


Faith, Hope, and Love

22

WE GATHER

 **Leader:** Loving God, fill our hearts with peace and share your love with us. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All: Now and for ever.

Reader: A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

“ . . . If I have all faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own . . . but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind . . . faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

(1 Corinthians 13:2–4, 13)


The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

God's Greatest Gift

Love, love, Jesus is love.
God's greatest gift is the gift of love.

All creation sings together,
praising God for love.

 What are some choices you have had to make recently? Were your decisions easy or difficult to make? How did your decisions affect you and others?



WE BELIEVE

We believe in God and all that the Church teaches.

Every day Christ calls us to follow him and to live by his teachings. Every day we have the opportunity to act as Jesus' disciples. The choices that we make show whether or not we follow Jesus' example. Sometimes we do not even realize that we are making a choice. We show love and respect because we are in the habit of doing it. A **virtue** is a good habit that helps us to act according to God's love for us.

The *theological virtues* of faith, hope, and love bring us closer to God and increase our desire to be with God forever. They are called theological because *theo* means "God" and these virtues are gifts from God. They make it possible for us to have a relationship with God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The virtue of **faith** enables us to believe in God and all that the Church teaches us. Faith helps us to believe all that God has told us about himself and all that he has done. The gift of faith helps us to believe that God is with us and is acting in our lives.

God makes faith possible, but faith is still a choice we make. Jesus once said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed" (John 20:29). We choose to respond to God's gift of faith. We choose to believe. Faith leads us to want to understand more about God and his plan for us, so that our belief in him can grow stronger.

Our faith is the faith of the Church. It is through the community of the Church that we come to believe. Through this community of faith we learn what it means to believe. Our faith is guided and strengthened by the Church.

Jesus' followers once asked him to "increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). They understood that faith could grow by the power of God. To grow in faith, we need to read the Bible, pray to God to make our faith stronger, and give witness to our faith by the way we live. We give witness to Christ when we speak and act based upon the Good News. As Christ's disciples we are called to show others our belief in God and to help them believe.



With a partner find a word, starting with each of the letters below that describes faith.

F _____

A _____

I _____

T _____

H _____

How can you grow in faith this week?

Pray together this Act of Faith.

O God, we believe in all that Jesus has taught us about you.

We place all our trust in you because of your great love for us.

As Catholics...

The theological virtues are the foundation of the human virtues. The human virtues are habits that come about by our own efforts. They lead us to live a good life. They result from our making the decision, over and over again, to live by God's law. These human virtues guide the way we think, feel, and behave. Four of these are called "Cardinal" Virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

Find out more about each of these virtues.

We trust in God and are confident in his love and care for us.

The virtue of **hope** enables us to trust in God's promise to share his life with us forever. Hope makes us confident in God's love and care for us. Hope keeps us from becoming discouraged or giving up when times are difficult. Hope helps us to trust in Christ and to rely on the strength of the Holy Spirit.

Hope is a gift that helps us to respond to the happiness that God offers us now and in the future. Hope helps us work to spread the Kingdom of God here on earth, and to look forward to the Kingdom in Heaven.

From the beginning of his ministry, Jesus gave people a reason to hope in God's mercy. God had not forgotten his people. He had sent his only Son to be with them and to share his life and love with them. Jesus brought them God's forgiveness and healing. He gave them the hope of peace and life with God.

The Beatitudes, which can be found on page 258, are a very important teaching of Jesus. Each beatitude begins with the word *blessed* which means "happy." In the Beatitudes, Jesus describes the happiness that comes to those who follow his example of living and trusting in God's care. The Beatitudes describe the ways Christ's disciples should think and act. They are a promise of God's blessings. They give us reason to hope in the Kingdom of God, also called the Kingdom of Heaven.



Share one thing that gives you hope.

Pray together this Act of Hope.

