wipes (for dirty hands) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Small Rocks (1 per child) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Markers/Crayons or Color Pencils ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Large Rock
 - Potted Plant
 - Cross

GATHER

(Welcome and gather children together as they are being dropped off and parents are moving to their own meeting space.)

Welcome everyone to our first Root session! We are going to begin each session with prayer, we will also do crafts, play games, and learn about God together.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ROOT SESSION 1 - CHILDREN FULL

God, Thank you for bringing us together. Thank you for this wonderful day! Today is the only (say the name of the day, i.e. April 5, 2022) that will ever happen, and we get to spend part of it together! Help us to listen, learn, and have fun together. Thank you for loving us so much. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Invite the children to look at the things on your prayer table.) Each time you come, the prayer table will include different items. The items on the table will give us an idea of what our meeting will be about that day. Any ideas at all about what we might be talking about today?

GAME

(You will need one tennis ball per small group.)

During our sessions together we are going to get to know a lot about God, but we also want to get to know each other better too. Names are important. We are going to play the Tennis Ball Name Game. First we need to get into small groups of around 7 people and stand in a circle facing inward. You will toss around the tennis ball to each member. In the first round, the person who catches the ball says their name aloud and tosses it to another member who then says their name aloud and so on. Try to remember each person's name. In the second round, the person has to say the other person's name before throwing them the ball, then the next person does the same and so on. Let's see who the first group to know everyone's name is!

ACTIVITY

Today we are going to talk about roots and rocks and what they have to do with our faith in God. The name of the box you are using to learn more about Jesus at-home is called *Root*. Today we are going to plant something together. Something that you can take home to water and take care of. It will grow while your family grows in faith.

When you grow something in the ground like seeds, flowers or plants they actually have to grow down before they grow up. *(Show them the potted plant.)* This potted plant looks so beautiful with its leaves coming out of the pot, but underneath the soil something else is growing that you cannot see. These are called roots. When you grow something,

ROOT SESSION 1 - CHILDREN FULL

like the seeds we are going to plant today, little plant roots come down from the seed and begin to hold on and burrow together in the soil. This has to happen so that the plant has an anchor. The roots are the anchor, they hold the plant down. The roots make sure that if there is a big storm or winds the plant won't blow away, they help to protect the plant. The roots also help feed the plant and make it healthy.

Today we are going to look at you as the little seeds that you will be planting. You are still small and have a lot of growing to do, just like the seeds. But the most important part of you that is growing right now is your roots. You can't actually see this happening but these roots will give you the sturdy foundation you need to grow upwards.

How do plant's roots grow? They receive water and nutrients from the soil and sunlight from the sky. Right now your parents are helping to grow your roots. They do this by taking care of you, teaching you how to make good decisions, and how to treat others, helping you to know God. Your parents do this so if tough things happen, like storms, sickness, problems in your family, problems at school or with friends, you won't fall apart and tumble over. Your faith in God and the things your parents have taught you, with all their love will help you to keep growing.

Now it's time to start planting! First thing we need is a pot for the seeds. The seeds need a home to grow out of. Each of you has a home that you have been planted in. *(Pass out the pots and have the children decorate them. They could use paint, markers, crayons, stickers etc. We also have included a PDF of a strip of paper that says - I'm growing Roots! The children can color it and wrap it around the pot and secure it with tape or glue.)*

Each of you (seeds) have been planted in a home. Your parents are kind of like your gardeners who are taking care of you and helping you develop good roots. What things do they teach you about that helps you grow into a good, holy, and healthy person? *(Get feedback from children here.)* Now we are going to put the dirt in our pot and then lastly push the seeds down into the soil. The soil is our life. Next we will give them a little splash of water so they can start drinking. Water is like grace from God that gives us life. The roots are going to start growing down right away, so your plant can then start growing up strong.

TEACHING

Now that we have talked about roots, we are going to focus on the second part of our lesson which is about rocks. You also have a Family Meeting in your Root Box at-home that tells you about why God has been described as rock. Why do you think we call God our rock? *(See what answers you get.)*

Tell me some things you know about rocks. They are sturdy and strong. They also never ever change. You can see a rock in the woods and come back years later and it will still be there, it will look the same. Our God is strong, he never changes, and we can always count on him. We have a basket full of some really small rocks. I want you to each choose one and put it in the dirt next to your seeds. This is our reminder that as we grow, God is always near, he never leaves us.

(Now try and see if the children can tell you back:)

Who is the seed?

What are the parts of you that grows down?

Who are the gardeners that help feed and develop your roots?

How do they do this?

What happens after your roots get sturdy in your soil?

Who is the rock that never ever leaves you?

We are going to be joining our parents for a closing prayer. Make sure to take your potted seed with you. Don't forget to water it and give it some sunlight. It will be growing as you grow in your faith.

I'M GROWING ROOTS!



I'M GROWING ROOTS!



I'M GROWING ROOTS!



SESSION 2

PARENTS FULL

(Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Two-Sided Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Garden Puzzle Image (1 per table, cut into 1 rectangular piece per person)
- Card Stock Sheet (1 per parent)
- Puzzle Box
- Markers/Crayons/Pencils with erasers and/or Colored Pencils ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Candles (few per table)
- Lighters (1 per table)
- Pens (1 per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Garden Puzzle Image (1 per table, cut into 1 rectangular piece per person)
 - Card Stock Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Markers/Crayons
 - Candles (few per table)
 - Lighters (1 per table)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Puzzle Box

GATHER

Welcome to our second session for *Root*! Thank you so much for making the time to be here! We know life is full and we value your time. We gather together to root ourselves in Jesus and our community so we can all be inspired and supported as we work to help our children grow their roots in Jesus. The work is hard, but worthwhile, and we are all together in it.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we get going, let's begin our time together in prayer.

I invite you to put aside anything that may be distracting you, and take a few deep breaths to get settled. Whatever the day was like, hand it to Jesus now.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, you created us. You know us and you call us good, even when we don't always see ourselves or our families that way. Give us the grace to welcome your light in our lives. Take away the fear that you won't love us if we let you in. You already know and love us, and tell us there is nothing to fear. We offer you this time and ask you to use it for your glory. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

In *Root* Mini-Series 2 we begin our journey through the Creed. The Creed is what we believe. It is what we say at Mass when the priest invites us all to “profess our faith.” The Creed begins with the words, “I believe.” These words—I believe—is what *Credo* means. As you delve into *Root* at-home with your families and as we gather together, you will have the opportunity to reflect on what it is you believe about God and our Church.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with the Mini-Series and Family Meeting you recently completed.

What is one thing you reflected on in Mini-Series 2 that resonated with you? What is one thing that challenged you?

How did Family Meeting 1 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?

Today, we will do a few activities and some sharing to process the information from Mini-Series 2, and offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 2.

REFLECT & SHARE

Root Mini-Series 2 continues to dig into the question of who God is to us, and who we are as God's creation.

I invite you to take a few moments now to reflect and journal your answers to the following questions. When finished, share your responses with your pod or small groups (or with the person next to you).

To what degree do I believe God cares about and is involved in my everyday life?
Does believing in God and his will for my life give me a sense of order or purpose?
How active do I want God to be in my daily life?
How does God guide my decisions, words, and actions?

How we respond to these questions impacts both how we think about God and how we live out each day.

ACTIVITY

We are going to participate in an activity as small groups that we will unpack together after we finish.

(For this activity, you will need to print the PDF of the image of the garden on a letter-sized sheet of paper. You will need one copy of the image per small group. Cut the image into same-sized rectangular pieces equal to the number of small group members. Ideally, no piece should give away the subject and each piece should have the same level of detail. When you assemble your group, hand everyone a piece of the picture, a sheet of paper, and art supplies like crayons, markers, pencils with erasers and/or colored pencils.)

You have been handed a piece of a picture, a sheet of paper, and some art supplies. Your task is to recreate your piece of the image so it fills up the entire piece of paper you were given. When everyone has finished, you will then put your pieces together to recreate the original on a much larger scale.

(After they finish.)

ROOT SESSION 2 - PARENTS FULL

Does your life sometimes feel like it doesn't make sense, or that it is cut apart in so many different pieces? How is it all supposed to work together without you feeling spread thin all the time?

As you were building the puzzle together, did you have a few of those “aha moments”—“Oh that's how it fits together, if you move this, then that makes sense”?

God created all of us with a purpose and meaning for our lives, the pieces are meant to fit together in an overall vision that leads us to a life with God forever. His order and will is meant to give us direction, peace, and hope. Without a direction for life, things can become disjointed, disconnected, and chaotic—we begin forcing pieces together or making half done puzzles.

The same goes for our family life. God wants to bring order, peace, and direction to it as well. Our children are actually begging for boundaries, limits, and an overall direction—this provides stability. We are all on a journey to where? For what? God wants to be the answer to these questions.

Think about making a puzzle from a box. The first thing you do is look at the picture on the box. *(You could have an actual puzzle box as you speak.)* This picture helps inform the rest. *(Point to picture on the box.)*

Sometimes I think we find ourselves taking pieces out of the box and trying to fit them together without looking at what we are trying to end up making. *(Start taking pieces out of the box, disregard the finished picture on the box, and act frustrated as you try to put pieces together.)* God gives us a beautiful picture to work towards, it is up to us to keep our eyes on it as we try to connect the pieces.

Let's take a few moments to reflect and journal, then share some of your thoughts and questions this activity may have prompted with your pod or small group (or the person next to you): *(provide 5 minutes)*

Does my personal life and my family life have a sense of order, or does it feel chaotic all the time?

How does God bring peace and purpose to my life and my family's life?

TEACHING

The Root Box focuses on the Creed, the written summary and foundation of our faith. Each time you meet with your children, you will give them an image of God to try and relate to. As we did last time, we want to help you prepare for your at-home Family Meeting. The Family Meeting drawn from Mini-Series 2 focuses on the image of God as light. Let's explore the image of God as light together now.

(For a few moments, turn off as many lights as possible in the space you are using. Get it as dark as possible.)

You are invited to sit quietly in the silence and the darkness for a bit. Close your eyes and sit a few moments in complete darkness.

(Pause)

Think about a lifetime of this—a life without light. This is what a life without God has been compared to—much of the world is walking around in darkness.

On each table there are a few votive candles and a lighter. I invite a parent at each table to light the candles.

You will now have a few moments to personally reflect and journal. Your answers to these questions will not be shared out loud. This is a time for you and God in the candlelight.

Do you believe God's word and presence can bring order and light to your life? If so, why do you sometimes push him away?

Do you believe you are called to be walking towards eternal light, forever with God? The light can also expose things. That is sometimes why we continue to stay in darkness. Are there areas in your life you aren't ready to let the light into?

WITNESS

(In candlelight, have a parent be prepared to share for a few minutes on God as light in their own life, how God has brought light into dark places, how God's light shines in the ordinary moments of life.)

ROOT SESSION 2 - PARENTS FULL

We will now hear from a member of our community about how God has been the light of their lives. Hopefully these reflections on God as light will help you as you share this image of God with your children at your next Family Meeting.

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

CLOSING PRAYER

(With the room still in candlelight, have children come back into the room for the last few minutes of the session wearing their glow stick necklaces.)

We have all been talking about God as light. Parents share one way your children bring light to your life. Tell them now. *(Pause for them to share.)*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, you tell us that you are the Light of the World. Help us to live in your light and share it with others. As we bring this light into our homes, may we be mindful that you are always there with us. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have a great week!

REFLECT & SHARE

To what degree do I believe God cares about and is involved in my everyday life?

Does believing in God and his will for my life give me a sense of order or purpose?

How active do I want God to be in my daily life?

How does God guide my decisions, words, and actions?

ACTIVITY

Does my personal life and my family life have a sense of order, or does it feel chaotic all the time?

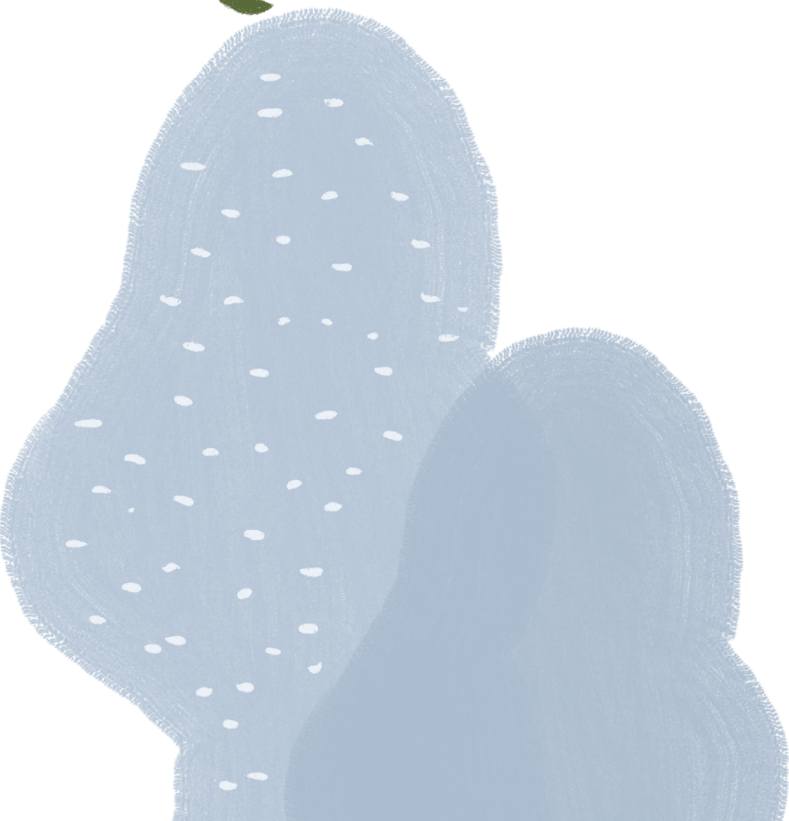
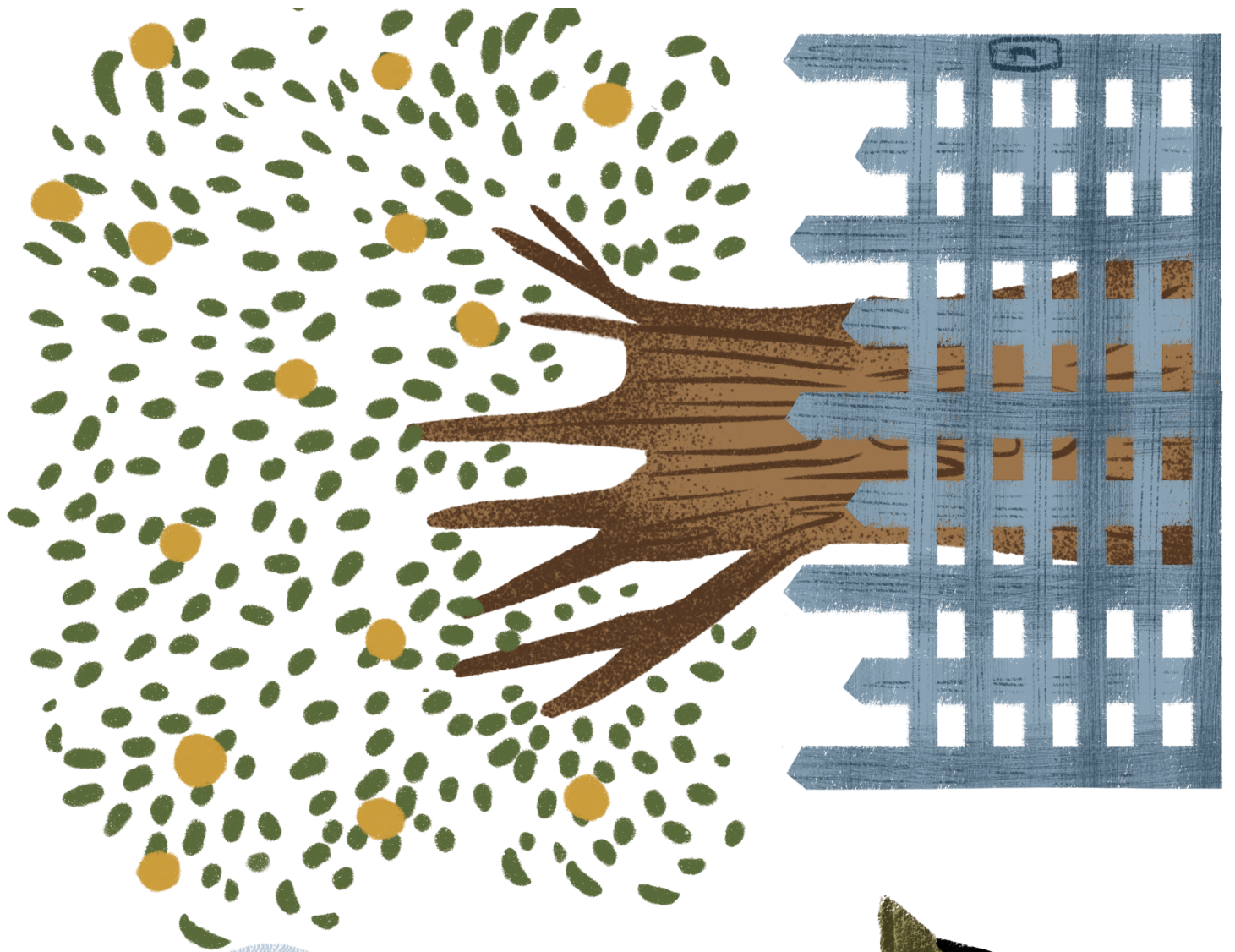
How does God bring peace and purpose to my life and my family's life?

TEACHING

Do you believe God's word and presence can bring order and light to your life? If so,
why do you sometimes push him away?

Do you believe you are called to be walking towards eternal light, forever with God?

The light can also expose things. That is sometimes why we continue to stay in darkness.
Are there areas in your life you aren't ready to let the light into?



SESSION 2

CHILDREN FULL

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Light Switch Coloring Sheet (1 per child)
- Light images
 - Light Bulb
 - Lamp
 - Flashlight
 - Christmas Lights
 - Candle
- Lighter
- Cover for Candle
- Light Sticks (1 per child) ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Markers/Crayons ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Light images
 - Light Bulb
 - Lamp
 - Flashlight
 - Christmas Lights
 - Candle
 - Lighter
 - Cover for Candle

GATHER

(Welcome and gather children together as they are being dropped off and parents are moving to their own meeting space.)

(Begin by welcoming the children and have them gather around the prayer table. On the prayer table place some images of light: a light bulb, a small lamp without a shade that you will plug in later, a flashlight, a string of Christmas lights that work, a candle; a lighter and a basket or cover large enough to put over the candle without any burning issues. You can also have a cross or crucifix, an image of Mary, etc.)

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

God, we are so happy to be here today to spend time with you. Thank you for our parents in the other room who love us so much. Is there anything else we can thank God for? (Let children add here.) Bless our time together. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

TEACHING

Today's session focuses on looking at God as the Light of the World. This is something you will be talking about during your at-home Family Meeting as well. You even have a flashlight in your Root box to help explain this. On our prayer table we have some images of light that we are going to be talking about today.

There is a book in the Bible written by one of Jesus' disciples, named John. When Jesus was on earth talking to the people, he told them: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

What happens if you walk into your garage late at night? It would be so dark. You probably couldn't see enough to even walk around. But if you light a candle it would begin to lighten up, and then if you turn a light on it would completely lighten up. You could then walk around and find your way easily.

Jesus compares himself to light because he wants us to see our lives better. He wants us to know he is with us wherever we go, and that we don't need to be afraid. We can compare him to a flashlight. He can light the way. The way to make good decisions, how to treat others, and how to stay close to him.

Now let's look at the lamp on our table. Let's try and plug it in without a light bulb. Nothing happens, there is no light. Now let's use a light bulb and twist it into the socket, it lights up. The light bulb has to be connected to the source to give off the light. Jesus is our source and when we plug into him he helps light our way. One way to live in Jesus' light is to bring him to our decisions. When you aren't sure what to do in different situations ask yourself "what would Jesus do"? Jesus will always be the flashlight, guiding us to the most loving thing to do.

ROOT SESSION 2 - CHILDREN FULL

Let's try this with a few different situations:

- A new kid comes into your class from another state. He is introduced by your teacher right before you all go out for recess. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- Your mom is tired from a long day and she asks you to help her with a few things. You are tired too and all you want to do is play video games. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- You see someone bullying a friend of yours at school. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- You didn't study for the spelling test. You can see your friend's answers very easily. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- *(Depending on your time you can come up with a few more scenarios.)*

Jesus wants us to be a light in the world. To do that, we have to follow the way he lived on earth. Turn off the lights and plug in the Christmas lights. For each light, come up with one way you can share Jesus' light with others.

Light the candle on your prayer table (or use a battery candle). At another place in the Bible there is a story about Jesus telling everyone to never cover their own light, the light inside themselves. *(Make sure lights are still down and cover the candle with the basket.)* What did he mean by this? Jesus told them that whenever they shared his light with others they would be pointing others to him (Matthew 5:14-16).

Is it easy for you to talk about Jesus to others? What would you want someone to know about him?

Jesus also gave each of us some pretty special parts to who we each are. He never wants us to hide ourselves and not be who he created us to be. What is something special about each of you?

ACTIVITY

We are going to do a craft now that reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World. In your room you all have a light switch that controls the lights. We are going to make a cover for your light switch. You can hang it over the switch or you might have to tape it down, ask your parents to help you. As you turn the lights on and off in your room, be reminded that Jesus is always with you.

ROOT SESSION 2 - CHILDREN FULL

(Have the children color the cover with markers and crayons. It may help to have the “center” of the switch cut out ahead of time. If you make extras they can make them for a few lights in their home.)

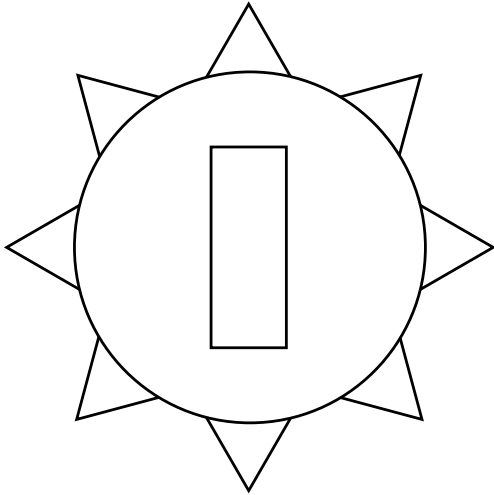
GAME

(If there is time left you can play a few rounds of red light/green light to go with today’s theme.)

(As you get ready to bring the children back to their parents for the closing prayer, give each of the children a lit up glow necklace to put on. As they enter the parent’s space the lights will be dimmed. Have them go and stand next to their parents.)

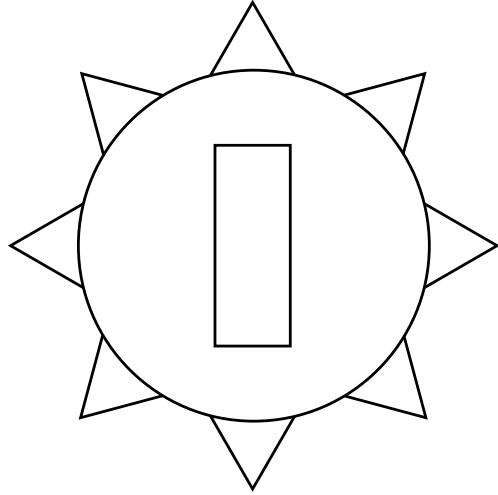
Your parents have also been talking about Jesus as the light of the world and also how you light up their world. Let’s go and shine brightly.

JESUS



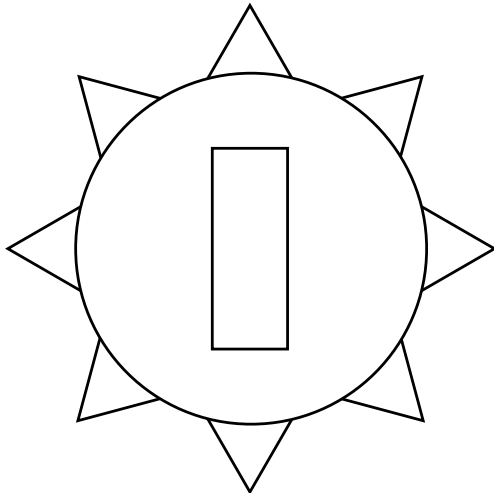
**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

JESUS



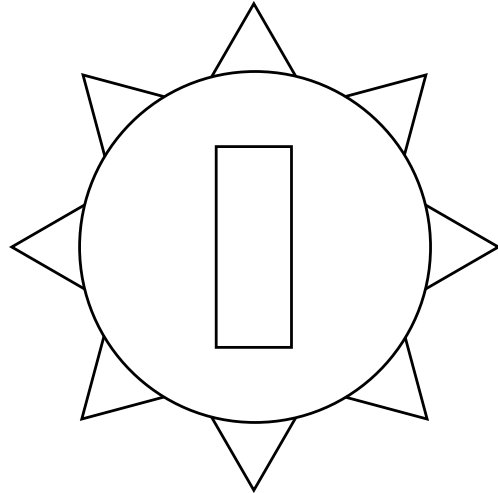
**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

JESUS



**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

JESUS



**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

SESSION 3

PARENTS FULL

(Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Strips of Paper for Parents (1 strip per parent)
 - Strips of Paper for Children (1 strip per child)
- Spaghetti (1 half bag per table) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Mini Marshmallows (1 half bag per table) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Measuring Tape
- Tablecloth
- Crucifix
- Candle
- Basket
- Incense (or scented candles)
- Pens ([Purchase Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Spaghetti (1 half bag per table)
 - Mini Marshmallows (1 half bag per table)
 - Strips of Paper for Parents (1 strip per parent)
 - Strips of Paper for Children (1 strip per child)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Tablecloth
 - Crucifix
 - Candle
 - Basket
 - Incense (or scented candles)

GATHER

Welcome to our third session for the *Root* series! Thank you so much for making the time to be here! We know life is full and we value your time. We gather together to root ourselves in Jesus and our community so we can all be inspired and supported as we work to help our children grow their roots in Jesus. The work is hard, but worthwhile, and we are all together in it.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we get going, let's begin our time together in prayer.

I invite you to put aside anything that may be distracting you and take a few deep breaths to get settled. Whatever the day was like, hand it to Jesus now.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for bringing us, your children, together. You love your children and you love families. In our world, families seem to be under attack, and sometimes it is so hard to live family life well. Just as you sent your Son, Jesus, to be part of a family with Mary and Joseph, we ask that you would send Jesus into the core of our families. We desperately need the tenderness, forgiveness, patience, joy, and love that only he can bring. We love you and thank you for your care. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

We continue to move through the Creed. As we said last time, the Creed is all we believe—the word *Credo* means, “I believe.” *Root Mini-Series 3* begins the exploration of what we believe about Jesus.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with the *Mini-Series* and *Family Meeting* you recently completed.

What is one thing you reflected on in *Mini-Series 3* that resonated with you? What is one thing that challenged you?

ROOT SESSION 3 - PARENTS FULL

How did Family Meeting 2 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?

We will do a few activities and some sharing to process the information from Mini-Series 3, and offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 3.

REFLECT & SHARE

Before Jesus started his public ministry, he spent many years at home with Mary and Joseph. We often call this time of Jesus' life his hidden life. It wasn't full of anything flashy. It wasn't attention seeking. It was a time he was formed by the love of Mary and Joseph, the disciplines of work and prayer, and the joy of play.

Jesus' hidden life gives value to what we do each day. It gives value to the ways we work for our family, the time we spend being attentive to our kids' needs, the meals we cook and dishes we clean, the home we make, the errands we run, and the laundry we fold. Jesus' life at home was his first school of love just as our lives at home have the potential to be schools of love.

Let's take a few minutes to reflect and journal, then share how we welcome Jesus into our families and homes. We can start more tangibly by thinking about how we welcomed our own children into our homes and families. When finished, share together with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

How did you prepare your body and mind, your family, and your home to welcome your children into the world?

**What practices or habits does your family have that make space for Jesus in your home?
Where does your family need Jesus most?**

ACTIVITY

We are going to have a competition between our small groups. Each small group will be given some spaghetti and mini marshmallows. Your goal is to build the highest freestanding structure possible in 10 minutes using the supplies given. Every group member should be a part of the process.

(When there is 1 minute left, begin the countdown. When time is up, go from table to table to see which structure is the tallest. Have a measuring tape available if needed. If possible, have a small prize for each team member of the winning table.)

ROOT SESSION 3 - PARENTS FULL

As parents, we sometimes focus on building tall kids, and tall families. Our goal is to be the highest and the best. But, if there is not a good foundation underneath, even the tallest buildings begin to lean over and break.

Let's take a few minutes to reflect and journal, then share together with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

As you are building your children, what things do you want to make sure are in their foundation?

Who is a good model for you in parenting, why?

Jesus wants to be the foundation of our homes. He wants us to build our lives on him and things that really matter. The most secure and sturdy shape to build with is a triangle (*show them one*). It is much harder to bend and break (*bend it back and forth*). We have a God whose relationship is sometimes imaged as a triangle. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is the absolute strongest foundation to build with. Storms are a part of life, but our God will get us through anything.

WITNESS

The Father sent his Son in a way that we can all understand—he sent his Son as a child, into the heart and home of a family. Jesus experienced day-to-day family life with Mary and Joseph. They worked together, cooked and ate together, played together, rested together, and prayed together. They helped their neighbors, spent time apart, talked about the good and bad in the world around them, and welcomed God into the heart of it all. We will now hear from a member of our community on how they have invited Jesus into their holy family.

(Have a parent be prepared to share for a few minutes on how they welcome Jesus into their home. What place does Jesus have in their family? What place do the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph have in their family? How are they able to see God in the ordinary?)

TEACHING

In your next Family Meeting you will talk about God as our comfort, which reminds us that Jesus is not far from us. When Jesus was on earth he experienced the things we still do. We experience much of life through our senses: hearing, touching, tasting, smelling,

ROOT SESSION 3 - PARENTS FULL

etc. As part of Family Meeting 3, you will guess some scratch and sniff scents. A scent has a certain way of bringing us to a place of comfort.

Scent is also used as part of our worship. In church, we burn incense, experiencing God with every part of us. With that image in mind, I am going to light some incense (or a scented candle) and put a crucifix in the middle of a prayer table. I am going to invite you to participate in a reflection that brings your family into the arms of Christ.

On your table there are some strips of paper. Please take one for each of your children. On each strip of paper, you will write:

One of your child's names
The joy they bring to your family
A struggle they have

Take some time to prayerfully fill them out and fold each one in half when finished.

Jesus wants to be at the center of our families. I will begin in prayer (*see below*) and then invite you to come forward quietly (*play soft music here if possible*) with your family, your slips of paper, in your hands, and lay them in the basket next to the crucifix.

Jesus, you came into a family. You know what that means. You know the blessing and the difficulties. I bring you each of my children by name and lay them at your cross, in your arms. With them, I will try to lay my own worries as a parent into your arms as well. Help me as I try to build my home on your love and presence. Amen.

Please come forward.

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

CLOSING PRAYER

The children are returning to us. (*Have them gather with their parents.*) Children, your parents just prayed for each of you by name. Your names are each in the basket by the cross. Now I invite the children to write their parent's names on a slip of paper (*just their names*). (*Have them fold the paper slip in half and bring it forward to place into the basket.*)

ROOT SESSION 3 - PARENTS FULL

We are going to pray for your parents right now.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Have the children stand and put their hands on their parent's shoulders.)

Jesus, it can be tough to be a parent, it is a lot of responsibility. Help them to turn to you when it is difficult. My parents always have a lot on their minds, please give them your peace. Jesus, I know you love them like I do. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have a great week!

REFLECT & SHARE

How did you prepare your body and mind, your family, and your home to welcome your children into the world?

What practices or habits does your family have that make space for Jesus in your home?

Where does your family need Jesus most?

ACTIVITY

As you are building your children, what things do you want to make sure are in their foundation?

Who is a good model for you in parenting, why?

Child's name:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

A struggle they have:

Child's name:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

A struggle they have:

Child's name:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

A struggle they have:

Child's name:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

A struggle they have:

Child's name:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

The joy they bring to your family:

A struggle they have:

A struggle they have:

My Parents' Names:

My Parents' Names:

My Parents' Names:

My Parents' Names:

My Parents' Names:

SESSION 3

CHILDREN FULL

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Two-Sided Print (1 per child)
- Manger or Small Basket with Straw
- An Image of the Holy Family
- A Piece of Wood
- A Bowl of Water
- A Tall Vase
- A Set of Crutches and Ace Bandage or Band-Aids
- A Bible
- Mustard Seeds ([Purchase Here](#))
- A Rosary
- A Loaf of Bread
- Markers or Colored Pencils ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Manger or Small Basket with Straw
 - An Image of the Holy Family
 - A Piece of Wood
 - A Bowl of Water
 - A Tall Vase
 - A Set of Crutches and Ace Bandage or Band-Aids
 - A Bible
 - Mustard Seeds
 - A Rosary
 - A Loaf of Bread

GATHER

(Welcome the children as their parents drop them off on the way to their meeting space.)

(Gather together around the prayer table. Place a manger or small basket with straw, an image of the Holy Family, a piece of wood, a bowl of water, a tall vase, a set of crutches and ace bandage or band-aids, a Bible, mustard seeds, a rosary, and a loaf of bread.)

OPENING PRAYER

Today we are going to talk about the life of Jesus here on earth. Let's say his name in prayer first.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Jesus, today we are going to hear about your life here on earth. Sometimes we forget you had a mom and dad and played with friends. That you ate food and laughed and had grandparents too. As we talk about you today, help us to understand even more how much you love us.
Amen.*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

TEACHING

Through your Root boxes, your family has been talking about the Creed. The Creed tells us what we believe as Catholics. We believe that God is a Trinity. We believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God sent his Son, Jesus to earth so he could show us how much he loves and understands us, and so he could teach people how to live in peace and goodness.

Who can tell us when Jesus came to earth? What is the special day we celebrate Jesus' birth? Christmas. Is there something on our prayer table that was a part of the first Christmas? A manger. Jesus was born in a manger in a stable with animals all around. Why would God send his Son to be born in this way? He didn't come as a king or a superhero, he came as a baby, born into a family. He understands our birth and our life.

We also have a picture of his family on our table. Does anyone know the name of his mom and step-dad here on earth? Mary and Joseph. Does anyone know the name of his grandparents? Anne and Joachim.