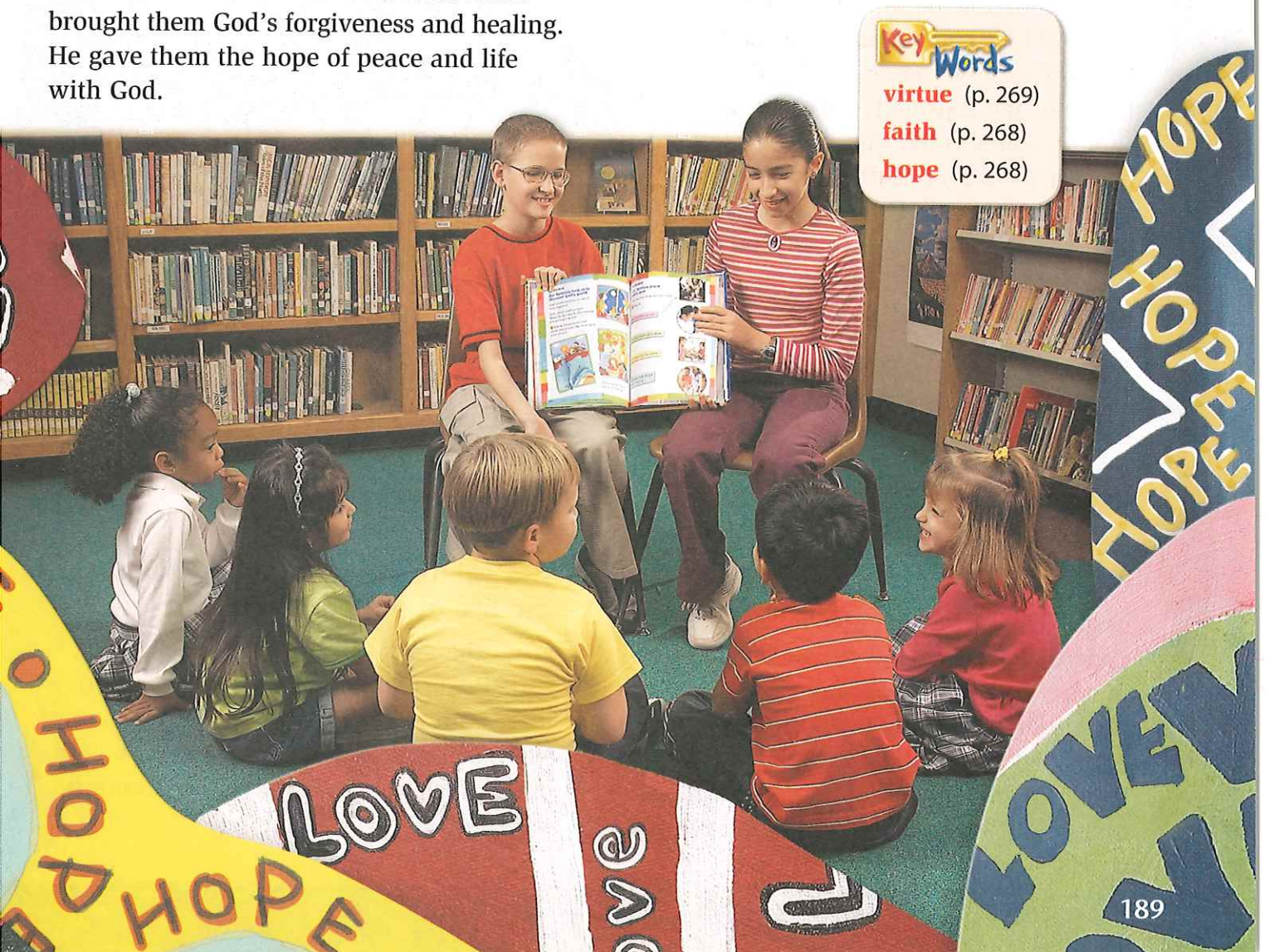
O God, we never give up on your love.
We have hope and will work for your kingdom to come and for a life that lasts forever with you in heaven.

Key Words

virtue (p. 269)

faith (p. 268)

hope (p. 268)



We are able to love God and one another.


During his ministry Jesus taught the people about the meaning of the Ten Commandments. He gave them the Beatitudes as a model for living and working toward future happiness. Jesus showed the people that God's law is a law of love.

Once Jesus was asked what commandment of God's law was the greatest. Jesus responded by saying "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

Love is possible because God loves us first. All love comes from God. God's love for us never ends. He is always there for us, especially through the Church community. The virtue of **love** enables us to love God and to love our neighbor. Love is the greatest of all virtues. All the other virtues come from it and lead back to it. Love is the goal of our lives as Christians.

Before he died Jesus told his disciples, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35).

Jesus showed us how to love. He kept his promises, lived by the virtues, took care of his family and friends, and treated all people with respect. He listened to people and cared for their needs, even when he was tired. He stood up for the rights of others and helped them to find peace and comfort.

 How can people be recognized as Jesus' disciples? Work in groups and act out some ways.

Pray together this Act of Love.

O God, we love you above all things.
Help us to love ourselves and one another as Jesus taught us to do.

Key Word
love (p. 268)



The saints are models for living the life of virtue.

From the very beginning of the Church, Christ's disciples have given witness to their faith in him. They spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, followed the teaching of the Apostles, and lived as a community of believers.

Many of these early disciples were martyrs, people who died rather than give up their belief in Christ. The word *martyr* comes from the Greek word for “witness.” We remember and honor these martyrs, and the many others throughout history who have given their lives for their faith.

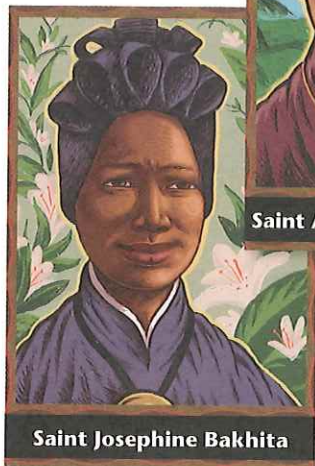
In the sixteenth century, Christian missionaries first brought the faith to Vietnam. During the next three centuries, Christians in Vietnam suffered for their beliefs. Many were martyred, especially during the years of 1820 to 1840. In 1988, Pope John Paul II proclaimed a group of one hundred seventeen of these martyrs as saints.