Joseph had a job he worked hard at. Does anyone see anything on our prayer table that had to do with Joseph's work? The piece of wood. Joseph was a carpenter. Jesus spent a lot of time in the workshop with Joseph working on projects. What types of things do you think they may have worked on? Tables, etc.

ROOT SESSION 3 - CHILDREN FULL

As Jesus grew into a young man he had a cousin who baptized him in a river, pouring water over his head. (*Take your hands and move it through the bowl of water.*) Does anyone know Jesus' cousin's name? John the Baptist. Jesus got baptized, similarly to us.

Jesus began to work miracles. Miracles are special things that cannot happen naturally on earth. These miracles showed the people that Jesus had been sent by God for them. The first miracle took place at a wedding. The family had run out of wine at the wedding dinner and Jesus' mom, Mary, asked him to help. So Jesus saw some huge vases, which is kind of like this vase on our table but way bigger! He had the servants pour water into it (*pour the bowl of water into the vase*) and then he changed it into something for the people to drink. What did he change the water into? Wine.

On our table there are a few other things that had to do with Jesus' miracles. Do you recognize any? Crutches and bandages or band-aids. He healed people who were sick and hurt. He even brought a dead man back to life! He did these things because he loved people so much, wanted to help them, and show us that he is truly God.

Jesus spent 3 years teaching people about how they should treat each other and live in peace in his kingdom. He also told them that he knew they would make mistakes, but that they could be honest, say they were sorry, and keep trying to be better. Jesus was a friend and a teacher to the people he met. What he told the people was written down into a book. Does anyone see that book on our table? The Bible. These stories still teach and guide us today.

Jesus liked to teach the people using short stories they could understand. These stories are called parables. Does anyone know any of Jesus' parables? On our prayer table we have some mustard seeds. (*Pass out a seed to each child.*) Take one in the palm of your hand, see how small they are. This tiny seed can grow into a big tree. He told the people that is how their faith grows too. It starts out small and becomes bigger. As it grows we can share our faith with others, like a tree shares its branches with the birds.

We also have a rosary on our prayer table. Does anyone know how to use this? Jesus loved his mother very much, she was with him his entire life. Mary and Jesus share a close bond. They are often pictured together. Mary is the perfect example of how to be a Christian. In our prayers we often ask Mary to bring us to her son Jesus. The rosary is a special prayer we pray with her. (*Take a moment and share with the children about your rosary, what the beads mean, etc.*)

ROOT SESSION 3 - CHILDREN FULL

Notice that we have a loaf of bread on our table. Jesus shared a very special meal with his friends and during the meal he broke bread into pieces and gave it to each of them. He told them that when he was no longer on earth they could do this same thing and he would be with them. We still share this bread, which is his body. We call it Eucharist.

You receive this great blessing he left us during Communion.

We are going to end our sharing about Jesus' life on earth at this point, we will finish talking about his death and rising at our next meeting.

CRAFT

We have been talking about Jesus today. His name means something. Does anyone know what the name Jesus means? The name Jesus comes from a Hebrew word meaning - God saves. Jesus fulfilled his name perfectly. He came to earth to rescue us from sin, and show us how to live in his love.

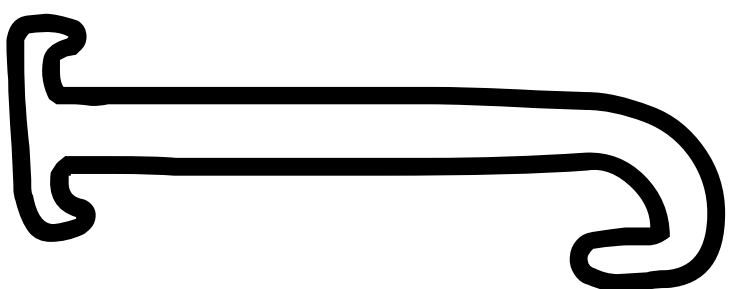
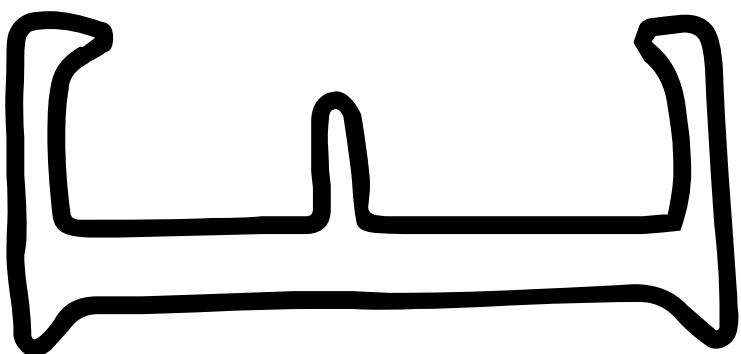
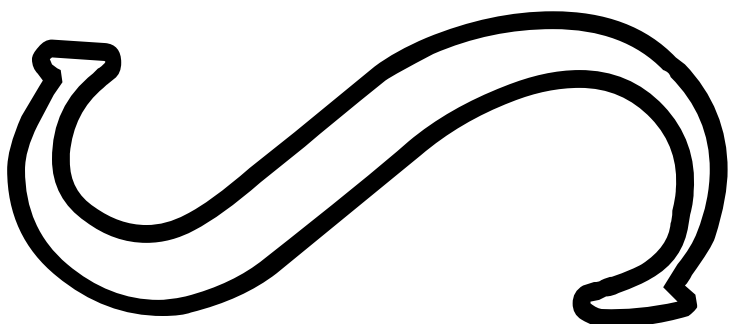
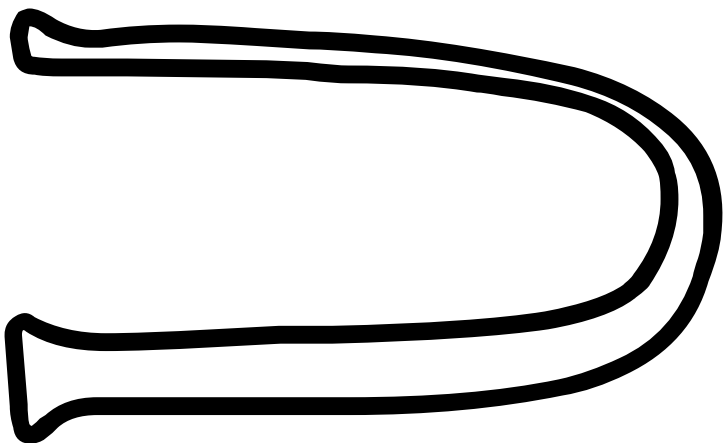
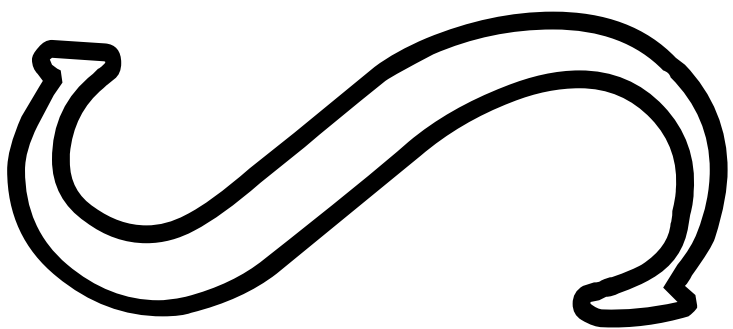
In the Scriptures it says that the name of Jesus has power and that it is the name above every other name (Philippians 2:3-11). I think Jesus wants his name to be said often, in respectful ways. When people say his name they are usually praying to him and talking to him. He wants to be a part of our lives.

How do you pray or talk to Jesus? *(Draw some answers from the children and then share with them how you (the catechist) talk to Jesus. Where? When? How?)*

Right now we are going to spend a little time with Jesus. *(Each child needs the two-sided PDF. One side has the name of Jesus and the other side has a fillable form that can be used to formulate a prayer to Jesus. Have the children decorate and color the name of Jesus, and then fill out the prayer on the back.)*

This sheet you just finished is an example of what it is like to pray. A big part of prayer is talking to Jesus, and telling him about your life. Another part of prayer is getting quiet and listening to what you feel like Jesus is sharing with you.

We are going to join our parents who have actually been talking and praying to Jesus about you, their children. Find your parents and then listen closely for your part in the closing prayer that will be said.



Dear Jesus,

I loved learning more about you today! One thing I learned was _____
_____.

I am part of a family just like you were. The names of people in my family are _____
_____.

I have a few favorites. My favorite color is _____, my favorite food is _____,
and my favorite thing to play is _____. Something that makes me happy is _____,
and something that makes me sad is _____.

Someone I would like to ask you to help is _____. Something I would like to thank you for
is _____.

I am trying to get to know you better, thank you for always loving me.

Amen

SESSION 4

PARENTS FULL

(Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Two-Sided Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Strips of Paper for Parents (1 strip per parent)
 - Crucifix Image
- Pens ([Purchase Here](#))
- Crucifixes (1 per table)
- String or Yarn (1 pieces about 10 inches long per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Candles

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Strips of Paper for Parents (1 strip per parent)
 - Crucifix (1 per table)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Candle
 - Crucifix

GATHER

Welcome to our fourth session for the *Root* series! It is good to see you! Thank you for continuing to make time to be here! We know life is full and we value your time. We are grateful to be here with you as we all take steps to root ourselves and our families in Jesus.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we get going, let's begin our time together in prayer.

ROOT SESSION 4 - PARENTS FULL

I invite you to put aside anything that may be distracting you, and take a few deep breaths to get settled. Whatever the day was like, hand it to Jesus now.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, you look at each of us with eyes full of love and mercy. Give us the grace to lift our eyes to yours. You see us for all that we are, and love us still. Give us the courage to open our lives to you. You are the one who brings value to the ordinary. You bear our crosses with us and give us hope that all things can be redeemed. Help us to trust in your love and will for us and our families. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

We turn to reflect on the most important event in all of history, the Paschal mystery of Jesus, meaning his Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with the Mini-Series and Family Meeting you recently completed.

What is one thing you reflected on in Mini-Series 4 that resonated with you? What is one thing that challenged you?

How did Family Meeting 3 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?

We will do a few activities and some sharing to process the content from Mini-Series 4, and offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 4.

REFLECT AND SHARE

We know Jesus existed. He is a person who lived in the history of our world. He has changed the lives of billions of people. To what extent has he had an impact on your life and your family's life?

We tend to let Jesus into our lives to different degrees. We may believe that we need to have it all together, and will let Jesus in when we finally have it all under control. We may believe weakness is unlovable, and Jesus wouldn't love us if he really saw who

ROOT SESSION 4 - PARENTS FULL

we are or what we've done. We may feel good with giving Jesus some of our lives, but unwilling to give him everything, scared about what he might ask of us.

The reality is, we are all flawed. No one is perfect. We do not have it all under control. We do need help and Jesus has bigger and better dreams for us and our families than we have for ourselves.

God the Father gave us his Son, Jesus to take away the sins of the world (including our sins), to show us the Father's love, to be our model for holiness, and to open heaven to us. God gave us his Son, Jesus because he loves us. He sent us someone who can look at us with tenderness, understand us, and embrace us with uncalculating love. Letting Jesus into our lives need not be a burden—he wants to carry our burdens with us. Letting Jesus into our lives need not be scary. He doesn't love in a limited way—he loves in an all-embracing way. Letting Jesus into our lives isn't a failure, condemning us because we don't have it all together. His presence in our lives leads to true freedom. In him we find real purpose and joy.

When we walk with Jesus in our daily lives, we discover the importance of growing in humility. Humility is a virtue that makes many of us feel uncomfortable or turns us off. Humility does not mean allowing people to walk all over us or never speaking up. Rather, humility is the character of Jesus and the way we get to heaven. Humility is having our feet rooted in Jesus and our eyes gazing up toward our Heavenly Father. It is knowing God is our maker and our goal. Humility is the key to freedom and joy in our daily lives.

Following Jesus means to try daily to live as he did. His life was filled with incredible joy, wonderful relationships, sorrow, sacrifice, etc. In some of his last moments on earth we see him coming to terms with and embracing his mission. He is conversing with God the Father in the garden of Gethsemane. He goes there to pray and prepare himself for the sacrifice ahead. He asks the Father if he could take away the cup, but ultimately accepts the will of the Father.

I invite you to take a few minutes journal, then discuss these questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

How do I spend time getting to know Jesus (prayer, the sacraments, reading Scripture, reading the lives of the saints)?

What kind of reaction do I have when I hear the word humility?

How do I walk toward or away from God in my ordinary life?

ACTIVITY

(Each table will need one crucifix per table. You can print an image of a crucifix, or bring in physical crucifixes.)

(Hold up a crucifix.) This is our example. With Christ's arms stretched open to the world, almost naked, completely exposed. The prefix to the word humility is "humus", meaning "dirt." Humility - to be in the dirt, in the mess, no pretenses. Christ is very close to us in our own crosses, in our own messes. He invites us to be honest and vulnerable, to practice humility as we face them. Each of us will carry crosses on our journeys. We are invited to unite our own struggles and sufferings to his.

(If possible, turn the lights low and add some candle light and soft music.) I invite you to pass the crucifix around the circle at your table. As you each hold it, spend a moment really looking at it. What is it saying to you? Think of one or two words that come to mind when you look at the cross and Christ. Pass the crucifix around again and as you hold it, say the word or two you thought of. I invite you to reflect on a cross that you are currently carrying. There are strips of paper at your table. Take a few moments to privately write down your cross on the slip of paper, fold it in half, and place it under the crucifix in the center of the table.

WITNESS

In following Jesus we too will bear crosses. Our own crosses are constantly a part of our lives; holding them, dragging them, stumbling, picking it up again. We are now going to hear from a member of our community about a cross they carry and how it has brought them closer to Jesus.

(Have the witness share about these questions: What is a cross you are carrying? What does the weight of it feel like? How do you invite Christ into your pain? What has Jesus taught you in the process? How do you teach your children to do the same with their crosses?)

TEACHING

In Root Family Meeting 4, your family will tie knots in a string. We sin and get twisted up in all different situations. Jesus desires to sit with us and untangle these knots. He died on the cross to replace the knots of our sins with love and forgiveness.

ROOT SESSION 4 - PARENTS FULL

There is another weight we also assume in our lives, the weight of worry. Worry can turn our stomach into knots. Our bodies can actually have physical reactions to worrying. What do you do with your worries?

On your table are some strings, take one and place it in front of you. You now each have a worry string in front of you. I am going to read a list of things you may worry about aloud. When I say one that you can relate to, tie a knot in your string. At the end of the list I will give you time to tie knots for other things you worry about that I didn't mention.

We worry God, we can't help it. We take the weight of the world on our shoulders. We feel like we have to hold it, fix it, ruminate on it, and if we are lucky, we let go of it.

Tie a knot in your string if you worry about: *(read these aloud slowly)*

Your health, money, your relationships, work, your parents, your children, your children's grades, their friends or them not having friends, the world around them, social media, video games, peer pressure, being a good or bad parent.

Now take a moment to tie in knots for anything else you worry about.

Hold your string in your hand, notice the knots. These knots can rob us from our peace. So many of these knots are out of our control. God invites us to trust in him. To put the knots in his hands. When you start worrying you can say: Jesus I trust in you.

You have each been given the words of a Scripture from the book of Matthew on the back of your discussion question sheet. Hold your string for a minute and silently read the passage to yourself. Then close your eyes, hold your string and sit with Jesus.

Jesus knows that we are imperfect and loves us still. He knows that we struggle with the same sins over and over and loves us still. He loves our children more than we love them and wants to walk alongside them.

Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection are the center of our faith. Our salvation is God the Father's initiative, showing "his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus shows us the fullness of Father's love for us, for he loved us to the end. "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Jesus' death was not a coincidental series of unfortunate events, but part of the mystery of God's plan. We believe Jesus knew and loved us all when he offered his life (CCC 616). In the words of the Catechism, "There is not, never has been, and

ROOT SESSION 4 - PARENTS FULL

never will be a single human being for whom Christ did not suffer” (CCC 605). But, of course, Jesus’ death is not the end of the story. Jesus’ resurrection confirms all his works and teachings. It is proof of all he promised (CCC 651). Jesus’ Resurrection is the reason and way to life with God forever in heaven.

I invite you to reflect on these questions for a few minutes and then share your thoughts with your pod or small group (or the person sitting next to you):

Do I believe Jesus died for me and my family?

Where does my family need the hope of the Resurrection—lived experience of love, joy, strength, peace, forgiveness—in our lives?

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

CLOSING PRAYER

(As the children come in, have them find their parents.) Today we have all been talking about Jesus’ sacrifice for us on the Cross. The children have put together a cross made up of beads. These beads represent some of the ways they each sin. They were able to talk about some of the things that are difficult for them. They understand that Jesus died for these things. God never wants our actions to separate us from him. They also tied a white ribbon on their crosses that stands for the blessing of Jesus’ Resurrection.

(Invite the parents to take a moment to have their child tell them more about their cross and what it means.)

I invite the parents to tie your worry string to your child’s cross. Jesus wants parents to give him the things that trouble their minds and get in the way of them trusting him. Hold together the small cross with your children as we close in prayer.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, we thank you for the gift of the cross. May it always remind us of how loved we each are. Help us to better appreciate you in our lives. You have given us so much. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

REFLECT AND SHARE

How do I spend time getting to know Jesus (prayer, the sacraments, reading Scripture, reading the lives of the Saints)?

What kind of reaction do I have when I hear the word humility?

How do I walk toward or away from God in my ordinary life?

TEACHING

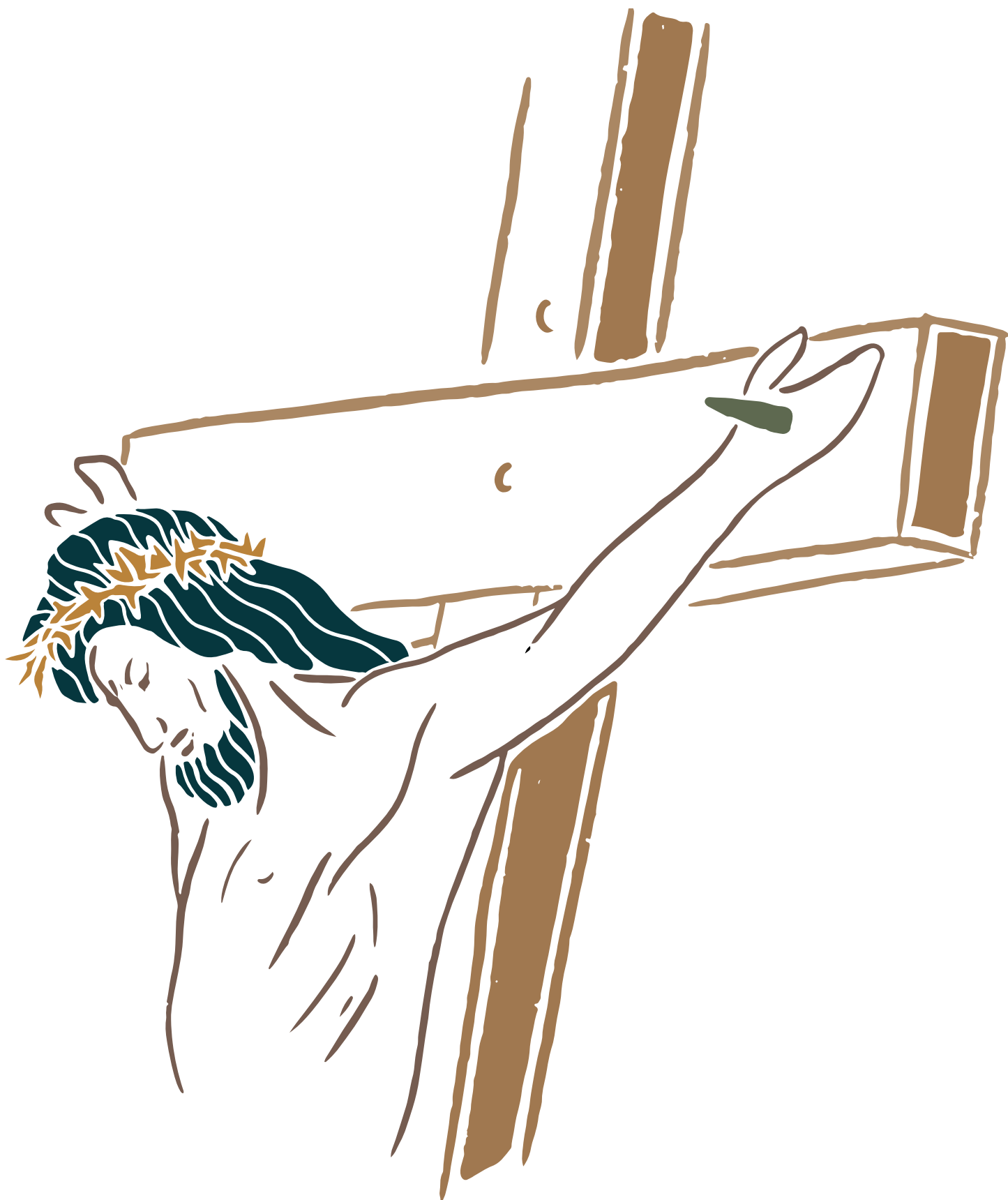
Do I believe Jesus died for me and my family?

Where does my family need the hope of the Resurrection—lived experience of love, joy, strength, peace, forgiveness—in our lives?

MATTHEW 6:25-34

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat [or drink], or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they? Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span? Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith? So do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’ All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.

Sufficient for a day is its own evil.



My Cross:

My Cross:

My Cross:

My Cross:

My Cross:

SESSION 4

CHILDREN FULL

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Strips of Paper (1 per child)
- Beads ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Pipe Cleaners ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- White Ribbon ([Purchase Here](#))
- Many Different Crosses and Crucifixes
- Bowl

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Beads
 - Many Different Crosses and Crucifixes
 - Bowl

GATHER

(Welcome the children as their parents drop them off on the way to their meeting space.)

(Gather together around the prayer table. Place a cross or crucifix , a bowl and your beads on your table.)

OPENING PRAYER

Today we are going to talk about the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. Let's begin with prayer.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, thank you for being with us today. You love us even more than we can imagine. Help us to hear that today as we learn more about you. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

TEACHING

I am so glad you each are joining us today, we will begin at our prayer table. Last time we were together we talked about the life of Jesus, today we are going to talk about his death and what that means for us.

On our prayer table we have a few different crosses and crucifixes. The cross is the greatest sign of Jesus' love for us. *(Take some time to tell the children about the different cross images you have with you today, and what they mean to you, including any stories that apply.)* The term crucifix refers to a cross which has an image of Jesus' body on it. As Catholics we look to his death and rising as the center of our faith.

(Take some time and let each of them hold a cross or crucifix.) What do you feel when you think about the death of Jesus? What do you know about how it happened? The last words Jesus said before he died were: "It is finished". He had done what he came to do.

Why did Jesus have to die? Does anyone have any answers to this important question?

I want to talk to you about the answer to this question. Before we begin, I know that it is sad to talk about the suffering and death of Jesus. But as we talk about it I want you to remember that Jesus' death was not the end of the story. Our sadness turns to great joy after things are finished.

First of all, Jesus came to earth to let us know about the great love of God the Father and to help us better understand how to love one another. Jesus knew that since the beginning of time people had not always lived in love and goodness. Sin is a real thing. We all do things we know aren't good for us and for others, that is part of what it means to be a human being. We can't change that.

What are some things you do that you know are wrong? When you do them you feel bad afterwards, but then sometimes it happens again. And when it keeps happening sometimes you may begin to feel like you are not good enough for God to love. Have you ever done something and felt this way? When we feel this way, we separate ourselves from God, but remember God wants to be with us always.

God sent Jesus to die on the Cross so that we would never be separate from him. Jesus took all our sins on the Cross, every one of them. Jesus' death tells us that we would never be separated from him if we accept his love and forgiveness.

ROOT SESSION 4 - CHILDREN FULL

I have some beads on our prayer table. I want you to think of some ways that you sin and don't make the best choices. I want you to take a bead for some of the things you do that you know are not right. *(Have the children say things out loud and then take beads from the table and move them into a bowl right next to a crucifix.)* These are the things Jesus died for. Our sin cannot keep us from God. Jesus made sure of that!

CRAFT

We are going to use beads and pipe cleaners to make crosses. The beads represent our sin. We are going to use these beads to make a cross. The cross is such a powerful image. It tells us how much we are loved by God, and that nothing can separate us from his love. The crosses we make today remind us of what Jesus died on the cross for, they are made up of our sins.

(Have children string beads along 2 pipe cleaners. One pipe cleaner needs to be shorter than the other. Fold up the ends so beads cannot fall off. Twist the shorter of the pipe cleaners in the center of the other to make a cross. If you have enough supplies they can make a couple others to give away to people they love to remind them of how much Jesus loves them too!)

Jesus' death also teaches us about how strong his forgiveness is. After his hands and feet were nailed to the wood, and while he was still hanging on the cross in such pain, he asked God the Father to forgive the people who hurt him. He took their sins upon himself and showed them that he still wants God to love them.

Because of the great forgiveness he gives to all of us through the Cross, we can show our love for him by also sharing forgiveness with others. This can be hard sometimes, but the image of Jesus suffering for us can remind us of how powerful it is to do what we know is right. When we forgive someone they will no longer be separate from us. In the same way, we will never be separate from Jesus. We continue to be at peace with others.

Why is it hard to forgive others? Who is it hardest for you to forgive? Jesus actually asks us to pray for our enemies, for the people who frustrate us. Let's do this right now. On a slip of paper write down the name or names of anyone who is hard for you to get along with. Let's slip all of their names underneath our cross or crucifix on our prayer table.

Let's say a prayer for them together:

ROOT SESSION 4 - CHILDREN FULL

Jesus, we cannot imagine the way you died for each of us. We ask that you help us love and forgive others the way you did. We pray for each name we just put under your cross. They are your children too. Help us to love them like you do. Amen.

Jesus' death is not the end of the story. There is one last image on the prayer table, a large rock. After Jesus died they laid his body in a tomb which was sort of like a small cave at that time. Then they rolled a huge rock in front of it to close it off. Does anyone know what happened a few days later at this tomb? What is the name of the day we celebrate this every year? He rose from the dead at Easter! This was huge! This had never happened before on earth. Jesus had died and then come back to life. His body was resurrected! Now all the people knew he was sent by God. This was the biggest miracle ever! *(Take a few minutes to share with the children about the visit to the tomb Easter morning.)*

What does Jesus' resurrection teach us? Why did he come back to life? He wants us each to know that death is not the end of our story. Each one of us is promised a life after death with Jesus in heaven. Here we will see everyone we loved who followed Jesus. We need to stay close to Jesus in our lives so we will share forever with him.

We are going to tie a white ribbon around our crosses. White is a color that reminds us of Jesus rising from the dead, on Easter the church is decorated with white. Now as we look at our crosses, we have our sins made into a cross tied with the white ribbon of God's love for us. He wants us to be with him forever! We are going to bring our crosses to show our parents and they will add something special as well.

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

SESSION 5

PARENTS FULL

(Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
- Pens ([Purchase Here](#))
- Butcher Paper
- Markers or Crayons ([Purchase Here](#))
- TV or Projector
- Nooma Breathe Video by Rob Bell ([Video Link](#)) ~ 5 minutes

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Butcher Paper
 - Markers or Crayons

GATHER

Welcome to our fifth session for *Root*! It has been such a gift to spend this time with you. We also hope it has been helpful to you. Please make sure to check-in with us if we can support or pray for your family in any particular way.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we get going, let's begin our time together in prayer.

I invite you to put aside anything that may be distracting you, and take a few deep breaths to get settled.

ROOT SESSION 5 - PARENTS FULL

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Come, Holy Spirit into our minds and hearts. Breathe new life into the place of our souls that have gone stale. Draw close to us as our helper. Live within us, filling us with God's own life. Help us to know Jesus Christ and lead us to our Heavenly Father. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

In Root Mini-Series 5 and Family Meeting 5 we come to the part of the Creed where we meet the Holy Spirit.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with the Mini-Series and Family Meeting you recently completed.

What is one thing you reflected on in Mini-Series 5 that resonated with you? What is one thing that challenged you?

How did Family Meeting 4 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?

We will do a few activities and some sharing to process the information from Mini-Series 5, and offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 5.

REFLECT & SHARE

The Holy Spirit is God's life and breath within us. Jesus tells his apostles and tells us, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth... you know it, because it remains with you, and will be with you" (John 14:16-17).

Our world can feel chaotic and uncertain. Our daily lives are filled with joy, anxieties, challenges, and unfulfilled desires. Our children, though close to us, also have their own journeys with their own joys and struggles. The Holy Spirit is our surest guide through each day. While we can't picture the Holy Spirit like we can picture Jesus, the Holy Spirit is tangible because he wants to be with us in every situation. The Holy Spirit

ROOT SESSION 5 - PARENTS FULL

wants to come into lunchtime and car rides, meetings and errands, play time and chore time, homework and bedtime. The Holy Spirit is the perfect person to call on when we face a challenge with one of our children or are in a disagreement with our spouse. The Holy Spirit wants to heal and restore in real time. All we need to do is invite the Holy Spirit in by saying: “Come, Holy Spirit.”

Let’s take a quick look at the symbols of the Holy Spirit from Scripture and Tradition.

The word “Spirit” translates from the Hebrew word *ruah*, which means breath. The Holy Spirit is God’s breath and life in us.

Jesus tells us he will send us an Advocate, which means “he who is called to one’s side.” The Holy Spirit is our helper in prayer and life situations.

The symbolism of water signifies the Holy Spirit’s action in Baptism. After the invocation of the Holy Spirit, water becomes the sacramental sign of new birth and the living water welling up in us to eternal life.

While water signifies birth and the fruitfulness of life given in the Holy Spirit, fire symbolizes the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit’s actions.

I invite you to take a few minutes to journal, then discuss these questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

What symbol of the Holy Spirit resonates with you most? Why?
Do you think the Holy Spirit has ever given you a gut feeling about something, directed you to make a certain decision, or been by your side in a situation? Can you name one of those experiences?

ACTIVITY

We are going to watch a short video about the Holy Spirit.

(Watch Nooma Breathe video by Rob Bell. ~ 5 minutes. After finishing the video, ask the parents for any comments, anything that they learned or that moved them.)

ROOT SESSION 5 - PARENTS FULL

(On a long table, or a few long tables, have a long piece of butcher paper rolled out. In the center have it written or painted: "The Holy Spirit Dwells In Me." Have pens and markers available and ask each parent to write their name somewhere on the sign. We will use this for our closing with the children.)

TEACHING

In Family Meeting 5 we are going to discover our God who is near. The symbolism of anointing with oil also signifies the Holy Spirit. Oil is a symbol that has been used in the Church for centuries. It represents healing, strengthening, and closeness. When we rub a small amount of oil into our skin, you will notice it no longer sits on the surface; it is absorbed into our skin. The notion of anointing suggests that there is no distance between the Son and the Spirit, so anyone who makes contact with the Son by faith must first encounter the oil of the Spirit by contact.

The seal is a symbol close to that of anointing. A seal was used in ancient times as a sign of allegiance and belonging. Soldiers would bear their leader's seal showing others who they belonged to and fought for (CCC 1295). We bear the seal of the Holy Spirit that marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service for ever, and the promise of divine protection in all trials (CCC 1296). This seal indicates the permanent effect and mark of the anointing with the Holy Spirit in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders (CCC 694-701).

God cannot get any closer to us than he does through the sacraments of the Church. We are touched by physical realities that affect real spiritual changes in us. When water is poured upon us in Baptism we are cleansed from original sin and made members of the Church, the Body of Christ. We belong to God's family. We are his adopted sons and daughters. When the words of absolution are proclaimed over us in Reconciliation, we are truly forgiven and restored. When we receive Communion, we are united with Jesus and our community in such a way that we become what we receive. In Confirmation, we are sealed for service and reminded of our belonging to the Lord. In Marriage, we participate in the love of the Trinity and become its image by the way we love one another in our families. When we receive the Anointing of the Sick, we are promised healing, if not physically, certainly spiritually. In all of these sacraments we are given the opportunity to touch and participate in the very life of God, who promised to be with us always. It is the Holy Spirit that makes this possible.

Through the sacramental life we are given the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are wisdom,

ROOT SESSION 5 - PARENTS FULL

understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2-3). When God is near, through the power of the Holy Spirit, his fruit begins to manifest in and through our lives. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23). When people encounter us they should experience this fruit in us.

The Holy Spirit also gives us special graces called charisms. Charisms are gifts that we each receive from the Holy Spirit that are meant for building up community and building up the Church. We might think of God’s grace as a loop. God gives to us so that we can give to others, and the more we give the more we can receive from God. God wants us to participate in the saving work of his Church. God wants to give us gifts to use for the good of our families, our communities, and our Church. Some charisms from the Holy Spirit include (but aren’t limited to): encouragement, writing, teaching, hospitality, mercy, leadership, administration, music, healing, faith, and intercessory prayer.

I invite you to reflect on these questions for a few minutes and then share your thoughts with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

Have you ever felt touched deeply by God’s grace through a sacrament? What was that like?

Where do you see the fruit of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) in your life?

WITNESS

We are now going to hear from a member of our community on how they have grown to live a life in the Spirit.

(Have the witness share about these questions: How does the Holy Spirit live within and guide your daily life? How do you consult the Spirit? When do they ask the Holy Spirit for his gifts of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2-3)? Where do they see the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22-23)?

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

CLOSING PRAYER

(As the children come back in, invite them to the front of the room.) All of us have been talking about the Holy Spirit today, and the fact that the Holy Spirit is constantly with us and in us. *(Have the children roll out and hold their poster up.)* The Holy Spirit dwells in each one of our children!

(Now have some parents come forward and roll out their poster. Have all the parents stand up.) The Holy Spirit dwells in each one of our parents!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, please help us to remember that your Spirit is always with us. We encounter you in each other, especially in our family. Help us treat each other like we are a home, a temple for the Holy Spirit.

Please repeat after me, all together, nice and loud.

*Come Holy Spirit into our lives.
Come Holy Spirit into our homes.
Amen.*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now go find your parents or your child and end with a huge Holy Spirit hug!

Have a great week!

REFLECT & SHARE

What symbol of the Holy Spirit resonates with you most? Why?

Do you think the Holy Spirit has ever given you a gut feeling about something, directed you to make a certain decision, or been by your side in a situation? Can you name one of those experiences?

TEACHING

Have you ever felt touched deeply by God's grace through a sacrament? What was that like?

Where do you see the fruit of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) in your life?

SESSION 5

CHILDREN FULL

Supply List:

- Lunch Bag (1 per child) ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Glue ([Purchase Here](#))
- Tape or Stapler ([Purchase Here](#))
- Markers or Crayons ([Purchase Here](#))
- Crepe Paper or Ribbon for Streamers ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Stickers ([Purchase Here](#))
- Piece of String/Yarn (1 per child) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Butcher Paper
- Fan
- An item that is very important to you, and some wrapping or covering for it.

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Fan
 - An item that is very important to you, and some wrapping or covering for it.

GATHER

(Welcome the children as their parents drop them off on the way to their meeting space.)

(Gather together around the prayer table. Place a fan, and an item that has great importance to you - see “teaching”.)

OPENING PRAYER

Today we are going to talk about the Holy Spirit. Let's say a prayer first.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, Today we are going to talk about the Holy Spirit. You made sure that after Jesus left earth, we would still have you near. Help us to listen and to participate today in all the activities. This is a holy space, we welcome you here. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

TEACHING

(On the prayer table have some sort of fan - a plug in one, hand held battery one, or even a simple paper fan. You will also need an item that you personally have that is very important to you, and something you use to take care of it or protect it because it is so special to you.)

(Begin by gathering the children around and telling them you have brought something very special to show them today. Unwrap it or take it out from under the covering. Tell them why this item is so special to you, what it means to you, and how difficult it would be to replace it. Ask the children where they think you keep it? Is it just thrown on the ground at your house, how do they think you store, display and take care of something so special to you? Ask them if they have anything that means a lot to them or their family. How do they care for it?)

Today I want to tell you that you are that most important item to God. He only made one person exactly like you, you are irreplaceable! There isn't another person just like you. You are one of a kind, and that makes you very special. You are much more valuable than the item I shared with you because God lives inside of you. Your body is a home for the Holy Spirit. God wants you to take care of yourself and for others to treat you in such a special way, just like I try to treat and take care of the item I shared with you.

The Bible tells us that we each are a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). A temple in the Bible was the place where God dwelt. The temple was a beautiful, well kept holy place. So if you are a temple for God, that means that you, your body, is a holy place. How do we think we should treat our bodies knowing that we are holy? How should we treat others knowing God lives in them too? Our words need to be kind, the things we watch and listen to need to be good, our actions need to be loving. What should we eat? Do we need to exercise? How should we take care of ourselves? How should we expect others to treat and take care of us? *(Process these questions with the children.)*

Today we are going to talk more about who this Holy Spirit is. When Jesus was on earth people experienced his love, kindness, and mercy in person. But when he left earth he still wanted people to be surrounded and touched by his goodness. He decided to send us his Spirit, so that anyone who believes in him here on earth could feel close to him.

This way we can still know his love, his joy, and his forgiveness.

ROOT SESSION 5 - CHILDREN FULL

What does the Holy Spirit look like? We can't actually see him, but we can know he is there. Since the Holy Spirit lives in us, we can feel him in others too. A hug from your mom or dad, kind words from a friend, or someone helping you out, is a reminder that God's Spirit is near.

An image that is used to explain the Holy Spirit is wind. We can't see the wind with our eyes, but we can see the things it does. Have you ever felt a cool breeze or almost been knocked over from a big gust of wind? Your eyes didn't see the wind but you for sure felt it. I have brought a fan on our prayer table. Let's use it to see what happens. *(Turn the fan on or use it with your hands.)* Can you see your hair move? Can it knock something small over? Yet we can't see anything different with our eyes except what it has done.

This is similar to the Holy Spirit. Even though we can't see him, what are some of the ways we can notice what he has done? We can experience the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians, 5:22-23). When we experience these things we can know the Holy Spirit is working in our lives.

CRAFT

(Supplies needed: a lunch bag per child, glue, tape or stapler, markers, crayons, crepe paper or ribbon for streamers, stickers, a piece of string or yarn for each child.)

Right now we are going to make a wind catcher, which is like a small kite.

(Have children decorate both sides of their lunch bags with the above items. Then have them add streamers with curling ribbon, crepe paper, etc. These can be taped, glued, or stapled inside the lunch bag. A hole needs to be put in the top of the bag. Insert the string through the hole and tie a knot underneath large enough to keep the string from going through. You can also tape the string to the inside of the bag to secure it. You could have these attached before you begin to save time here.)

(Once finished, have the children hold their small kites at one end of the room.)

We are going to have some fun. When I say a way you have experienced the goodness of the Holy Spirit, you are going to run to the other side and let your kite fly behind you.

ROOT SESSION 5 - CHILDREN FULL

Have you ever had your mom or dad tell you how much they love you?

Run to the other side.

Have you ever seen something really beautiful in the world: a rainbow, a sunset, the waves crashing at the ocean, fireflies on a summer evening, etc.?

Run to the other side.

Has anyone ever forgiven you for something you wish you didn't do?

Run to the other side.

Have you ever helped someone out before anyone asked you to?

Run to the other side.

Have you ever been in church and felt that God was close to you?

Run to the other side.

Has anyone encouraged you when you were sad and having a bad day?

Run to the other side.

(You can add as many as you would like.)

Each time these things happen God's Spirit is very near. God is love, forgiveness, beauty, helpfulness, encouragement, etc.

We have a long roll of butcher paper that says in the middle: "The Holy Spirit dwells in me." Please grab a marker or crayon and write your name real big somewhere on the poster. We are going to go back to your parents and when we get inside I am going to have you all move towards the front and stand around this poster. Some of you will need to hold onto it as we unroll it. Don't unroll it until I tell you it is time to.

SESSION 6

PARENTS FULL

(Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
- Pens ([Purchase Here](#))
- Markers ([Purchase Here](#))
- TV or Projector
- Big House Music Video ([Video Link](#))
- Magazines
- Scissors ([Purchase Here](#))
- Cardstock (1 per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Glue ([Purchase Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
 - Magazines
 - Scissors
 - Cardstock (1 per parent)
 - Glue
 - Markers
- Prayer Table
 - Candles

GATHER

Welcome to our final session! We have enjoyed this time with you. It has been a gift to root into Jesus as a community, and we hope these sessions have supported your work at home. Today we will continue through the final portion of the Creed and help you prepare for Family Meeting 6.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we continue, let's begin our time in prayer. I invite you to put away anything that may distract you so you can root in Jesus in this present moment. *(You may invite everyone to take a few deep breaths to settle in.)*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit. Come, Lord Jesus.

Heavenly Father, we were made by you and for you. We are your sons and daughters. As we care for our children, help us to remember we are your children. As we journey through life, give us the grace to remember that the goal of our journey is you. Give us the faith, desire, and perseverance we need to keep our eyes and hearts set on you each day. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

In Root Mini-Series 6 and Family Meeting 6 we come to the part of the Creed where we consider our forever home, heaven.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with the Mini-Series and Family Meeting you recently completed.

What is one thing you reflected on in Mini-Series 6 that resonated with you? What is one thing that challenged you?

How did Family Meeting 5 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?

We will do a few activities and some sharing to process the information from Mini-Series 6, and offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 6.

REFLECT & SHARE

Time is a funny concept for humans. Time "flies by" or "drags on." It goes by "in the blink of an eye" and we "wish we could get it back." Or it feels "never ending."

ROOT SESSION 6 - PARENTS FULL

When children are young, they experience time differently than we do. What matters to them is what's happening "right now." They are experts at living in the present moment. And often, not being able to do or have something "right now" provides great mental and emotional challenges. *(We can be similar here—oftentimes we also don't like waiting!)*

We are on this journey through time, through life. Sometimes we go through physically exhausting seasons—like having a newborn or a toddler. Sometimes our seasons are more mentally and emotionally difficult. Other seasons feel light and bursting with little moments of fun. No matter the season we are in now, we know this season will pass and another will come. We also know the end goal of the journey—meeting God in heaven.

I invite you to take a few minutes journal, then discuss these questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

What does time feel like in the current season of your journey?

How do your kids experience this time in their life?

How often do you consider heaven as the end goal of your journey? What are things you know about heaven?

ACTIVITY

At your table there are some magazines. You will be looking through these for words or images that speak to you about heaven. What are you picturing, what might it look like, what words could you use to describe it, who will be there. We know it will be perfect, but "perfect" means different things to different people. Use the scissors to cut out images or words and glue them to the card stock in front of you. We will call these vision boards. Typically vision boards give you a picture of something you want to work towards. I think that idea works here as well. (You may want to have a sample vision board completed and tell them about what you chose, and how it represents your vision, this will help them as they begin.)

(As they finish, have a space with tables for them to put their completed vision boards. Then play some soft reflective music and invite them to come and enjoy all the different visions we have of a life with God forever.)

TEACHING

We care a great deal about our homes. Just think of the shows, stores, blogs, etc. all geared toward designing and making beautiful homes. We want to feel comfortable, safe, and loved in our homes. We all know sometimes this is the case, and sometimes it is not. Whatever your home may look or feel like right now, God wants to be a co-designer of that space with you. He wants to make our homes places of rest, safety, forgiveness, love, and formation. The image for your next Family Meeting is God is our refreshment. He wants to live in our home and make it a place of refuge and refreshment for the journey of life.

We are all being formed all the time—by what we watch, the company we keep, the conversation we have, the podcasts we listen to, the social media we scroll. The most meaningful formation we have is in our families. Our homes—our families—are meant to teach us how to live with God daily so we can one day meet him in heaven. Our homes can be the place we come to know that God isn't just “the Big Man upstairs” or “Old Man in the sky,” but that, in the words of St. Alphonse's Ligouri, “God is ever beside you—indeed, he is even within you.” When we learn and teach our children God is beside us and within us, we prepare for our ultimate home—heaven.

Even when we come from or create the most loving of homes, we long for more. Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of our deepest longings, the state of total happiness (CCC 1024). As we move through our daily lives, we might not often have heaven on our minds. But keeping our eternal end in mind can help us in the ordinary parts of our days. Keeping heaven in mind may motivate us to choose forgiveness instead of resentments, compassion instead of judgment, patience instead of rushing around.

This can be hard, and it helps to remember that we do not journey toward heaven alone. The Church is made of us on earth and the heavenly Church—the saints in heaven. We are one family in God and meant for the same home. The Saints lived in the mess and chaos of life, just like we do. They were not perfect and did not have it all together. But this is what they did know—they knew they needed Jesus more than anything, and if they gave their lives to him, he would give a more beautiful life back to them. The Saints are our models and friends, and since they are in heaven with God, they can bring our prayers to Jesus in a special way.

I invite you to take a few minutes journal, then discuss these questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

ROOT SESSION 6 - PARENTS FULL

How do you want your home to feel?

How is your life at home as a family preparing you for your forever home in heaven?
Do you have a fondness for any particular Saints? How do the Saints figure into the faith life of your family?

What do you think of the Church's teaching that heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of our deepest longings, the state of total happiness? Is this how you've always thought of heaven?

WITNESS

When we know the destination we can take practical steps to get there. We are now going to hear from a member of our community about what they do as a family in their home to prepare for their forever home in heaven.

(Have the witness share about these questions: What does heaven look like to you? Is it a destination that shapes the rest of your life? What are "holy habits" you keep to help your family walk toward heaven? Do you say grace before meals, bless your children before they go to school or to bed, read Scripture together, go to Mass together, have certain Saint friends, pray the Rosary together, abstain from meat on Fridays, visit Jesus in Adoration, allow room for faith conversations, etc.?)

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

CLOSING PRAYER

Have the children find their parents and stand by them. Today we all talked about living a life that leads us to heaven. The children talked about a Scripture that tells us that God has a special house with many rooms prepared for us in heaven. They learned a song and hand motions that got them to think about what this house might be like. We are going to play the song up in front right now and ask everyone to sing along and do the hand motions. Children get your parents up.

(Play the video, and offer encouragement to get people up and participating.)

ROOT SESSION 6 - PARENTS FULL

Let us conclude our time together in prayer.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, you tell us that death is not the end. Jesus showed us this through his Resurrection. Help our families to follow you, each step, every day - all the way to heaven. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Please take some time and offer other parents and children the peace of Christ with a fist pump, a handshake, a high five, or a hug and by saying - Peace be with you.

Have a great week!

REFLECT & SHARE

What does time feel like in the current season of your journey?

How do your kids experience this time in their life?

How often do you consider heaven as the end goal of your journey? What are things you know about heaven?

TEACHING

How do you want your home to feel?

How is your life at home as a family preparing you for your forever home in heaven?

Do you have a fondness for any particular Saints? How do the Saints figure into the faith life of your family?

What do you think of the Church's teaching that heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of our deepest longings, the state of total happiness? Is this how you've always thought of heaven?

SESSION 6

CHILDREN FULL

Supply List:

- Packs Playing Cards (enough for each small groups to build card houses) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Table Covering
- A Picture of a Mansion with Many Rooms
- Table Settings (plate, silverware, glass, napkin, etc.)
- Saint Items (books, props, statues, etc.)
- Images of Angels
- TV or Projector
- Big House Music Video ([Video Link](#))

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Packs Playing Cards (enough for each small groups to build card houses)
 - A Picture of a Mansion with Many Rooms
 - Table Settings (plate, silverware, glass, napkin, etc.)
 - Saint Items (books, props, statues, etc.)
 - Images of Angels

GATHER

(Welcome the children as their parents drop them off on the way to their meeting space.)

(Gather together around the prayer table. On the table you should have some packs of playing cards, a picture of a mansion with many rooms, a few table settings as if you were going to eat a meal, some items that have to do with the Saints you will be talking about, and any images you may have of angels. Tell the children to look closely at the table and all the items on it and to remember as many as they can. Let them look at it for one minute. Then put a table covering over the entire table. Have the children help you write down as many items as they can remember. Then take off the table covering and see how you did. Ask the children what they think all these things have in common. What could we be talking about today that would have to do with these items?)

ROOT SESSION 6 - CHILDREN FULL

Today we are going to be talking about heaven. Throughout our lesson today I am going to be pulling from these items to talk to you about what heaven has been described as.

OPENING PRAYER

Today we are going to talk about heaven. Let's say a prayer first.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, thank you for bringing us together again. We give you thanks for each person joining us today. You tell us that you want to be with us forever and that you have prepared a special place for us. Help us to open our minds and our hearts as we learn more about that place today. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ACTIVITY

(You will need a few packs of playing cards, more or less based on the size of your group. Have the children work together in small groups to make a large house with the cards. If you have more children, build a few houses. You can turn this into a competition if you want.)

TEACHING

(Read the following Scripture from John 14:1-14.)

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where [I] am going you know the way.” Thomas said to him, “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” Philip said to him, “Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do

ROOT SESSION 6 - CHILDREN FULL

you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.

Jesus is telling the disciples about the place he has for them in heaven. He describes it as a house with many rooms. The card houses we just built contained many rooms! Jesus tells them he is going to prepare a place for them there. So where he is, they will also be. He wants them to be with him in heaven. But they tell him that they don't know the way there? How do we get there? Jesus tells them that he is the way. The way to heaven is to follow him. If we follow him on earth we will follow him to heaven.

Have you ever thought about what heaven will be like? *(Have children share any of their thoughts here. Will Heaven have swimming pools? Will it have video games? Will it have a bedtime or will you never sleep? There are so many different questions and images about heaven and what it will be like.)*

We know that heaven is perfect, there is no more suffering or sadness. There is joy, peace, and great love. We will experience all these things because we will be with God who is those things. We also look forward to meeting all those who have died before us. Heaven has also been described as a banquet - like eating a delicious meal with everyone you love. Notice some things for a meal on our prayer table. What would be your most perfect meal to eat in heaven? Who would be sitting at your table?

I am going to play a song for you that talks about God's house *(show them the image of the mansion from the prayer table)* and what we might do there. It has hand motions so let's all get up and try them together. *(Children should enjoy this, have them go through it a few times singing and dancing together. If possible make sure to watch the video ahead of time, so you can also help teach hand motions. Let children know when we go back into the other room with your parents, we are going to do this song with them and I am going to need you to be really loud and to do the hand motions, so they can learn too.)*

We are told that the saints and angels are also in heaven. Does anyone know any stories about the Saints? These are people just like us who lived on earth and made mistakes and bad decisions sometimes just like we do, but they also had great faith and they tried their very best to follow Jesus. I want to share with you today about a few of these

ROOT SESSION 6 - CHILDREN FULL

Saints. (*Bring in books, props, statues, etc. to share with the children about a few of the Saints.*)
We also are called to be saints, to follow Jesus and make a difference in whatever way we can.

What do you know about angels? The name “angel” refers to what angels do, they are servants and messengers of God (CCC 329). Angels are pure spirits, sometimes in art they are depicted with wings, but they actually do not have bodies like us. The angels served Christ as he accomplished his saving plan. The angel Gabriel came to Mary, announcing God’s desire for Jesus to dwell within her (Lk. 1: 26-38). Angels sang songs of praise at Jesus’ birth (Lk. 2:14). They minister to a tired and hungry Jesus after he spends forty days in the desert (Mk. 1: 13). They strengthen him in his agony in the garden, proclaim the Good News of his Resurrection (Jn. 20:11-18), and will be with Jesus when he returns, announcing and serving at his judgment (CCC 333). The whole life of the Church benefits from the mysterious and powerful help of angels. At Mass, the Church joins with the angels to adore God, singing: holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. Do you remember when we sing this song with the angels?

The angels also surround us. “From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession” (CCC 336). Yes, that’s right, our guardian angels. We have a special prayer to our guardian angels. Let’s pray it now together.
Please repeat after me:

*Angel of God
My guardian dear
To whom God’s love
Commits me here
Ever this day
Be at my side,
To light and guard,
To rule and guide.
Amen.*

We see the bond between heaven and earth in the Church’s belief in guardian angels. Even as we journey here on earth, we have protectors that guide and lead us in our pathway toward heaven.

Let’s sing and do the hand movements to Big House one more time before we head back to meet up with our parents and share it with them.

SESSION 1

PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

(To be used between Family Meeting 1 and 2. Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Two-Sided Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Garden Puzzle Image (1 per table, cut into 1 rectangular piece per person)
- Card Stock Sheet (1 per parent)
- Puzzle Box
- Markers/Crayons/Pencils with erasers and/or Colored Pencils ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Candles (few per table)
- Lighters (1 per table)
- Pens (1 per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Garden Puzzle Image (1 per table, cut into 1 rectangular piece per person)
 - Card Stock Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Markers/Crayons
 - Candles (few per table)
 - Lighters (1 per table)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Puzzle Box

GATHER

Welcome to our first session for Root! Thank you so much for making the time to be here! We know life is full and we value your time. We gather together to root ourselves in Jesus and our community so we can all be inspired and supported as we work to help our children grow their roots in Jesus. The work is hard, but worthwhile, and we are all together in it.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we get going, let's begin our time together in prayer.

I invite you to put aside anything that may be distracting you, and take a few deep breaths to get settled. Whatever the day was like, hand it to Jesus now.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, you created us. You know us and you call us good, even when we don't always see ourselves or our families that way. Give us the grace to welcome your light in our lives. Take away the fear that you won't love us if we let you in. You already know and love us, and tell us there is nothing to fear. We offer you this time and ask you to use it for your glory. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

In Root Family Meeting 2 we begin our journey through the Creed. The Creed is what we believe. It is what we say at Mass when the priest invites us all to “profess our faith.” The Creed begins with the words, “I believe.” These words—I believe—is what Credo means. As you delve into Root at-home with your families and as we gather together, you will have the opportunity to reflect on what it is you believe about God and our Church.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with the Family Meeting you recently completed.

How did Family Meeting 1 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?
What did you and your family learn?

Today, we will do a few activities and some sharing to offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 2.

REFLECT & SHARE

I invite you to take a few moments now to reflect and journal your answers to the following questions. When finished, share your responses with your pod or small groups (or with the person next to you).

To what degree do I believe God cares about and is involved in my everyday life?
Does believing in God and his will for my life give me a sense of order or purpose?
How active do I want God to be in my daily life?
How does God guide my decisions, words, and actions?

How we respond to these questions impacts both how we think about God and how we live out each day.

ACTIVITY

We are going to participate in an activity as small groups that we will unpack together after we finish.

(For this activity, you will need to print the PDF of the image of the garden on a letter-sized sheet of paper. You will need one copy of the image per small group. Cut the image into same-sized rectangular pieces equal to the number of small group members. Ideally, no piece should give away the subject and each piece should have the same level of detail. When you assemble your group, hand everyone a piece of the picture, a sheet of paper, and art supplies like crayons, markers, pencils with erasers and/or colored pencils.)

You have been handed a piece of a picture, a sheet of paper, and some art supplies. Your task is to recreate your piece of the image so it fills up the entire piece of paper you were given. When everyone has finished, you will then put your pieces together to recreate the original on a much larger scale.

(After they finish.)

Does your life sometimes feel like it doesn't make sense, or that it is cut apart in so many different pieces? How is it all supposed to work together without you feeling spread thin all the time?

As you were building the puzzle together, did you have a few of those "aha moments"—

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

“Oh that’s how it fits together, if you move this, then that makes sense”?

God created all of us with a purpose and meaning for our lives, the pieces are meant to fit together in an overall vision that leads us to a life with God forever. His order and will is meant to give us direction, peace, and hope. Without a direction for life, things can become disjointed, disconnected, and chaotic—we begin forcing pieces together or making half done puzzles.

The same goes for our family life. God wants to bring order, peace, and direction to it as well. Our children are actually begging for boundaries, limits, and an overall direction—this provides stability. We are all on a journey to where? For what? God wants to be the answer to these questions.

Think about making a puzzle from a box. The first thing you do is look at the picture on the box. *(You could have an actual puzzle box as you speak.)* This picture helps inform the rest. *(Point to picture on the box.)*

Sometimes I think we find ourselves taking pieces out of the box and trying to fit them together without looking at what we are trying to end up making. *(Start taking pieces out of the box, disregard the finished picture on the box, and act frustrated as you try to put pieces together.)* God gives us a beautiful picture to work towards, it is up to us to keep our eyes on it as we try to connect the pieces.

Let’s take a few moments to reflect and journal, then share some of your thoughts and questions this activity may have prompted with your pod or small group (or the person next to you): *(provide 5 minutes)*

Does my personal life and my family life have a sense of order, or does it feel chaotic all the time?

How does God bring peace and purpose to my life and my family’s life?

TEACHING

The Root Box focuses on the Creed, the written summary and foundation of our faith. Each time you meet with your children, you will give them an image of God to try and relate to. We want to help you prepare for your at-home Family Meeting. The next Family Meeting focuses on the image of God as light. Let’s explore the image of God as light together now.

(For a few moments, turn off as many lights as possible in the space you are using. Get it as dark

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

as possible.)

You are invited to sit quietly in the silence and the darkness for a bit. Close your eyes and sit a few moments in complete darkness.

(Pause)

Think about a lifetime of this—a life without light. This is what a life without God has been compared to—much of the world is walking around in darkness.

On each table there are a few votive candles and a lighter. I invite a parent at each table to light the candles.

You will now have a few moments to personally reflect and journal. Your answers to these questions will not be shared out loud. This is a time for you and God in the candlelight.

Do you believe God's word and presence can bring order and light to your life? If so, why do you sometimes push him away?

Do you believe you are called to be walking towards eternal light, forever with God? The light can also expose things. That is sometimes why we continue to stay in darkness. Are there areas in your life you aren't ready to let the light into?

WITNESS

(In candlelight, have a parent be prepared to share for a few minutes on God as light in their own life, how God has brought light into dark places, how God's light shines in the ordinary moments of life.)

We will now hear from a member of our community about how God has been the light of their lives. Hopefully these reflections on God as light will help you as you share this image of God with your children at your next Family Meeting.

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root Box.)

CLOSING PRAYER

ROOT SESSION 1 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

(With the room still in candlelight, have children come back into the room for the last few minutes of the session wearing their glow stick necklaces.)

We have all been talking about God as light. Parents share one way your children bring light to your life. Tell them now. *(Pause for them to share.)*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, you tell us that you are the Light of the World. Help us to live in your light and share it with others. As we bring this light into our homes, may we be mindful that you are always there with us. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have a great week!

REFLECT & SHARE

To what degree do I believe God cares about and is involved in my everyday life?

Does believing in God and his will for my life give me a sense of order or purpose?

How active do I want God to be in my daily life?

How does God guide my decisions, words, and actions?

ACTIVITY

Does my personal life and my family life have a sense of order, or does it feel chaotic all the time?

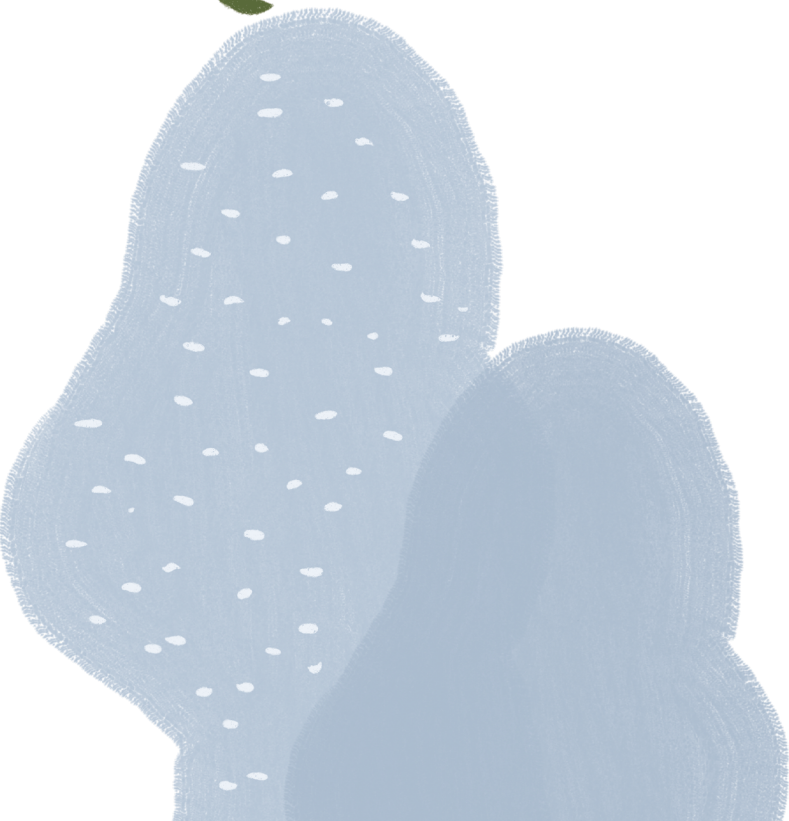
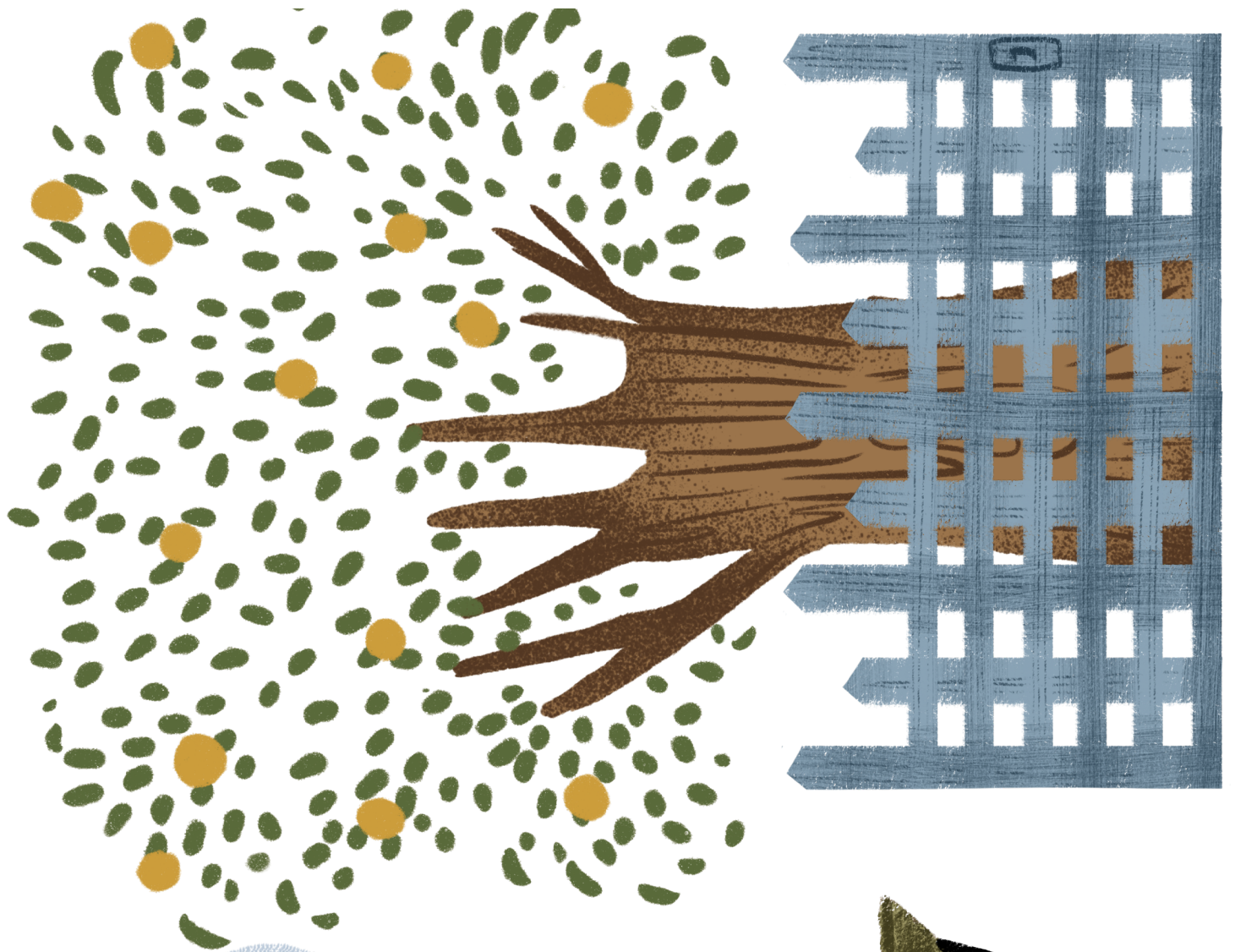
How does God bring peace and purpose to my life and my family's life?

TEACHING

Do you believe God's word and presence can bring order and light to your life? If so,
why do you sometimes push him away?

Do you believe you are called to be walking towards eternal light, forever with God?

The light can also expose things. That is sometimes why we continue to stay in darkness.
Are there areas in your life you aren't ready to let the light into?



SESSION 1

CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Light Switch Coloring Sheet (1 per child)
- Light images
 - Light Bulb
 - Lamp
 - Flashlight
 - Christmas Lights
 - Candle
- Lighter
- Cover for Candle
- Light Sticks (1 per child) ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Markers/Crayons or Color Pencils ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Light images
 - Light Bulb
 - Lamp
 - Flashlight
 - Christmas Lights
 - Candle
 - Lighter
 - Cover for Candle

GATHER

(Welcome and gather children together as they are being dropped off and parents are moving to their own meeting space.)

(Begin by welcoming the children and have them gather around the prayer table. On the prayer table place some images of light: a light bulb, a small lamp without a shade that you will plug in later, a flashlight, a string of Christmas lights that work, a candle; a lighter and a basket or cover large enough to put over the candle without any burning issues. You can also have a cross or crucifix, an image of Mary, etc.)

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

God, we are so happy to be here today to spend time with you. Thank you for our parents in the other room who love us so much. Is there anything else we can thank God for? (Let children add here.) Bless our time together. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

TEACHING

Today's session focuses on looking at God as the Light of the World. This is something you will be talking about during your at-home Family Meeting as well. You even have a flashlight in your Root box to help explain this. On our prayer table we have some images of light that we are going to be talking about today.

There is a book in the Bible written by one of Jesus' disciples, named John. When Jesus was on earth talking to the people, he told them: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

What happens if you walk into your garage late at night? It would be so dark. You probably couldn't see enough to even walk around. But if you light a candle it would begin to lighten up, and then if you turn a light on it would completely lighten up. You could then walk around and find your way easily.

Jesus compares himself to light because he wants us to see our lives better. He wants us to know he is with us wherever we go, and that we don't need to be afraid. We can compare him to a flashlight. He can light the way. The way to make good decisions, how to treat others, and how to stay close to him.

Now let's look at the lamp on our table. Let's try and plug it in without a light bulb. Nothing happens, there is no light. Now let's use a light bulb and twist it into the socket, it lights up. The light bulb has to be connected to the source to give off the light. Jesus is our source and when we plug into him he helps light our way. One way to live in Jesus' light is to bring him to our decisions. When you aren't sure what to do in different situations ask yourself "what would Jesus do"? Jesus will always be the flashlight, guiding us to the most loving thing to do.

ROOT SESSION 1 - CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

Let's try this with a few different situations:

- A new kid comes into your class from another state. He is introduced by your teacher right before you all go out for recess. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- Your mom is tired from a long day and she asks you to help her with a few things. You are tired too and all you want to do is play video games. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- You see someone bullying a friend of yours at school. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- You didn't study for the spelling test. You can see your friend's answers very easily. What would Jesus do? What should you do?
- *(Depending on your time you can come up with a few more scenarios.)*

Jesus wants us to be a light in the world. To do that, we have to follow the way he lived on earth. Turn off the lights and plug in the Christmas lights. For each light, come up with one way you can share Jesus' light with others.

Light the candle on your prayer table (or use a battery candle). At another place in the Bible there is a story about Jesus telling everyone to never cover their own light, the light inside themselves. *(Make sure lights are still down and cover the candle with the basket.)* What did he mean by this? Jesus told them that whenever they shared his light with others they would be pointing others to him (Matthew 5:14-16).

Is it easy for you to talk about Jesus to others? What would you want someone to know about him?

Jesus also gave each of us some pretty special parts to who we each are. He never wants us to hide ourselves and not be who he created us to be. What is something special about each of you?

ACTIVITY

We are going to do a craft now that reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World. In your room you all have a light switch that controls the lights. We are going to make a cover for your light switch. You can hang it over the switch or you might have to tape it down, ask your parents to help you. As you turn the lights on and off in your room, be reminded that Jesus is always with you.

ROOT SESSION 1 - CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

(Have the children color the cover with markers and crayons. It may help to have the “center” of the switch cut out ahead of time. If you make extras they can make them for a few lights in their home.)

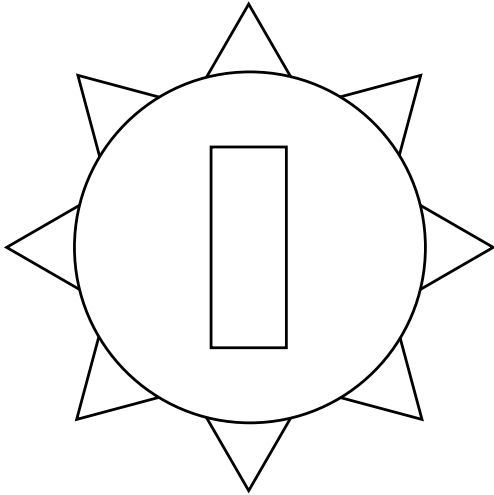
GAME

(If there is time left you can play a few rounds of red light/green light to go with today’s theme.)

(As you get ready to bring the children back to their parents for the closing prayer, give each of the children a lit up glow necklace to put on. As they enter the parent’s space the lights will be dimmed. Have them go and stand next to their parents.)

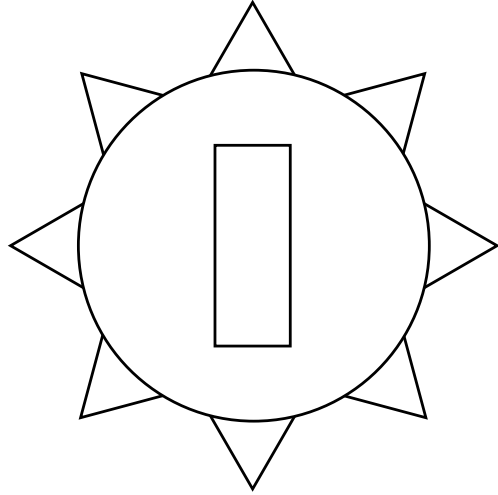
Your parents have also been talking about Jesus as the light of the world and also how you light up their world. Let’s go and shine brightly.

JESUS



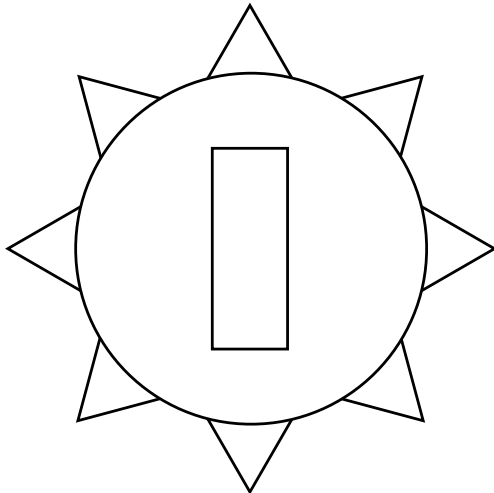
**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

JESUS



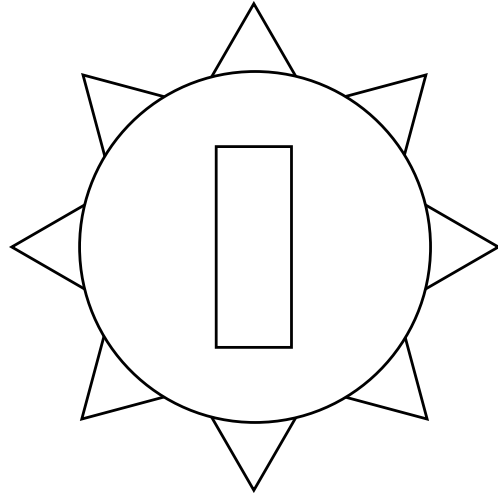
**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

JESUS



**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

JESUS



**IS THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD**

SESSION 2

PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

(To be used between Family Meeting 3 and 4. Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Two-Sided Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Strips of Paper for Parents (1 strip per parent)
 - Crucifix Image
- Pens ([Purchase Here](#))
- Crucifixes (1 per table)
- String or Yarn (1 pieces about 10 inches long per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Candles

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Strips of Paper for Parents (1 strip per parent)
 - Crucifix (1 per table)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
- Prayer Table
 - Candle
 - Crucifix

GATHER

Welcome to our second session for the *Root* series! It is good to see you! Thank you for continuing to make time to be here! We know life is full and we value your time. We are grateful to be here with you as we all take steps to root ourselves and our families in Jesus.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we get going, let's begin our time together in prayer.

ROOT SESSION 2 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

I invite you to put aside anything that may be distracting you, and take a few deep breaths to get settled. Whatever the day was like, hand it to Jesus now.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, you look at each of us with eyes full of love and mercy. Give us the grace to lift our eyes to yours. You see us for all that we are, and love us still. Give us the courage to open our lives to you. You are the one who brings value to the ordinary. You bear our crosses with us and give us hope that all things can be redeemed. Help us to trust in your love and will for us and our families. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

We turn to reflect on the most important event in all of history, the Paschal mystery of Jesus, meaning his Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with Family Meeting you recently completed.

How did Family Meeting 3 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?
What did you and your family learn?

We will do a few activities and some sharing to offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 4.

REFLECT AND SHARE

We know Jesus existed. He is a person who lived in the history of our world. He has changed the lives of billions of people. To what extent has he had an impact on your life and your family's life?

We tend to let Jesus into our lives to different degrees. We may believe that we need to have it all together, and will let Jesus in when we finally have it all under control. We may believe weakness is unlovable, and Jesus wouldn't love us if he really saw who we are or what we've done. We may feel good with giving Jesus some of our lives, but

ROOT SESSION 2 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

unwilling to give him everything, scared about what he might ask of us.

The reality is, we are all flawed. No one is perfect. We do not have it all under control. We do need help and Jesus has bigger and better dreams for us and our families than we have for ourselves.

God the Father gave us his Son, Jesus to take away the sins of the world (including our sins), to show us the Father's love, to be our model for holiness, and to open heaven to us. God gave us his Son, Jesus because he loves us. He sent us someone who can look at us with tenderness, understand us, and embrace us with uncalculating love. Letting Jesus into our lives need not be a burden—he wants to carry our burdens with us. Letting Jesus into our lives need not be scary. He doesn't love in a limited way—he loves in an all-embracing way. Letting Jesus into our lives isn't a failure, condemning us because we don't have it all together. His presence in our lives leads to true freedom. In him we find real purpose and joy.

When we walk with Jesus in our daily lives, we discover the importance of growing in humility. Humility is a virtue that makes many of us feel uncomfortable or turns us off. Humility does not mean allowing people to walk all over us or never speaking up. Rather, humility is the character of Jesus and the way we get to heaven. Humility is having our feet rooted in Jesus and our eyes gazing up toward our Heavenly Father. It is knowing God is our maker and our goal. Humility is the key to freedom and joy in our daily lives.

Following Jesus means to try daily to live as he did. His life was filled with incredible joy, wonderful relationships, sorrow, sacrifice, etc. In some of his last moments on earth we see him coming to terms with and embracing his mission. He is conversing with God the Father in the garden of Gethsemane. He goes there to pray and prepare himself for the sacrifice ahead. He asks the Father if he could take away the cup, but ultimately accepts the will of the Father.

I invite you to take a few minutes journal, then discuss these questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

How do I spend time getting to know Jesus (prayer, the sacraments, reading Scripture, reading the lives of the saints)?

What kind of reaction do I have when I hear the word humility?

How do I walk toward or away from God in my ordinary life?

ACTIVITY

(Each table will need one crucifix per table. You can print an image of a crucifix, or bring in physical crucifixes.)

(Hold up a crucifix.) This is our example. With Christ's arms stretched open to the world, almost naked, completely exposed. The prefix to the word humility is "humus", meaning "dirt." Humility - to be in the dirt, in the mess, no pretenses. Christ is very close to us in our own crosses, in our own messes. He invites us to be honest and vulnerable, to practice humility as we face them. Each of us will carry crosses on our journeys. We are invited to unite our own struggles and sufferings to his.

(If possible, turn the lights low and add some candle light and soft music.) I invite you to pass the crucifix around the circle at your table. As you each hold it, spend a moment really looking at it. What is it saying to you? Think of one or two words that come to mind when you look at the cross and Christ. Pass the crucifix around again and as you hold it, say the word or two you thought of. I invite you to reflect on a cross that you are currently carrying. There are strips of paper at your table. Take a few moments to privately write down your cross on the slip of paper, fold it in half, and place it under the crucifix in the center of the table.

WITNESS

In following Jesus we too will bear crosses. Our own crosses are constantly a part of our lives; holding them, dragging them, stumbling, picking it up again. We are now going to hear from a member of our community about a cross they carry and how it has brought them closer to Jesus.

(Have the witness share about these questions: What is a cross you are carrying? What does the weight of it feel like? How do you invite Christ into your pain? What has Jesus taught you in the process? How do you teach your children to do the same with their crosses?)

TEACHING

In Root Family Meeting 4, your family will tie knots in a string. We sin and get twisted up in all different situations. Jesus desires to sit with us and untangle these knots. He died on the cross to replace the knots of our sins with love and forgiveness.

ROOT SESSION 2 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

There is another weight we also assume in our lives, the weight of worry. Worry can turn our stomach into knots. Our bodies can actually have physical reactions to worrying. What do you do with your worries?

On your table are some strings, take one and place it in front of you. You now each have a worry string in front of you. I am going to read a list of things you may worry about aloud. When I say one that you can relate to, tie a knot in your string. At the end of the list I will give you time to tie knots for other things you worry about that I didn't mention.

We worry God, we can't help it. We take the weight of the world on our shoulders. We feel like we have to hold it, fix it, ruminate on it, and if we are lucky, we let go of it.

Tie a knot in your string if you worry about: *(read these aloud slowly)*

Your health, money, your relationships, work, your parents, your children, your children's grades, their friends or them not having friends, the world around them, social media, video games, peer pressure, being a good or bad parent.

Now take a moment to tie in knots for anything else you worry about.

Hold your string in your hand, notice the knots. These knots can rob us from our peace. So many of these knots are out of our control. God invites us to trust in him. To put the knots in his hands. When you start worrying you can say: Jesus I trust in you.

You have each been given the words of a Scripture from the book of Matthew on the back of your discussion question sheet. Hold your string for a minute and silently read the passage to yourself. Then close your eyes, hold your string and sit with Jesus.

Jesus knows that we are imperfect and loves us still. He knows that we struggle with the same sins over and over and loves us still. He loves our children more than we love them and wants to walk alongside them.

Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection are the center of our faith. Our salvation is God the Father's initiative, showing "his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus shows us the fullness of Father's love for us, for he loved us to the end. "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Jesus' death was not a coincidental series of unfortunate events, but part of the mystery of God's plan. We believe Jesus knew and loved us all when he offered his life (CCC 616). In the words of the Catechism, "There is not, never has been, and

ROOT SESSION 2 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

never will be a single human being for whom Christ did not suffer” (CCC 605). But, of course, Jesus’ death is not the end of the story. Jesus’ resurrection confirms all his works and teachings. It is proof of all he promised (CCC 651). Jesus’ Resurrection is the reason and way to life with God forever in heaven.

I invite you to reflect on these questions for a few minutes and then share your thoughts with your pod or small group (or the person sitting next to you):

Do I believe Jesus died for me and my family?

Where does my family need the hope of the Resurrection—lived experience of love, joy, strength, peace, forgiveness—in our lives?

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

CLOSING PRAYER

(As the children come in, have them find their parents.) Today we have all been talking about Jesus’ sacrifice for us on the Cross. The children have put together a cross made up of beads. These beads represent some of the ways they each sin. They were able to talk about some of the things that are difficult for them. They understand that Jesus died for these things. God never wants our actions to separate us from him. They also tied a white ribbon on their crosses that stands for the blessing of Jesus’ Resurrection.

(Invite the parents to take a moment to have their child tell them more about their cross and what it means.)

I invite the parents to tie your worry string to your child’s cross. Jesus wants parents to give him the things that trouble their minds and get in the way of them trusting him. Hold together the small cross with your children as we close in prayer.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, we thank you for the gift of the cross. May it always remind us of how loved we each are. Help us to better appreciate you in our lives. You have given us so much. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

REFLECT AND SHARE

How do I spend time getting to know Jesus (prayer, the sacraments, reading Scripture, reading the lives of the Saints)?

What kind of reaction do I have when I hear the word humility?

How do I walk toward or away from God in my ordinary life?

TEACHING

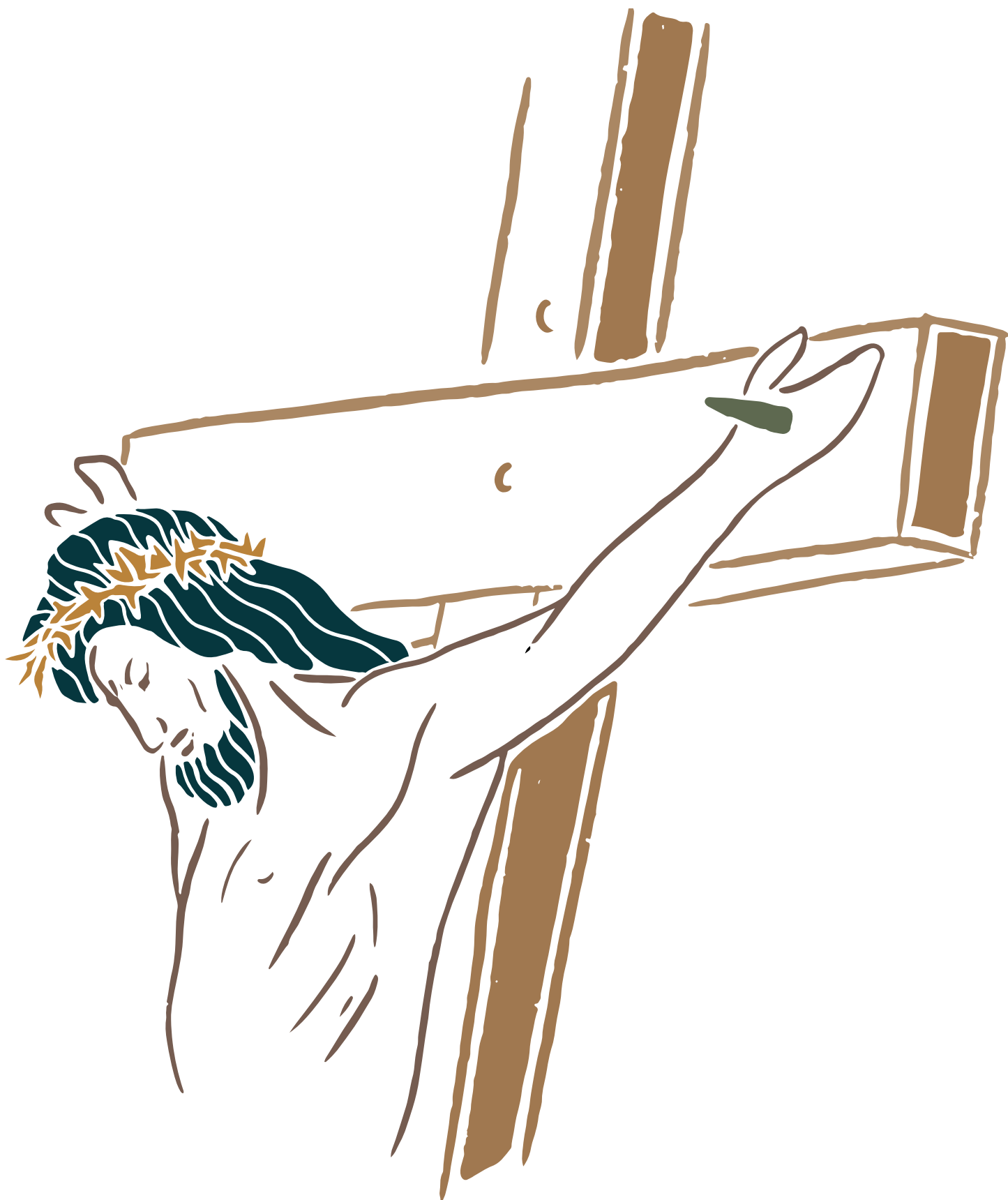
Do I believe Jesus died for me and my family?

Where does my family need the hope of the Resurrection—lived experience of love, joy, strength, peace, forgiveness—in our lives?

MATTHEW 6:25-34

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat [or drink], or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they? Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span? Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith? So do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’ All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.

Sufficient for a day is its own evil.



My Cross:

My Cross:

My Cross:

My Cross:

My Cross:

SESSION 2

CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Strips of Paper (1 per child)
- Beads ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- Pipe Cleaners ([Purchase Here](#) or [Here](#))
- White Ribbon ([Purchase Here](#))
- Many Different Crosses and Crucifixes
- Bowl

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Beads
 - Many Different Crosses and Crucifixes
 - Bowl

GATHER

(Welcome the children as their parents drop them off on the way to their meeting space.)

(Gather together around the prayer table. Place a cross or crucifix , a bowl and your beads on your table.)

OPENING PRAYER

Today we are going to talk about the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. Let's begin with prayer.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, thank you for being with us today. You love us even more than we can imagine. Help us to hear that today as we learn more about you. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

TEACHING

I am so glad you each are joining us today, we will begin at our prayer table. Last time we were together we talked about the life of Jesus, today we are going to talk about his death and what that means for us.

On our prayer table we have a few different crosses and crucifixes. The cross is the greatest sign of Jesus' love for us. *(Take some time to tell the children about the different cross images you have with you today, and what they mean to you, including any stories that apply.)* The term crucifix refers to a cross which has an image of Jesus' body on it. As Catholics we look to his death and rising as the center of our faith.

(Take some time and let each of them hold a cross or crucifix.) What do you feel when you think about the death of Jesus? What do you know about how it happened? The last words Jesus said before he died were: "It is finished". He had done what he came to do.

Why did Jesus have to die? Does anyone have any answers to this important question?

I want to talk to you about the answer to this question. Before we begin, I know that it is sad to talk about the suffering and death of Jesus. But as we talk about it I want you to remember that Jesus' death was not the end of the story. Our sadness turns to great joy after things are finished.

First of all, Jesus came to earth to let us know about the great love of God the Father and to help us better understand how to love one another. Jesus knew that since the beginning of time people had not always lived in love and goodness. Sin is a real thing. We all do things we know aren't good for us and for others, that is part of what it means to be a human being. We can't change that.

What are some things you do that you know are wrong? When you do them you feel bad afterwards, but then sometimes it happens again. And when it keeps happening sometimes you may begin to feel like you are not good enough for God to love. Have you ever done something and felt this way? When we feel this way, we separate ourselves from God, but remember God wants to be with us always.

God sent Jesus to die on the Cross so that we would never be separate from him. Jesus took all our sins on the Cross, every one of them. Jesus' death tells us that we would never be separated from him if we accept his love and forgiveness.

ROOT SESSION 2 - CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

I have some beads on our prayer table. I want you to think of some ways that you sin and don't make the best choices. I want you to take a bead for some of the things you do that you know are not right. *(Have the children say things out loud and then take beads from the table and move them into a bowl right next to a crucifix.)* These are the things Jesus died for. Our sin cannot keep us from God. Jesus made sure of that!

CRAFT

We are going to use beads and pipe cleaners to make crosses. The beads represent our sin. We are going to use these beads to make a cross. The cross is such a powerful image. It tells us how much we are loved by God, and that nothing can separate us from his love. The crosses we make today remind us of what Jesus died on the cross for, they are made up of our sins.

(Have children string beads along 2 pipe cleaners. One pipe cleaner needs to be shorter than the other. Fold up the ends so beads cannot fall off. Twist the shorter of the pipe cleaners in the center of the other to make a cross. If you have enough supplies they can make a couple others to give away to people they love to remind them of how much Jesus loves them too!)

Jesus' death also teaches us about how strong his forgiveness is. After his hands and feet were nailed to the wood, and while he was still hanging on the cross in such pain, he asked God the Father to forgive the people who hurt him. He took their sins upon himself and showed them that he still wants God to love them.

Because of the great forgiveness he gives to all of us through the Cross, we can show our love for him by also sharing forgiveness with others. This can be hard sometimes, but the image of Jesus suffering for us can remind us of how powerful it is to do what we know is right. When we forgive someone they will no longer be separate from us. In the same way, we will never be separate from Jesus. We continue to be at peace with others.

Why is it hard to forgive others? Who is it hardest for you to forgive? Jesus actually asks us to pray for our enemies, for the people who frustrate us. Let's do this right now. On a slip of paper write down the name or names of anyone who is hard for you to get along with. Let's slip all of their names underneath our cross or crucifix on our prayer table.

Let's say a prayer for them together:

ROOT SESSION 2 - CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

Jesus, we cannot imagine the way you died for each of us. We ask that you help us love and forgive others the way you did. We pray for each name we just put under your cross. They are your children too. Help us to love them like you do. Amen.

Jesus' death is not the end of the story. There is one last image on the prayer table, a large rock. After Jesus died they laid his body in a tomb which was sort of like a small cave at that time. Then they rolled a huge rock in front of it to close it off. Does anyone know what happened a few days later at this tomb? What is the name of the day we celebrate this every year? He rose from the dead at Easter! This was huge! This had never happened before on earth. Jesus had died and then come back to life. His body was resurrected! Now all the people knew he was sent by God. This was the biggest miracle ever! *(Take a few minutes to share with the children about the visit to the tomb Easter morning.)*

What does Jesus' resurrection teach us? Why did he come back to life? He wants us each to know that death is not the end of our story. Each one of us is promised a life after death with Jesus in heaven. Here we will see everyone we loved who followed Jesus. We need to stay close to Jesus in our lives so we will share forever with him.

We are going to tie a white ribbon around our crosses. White is a color that reminds us of Jesus rising from the dead, on Easter the church is decorated with white. Now as we look at our crosses, we have our sins made into a cross tied with the white ribbon of God's love for us. He wants us to be with him forever! We are going to bring our crosses to show our parents and they will add something special as well.

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

My Enemies:

SESSION 3

PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

(To be used between Family Meeting 5 and 6. Parents and children will be separated for the first part of each session.)

Supply List:

- Printable PDFs
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
- Pens ([Purchase Here](#))
- Markers ([Purchase Here](#))
- TV or Projector
- Big House Music Video ([Video Link](#))
- Magazines
- Scissors ([Purchase Here](#))
- Cardstock (1 per parent) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Glue ([Purchase Here](#))

Set-Up:

- Group Table
 - Small Group Question Sheet (1 per parent)
 - Pens (1 per parent)
 - Magazines
 - Scissors
 - Cardstock (1 per parent)
 - Glue
 - Markers
- Prayer Table
 - Candles

GATHER

Welcome to our final session! We have enjoyed this time with you. It has been a gift to root into Jesus as a community, and we hope these sessions have supported your work at home. Today we will continue through the final portion of the Creed and help you prepare for Family Meeting 6.

OPENING PRAYER

Before we continue, let's begin our time in prayer. I invite you to put away anything that may distract you so you can root in Jesus in this present moment. *(You may invite everyone to take a few deep breaths to settle in.)*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit. Come, Lord Jesus.

Heavenly Father, we were made by you and for you. We are your sons and daughters. As we care for our children, help us to remember we are your children. As we journey through life, give us the grace to remember that the goal of our journey is you. Give us the faith, desire, and perseverance we need to keep our eyes and hearts set on you each day. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHECK-IN

In Family Meeting 6 we come to the part of the Creed where we consider our forever home, heaven.

Let's take a few minutes to share your experiences with the Family Meeting you recently completed.

How did Family Meeting 5 go at-home? What went well? What was difficult?
What did you and your family learn?

We will do a few activities and some sharing to offer support as you move toward Family Meeting 6.

REFLECT & SHARE

Time is a funny concept for humans. Time "flies by" or "drags on." It goes by "in the blink of an eye" and we "wish we could get it back." Or it feels "never ending."

ROOT SESSION 3 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

When children are young, they experience time differently than we do. What matters to them is what's happening "right now." They are experts at living in the present moment. And often, not being able to do or have something "right now" provides great mental and emotional challenges. *(We can be similar here—oftentimes we also don't like waiting!)*

We are on this journey through time, through life. Sometimes we go through physically exhausting seasons—like having a newborn or a toddler. Sometimes our seasons are more mentally and emotionally difficult. Other seasons feel light and bursting with little moments of fun. No matter the season we are in now, we know this season will pass and another will come. We also know the end goal of the journey—meeting God in heaven.

I invite you to take a few minutes journal, then discuss these questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

What does time feel like in the current season of your journey?

How do your kids experience this time in their life?

How often do you consider heaven as the end goal of your journey? What are things you know about heaven?

ACTIVITY

At your table there are some magazines. You will be looking through these for words or images that speak to you about heaven. What are you picturing, what might it look like, what words could you use to describe it, who will be there. We know it will be perfect, but "perfect" means different things to different people. Use the scissors to cut out images or words and glue them to the card stock in front of you. We will call these vision boards. Typically vision boards give you a picture of something you want to work towards. I think that idea works here as well. (You may want to have a sample vision board completed and tell them about what you chose, and how it represents your vision, this will help them as they begin.)

(As they finish, have a space with tables for them to put their completed vision boards. Then play some soft reflective music and invite them to come and enjoy all the different visions we have of a life with God forever.)

TEACHING

We care a great deal about our homes. Just think of the shows, stores, blogs, etc. all geared toward designing and making beautiful homes. We want to feel comfortable, safe, and loved in our homes. We all know sometimes this is the case, and sometimes it is not. Whatever your home may look or feel like right now, God wants to be a co-designer of that space with you. He wants to make our homes places of rest, safety, forgiveness, love, and formation. The image for your next Family Meeting is God is our refreshment. He wants to live in our home and make it a place of refuge and refreshment for the journey of life.

We are all being formed all the time—by what we watch, the company we keep, the conversation we have, the podcasts we listen to, the social media we scroll. The most meaningful formation we have is in our families. Our homes—our families—are meant to teach us how to live with God daily so we can one day meet him in heaven. Our homes can be the place we come to know that God isn't just “the Big Man upstairs” or “Old Man in the sky,” but that, in the words of St. Alphonse's Ligouri, “God is ever beside you—indeed, he is even within you.” When we learn and teach our children God is beside us and within us, we prepare for our ultimate home—heaven.

Even when we come from or create the most loving of homes, we long for more. Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of our deepest longings, the state of total happiness (CCC 1024). As we move through our daily lives, we might not often have heaven on our minds. But keeping our eternal end in mind can help us in the ordinary parts of our days. Keeping heaven in mind may motivate us to choose forgiveness instead of resentments, compassion instead of judgment, patience instead of rushing around.

This can be hard, and it helps to remember that we do not journey toward heaven alone. The Church is made of us on earth and the heavenly Church—the saints in heaven. We are one family in God and meant for the same home. The Saints lived in the mess and chaos of life, just like we do. They were not perfect and did not have it all together. But this is what they did know—they knew they needed Jesus more than anything, and if they gave their lives to him, he would give a more beautiful life back to them. The Saints are our models and friends, and since they are in heaven with God, they can bring our prayers to Jesus in a special way.

I invite you to take a few minutes journal, then discuss these questions with your pod or small group (or the person next to you):

ROOT SESSION 3 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

How do you want your home to feel?

How is your life at home as a family preparing you for your forever home in heaven?
Do you have a fondness for any particular Saints? How do the Saints figure into the faith life of your family?

What do you think of the Church's teaching that heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of our deepest longings, the state of total happiness? Is this how you've always thought of heaven?

WITNESS

When we know the destination we can take practical steps to get there. We are now going to hear from a member of our community about what they do as a family in their home to prepare for their forever home in heaven.

(Have the witness share about these questions: What does heaven look like to you? Is it a destination that shapes the rest of your life? What are "holy habits" you keep to help your family walk toward heaven? Do you say grace before meals, bless your children before they go to school or to bed, read Scripture together, go to Mass together, have certain Saint friends, pray the Rosary together, abstain from meat on Fridays, visit Jesus in Adoration, allow room for faith conversations, etc.?)

(If there is any time left, ask if parents have any other questions or take-aways from the Root for Parents Mini-Series. Remind them to bring their books and to underline parts that speak to them, challenge them, need clarifying, etc.)

CLOSING PRAYER

Have the children find their parents and stand by them. Today we all talked about living a life that leads us to heaven. The children talked about a Scripture that tells us that God has a special house with many rooms prepared for us in heaven. They learned a song and hand motions that got them to think about what this house might be like. We are going to play the song up in front right now and ask everyone to sing along and do the hand motions. Children get your parents up.

(Play the video, and offer encouragement to get people up and participating.)

ROOT SESSION 3 - PARENTS SIMPLIFIED

Let us conclude our time together in prayer.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, you tell us that death is not the end. Jesus showed us this through his Resurrection. Help our families to follow you, each step, every day - all the way to heaven. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Please take some time and offer other parents and children the peace of Christ with a fist pump, a handshake, a high five, or a hug and by saying - Peace be with you.

Have a great week!

REFLECT & SHARE

What does time feel like in the current season of your journey?

How do your kids experience this time in their life?

How often do you consider heaven as the end goal of your journey? What are things you know about heaven?

TEACHING

How do you want your home to feel?

How is your life at home as a family preparing you for your forever home in heaven?

Do you have a fondness for any particular Saints? How do the Saints figure into the faith life of your family?

What do you think of the Church's teaching that heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of our deepest longings, the state of total happiness? Is this how you've always thought of heaven?

SESSION 3

CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

Supply List:

- Packs Playing Cards (enough for each small groups to build card houses) ([Purchase Here](#))
- Table Covering
- A Picture of a Mansion with Many Rooms
- Table Settings (plate, silverware, glass, napkin, etc.)
- Saint Items (books, props, statues, etc.)
- Images of Angels
- TV or Projector
- Big House Music Video ([Video Link](#))

Set-Up:

- Prayer Table
 - Packs Playing Cards (enough for each small groups to build card houses)
 - A Picture of a Mansion with Many Rooms
 - Table Settings (plate, silverware, glass, napkin, etc.)
 - Saint Items (books, props, statues, etc.)
 - Images of Angels

GATHER

(Welcome the children as their parents drop them off on the way to their meeting space.)

(Gather together around the prayer table. On the table you should have some packs of playing cards, a picture of a mansion with many rooms, a few table settings as if you were going to eat a meal, some items that have to do with the Saints you will be talking about, and any images you may have of angels. Tell the children to look closely at the table and all the items on it and to remember as many as they can. Let them look at it for one minute. Then put a table covering over the entire table. Have the children help you write down as many items as they can remember. Then take off the table covering and see how you did. Ask the children what they think all these things have in common. What could we be talking about today that would have to do with these items?)

ROOT SESSION 3 - CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

Today we are going to be talking about heaven. Throughout our lesson today I am going to be pulling from these items to talk to you about what heaven has been described as.

OPENING PRAYER

Today we are going to talk about heaven. Let's say a prayer first.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, thank you for bringing us together again. We give you thanks for each person joining us today. You tell us that you want to be with us forever and that you have prepared a special place for us. Help us to open our minds and our hearts as we learn more about that place today. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ACTIVITY

(You will need a few packs of playing cards, more or less based on the size of your group. Have the children work together in small groups to make a large house with the cards. If you have more children, build a few houses. You can turn this into a competition if you want.)

TEACHING

(Read the following Scripture from John 14:1-14.)

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where [I] am going you know the way.” Thomas said to him, “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” Philip said to him, “Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do

ROOT SESSION 3 - CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.

Jesus is telling the disciples about the place he has for them in heaven. He describes it as a house with many rooms. The card houses we just built contained many rooms! Jesus tells them he is going to prepare a place for them there. So where he is, they will also be. He wants them to be with him in heaven. But they tell him that they don't know the way there? How do we get there? Jesus tells them that he is the way. The way to heaven is to follow him. If we follow him on earth we will follow him to heaven.

Have you ever thought about what heaven will be like? *(Have children share any of their thoughts here. Will Heaven have swimming pools? Will it have video games? Will it have a bedtime or will you never sleep? There are so many different questions and images about heaven and what it will be like.)*

We know that heaven is perfect, there is no more suffering or sadness. There is joy, peace, and great love. We will experience all these things because we will be with God who is those things. We also look forward to meeting all those who have died before us. Heaven has also been described as a banquet - like eating a delicious meal with everyone you love. Notice some things for a meal on our prayer table. What would be your most perfect meal to eat in heaven? Who would be sitting at your table?

I am going to play a song for you that talks about God's house *(show them the image of the mansion from the prayer table)* and what we might do there. It has hand motions so let's all get up and try them together. *(Children should enjoy this, have them go through it a few times singing and dancing together. If possible make sure to watch the video ahead of time, so you can also help teach hand motions. Let children know when we go back into the other room with your parents, we are going to do this song with them and I am going to need you to be really loud and to do the hand motions, so they can learn too.)*

We are told that the saints and angels are also in heaven. Does anyone know any stories about the Saints? These are people just like us who lived on earth and made mistakes and bad decisions sometimes just like we do, but they also had great faith and they tried their very best to follow Jesus. I want to share with you today about a few of these

ROOT SESSION 3 - CHILDREN SIMPLIFIED

Saints. (*Bring in books, props, statues, etc. to share with the children about a few of the Saints.*)
We also are called to be saints, to follow Jesus and make a difference in whatever way we can.

What do you know about angels? The name “angel” refers to what angels do, they are servants and messengers of God (CCC 329). Angels are pure spirits, sometimes in art they are depicted with wings, but they actually do not have bodies like us. The angels served Christ as he accomplished his saving plan. The angel Gabriel came to Mary, announcing God’s desire for Jesus to dwell within her (Lk. 1: 26-38). Angels sang songs of praise at Jesus’ birth (Lk. 2:14). They minister to a tired and hungry Jesus after he spends forty days in the desert (Mk. 1: 13). They strengthen him in his agony in the garden, proclaim the Good News of his Resurrection (Jn. 20:11-18), and will be with Jesus when he returns, announcing and serving at his judgment (CCC 333). The whole life of the Church benefits from the mysterious and powerful help of angels. At Mass, the Church joins with the angels to adore God, singing: holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. Do you remember when we sing this song with the angels?

The angels also surround us. “From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession” (CCC 336). Yes, that’s right, our guardian angels. We have a special prayer to our guardian angels. Let’s pray it now together.
Please repeat after me:

*Angel of God
My guardian dear
To whom God’s love
Commits me here
Ever this day
Be at my side,
To light and guard,
To rule and guide.
Amen.*

We see the bond between heaven and earth in the Church’s belief in guardian angels. Even as we journey here on earth, we have protectors that guide and lead us in our pathway toward heaven.

Let’s sing and do the hand movements to Big House one more time before we head back to meet up with our parents and share it with them.