The majority of those honored were lay-people. There were also many priests, some bishops, and religious sisters and brothers. Many of them were missionaries. Andrew Dung-Lac was a Vietnamese priest who was martyred, along with Father Peter Thi.

Andrew Trong Van Tram was a soldier and later an officer in the army. He had to keep his faith a secret. In 1834 the authorities discovered that Andrew, who was Catholic, was helping the missionaries. His position as an officer was taken away from him, and he was



Saint Andrew Trong Van Tram



Saint Josephine Bakhita



Saint Anthony Dich Nguyen

put in prison. He was given the chance to be freed if he would stop practicing his faith. He refused to do so, and in 1835 he was killed for his belief.

Anthony Dich Nguyen was a wealthy farmer who contributed to the Church.

He helped the missionaries of the Paris Foreign Mission Society who served in Vietnam. He hid priests who were trying to escape government persecution. Anthony was arrested and beaten because of his faith and because he sheltered these Catholic priests.

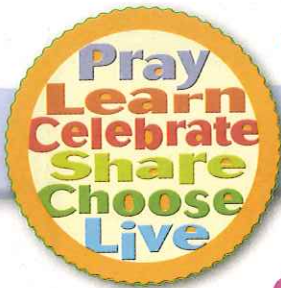
These holy people made it possible for future generations of Vietnamese to know Christ and learn the faith. The feast day of the martyrs of Vietnam is November 24. We also remember and honor some of these martyrs with their own feast days: Andrew Dung-Lac and Peter Thi on December 21 and Andrew Trong Van Tram on November 28.

We look to the saints as examples for living the virtues of faith, hope, and love. Saint Josephine Bakhita also lived a life of holiness. Find out more about her and the lives of other saints.

WE RESPOND


Name one saint that you know about.

With a partner talk about ways we can follow the example of the saints.



PROJECT

Show What *you* Know

Make a memory game using the  **Key Words**. Write the remaining Key Words and definitions in different squares. Then, cover each square with a sticky note or scrap paper. Play the game by asking a partner to choose squares to find matching pairs of Key Words and definitions.

the greatest of all virtues that enables us to love God and to love our neighbor			
		love	

Make *it* Happen

What are some ways that you can show faith, hope, and love? Make a list here:

➔ **DISCIPLE CHALLENGE** Look over your ideas. Circle one that you will live out this week at school, at home, and in the community.



Dear God,
I know you created me out of love.
You love me no matter what—just the way I am.
God, you see my hidden talents and know what I can do.
Sometimes I am not happy being me.
Help me to see myself as you see me.
Amen.

What Would *you* do?

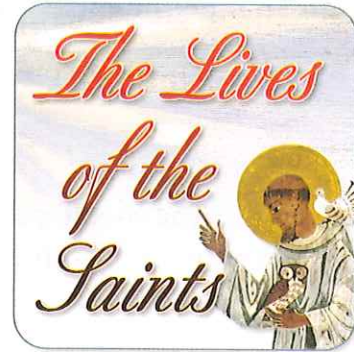
Your mother has recently started a part-time job. You notice that she doesn't have the time to do all the things that she used to do. You

Remember, every day we have the opportunity to act as Jesus' disciples.

Now, pass it on!

More *to* Explore

The Church has a special process to honor people who have lived very holy lives and have witnessed to Jesus Christ. This process is called *canonization*. During this process Church leaders examine the life of a person whose name has been submitted for sainthood. They gather proof that the person has lived a life of faith and holiness. When someone is canonized, his or her name is officially entered into the worldwide list of saints recognized by the Catholic Church. Each saint is remembered on a special day during the Church year. What is the Church's special process of becoming a saint called? For a person to be named a saint, what kind of life would they have lived?



➔ **DISCIPLE CHALLENGE** Visit www.vatican.va to find the answers to these questions about canonization.

- What are two titles that the Church gives to people of virtue who are not yet saints?

- What evidence is used to prove a person worthy of sainthood?

Take Home

Gather your family together. Look over the chart on page 258 which describes some ways to live the Beatitudes. Choose a beatitude that your family will live out this week.

CHAPTER TEST

Write the letter of the definition that matches each term.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. _____ faith | a. enables us to trust in God's promise to share his life with us |
| | b. disciples who died rather than give up their belief in Christ |
| 2. _____ love | c. enables us to believe in God and all that the Church teaches us |
| 3. _____ hope | d. the greatest of all virtues that enables us to love God and our neighbor |
| 4. _____ martyrs | e. a habit that comes about by our own efforts |

Write True or False for the following sentences.
Then change the false sentences to make them true.

5. _____ The new commandment teaches us to love only ourselves.

6. _____ The theological virtues are gifts from God that make it possible for us to have a relationship with God.

7. _____ A virtue is a good habit that helps us to act according to our wants.

8. _____ Love is the greatest of all virtues.

Write a sentence to answer each question.

9. What does Jesus teach us in the Beatitudes?

10. Choose one of the saints you learned about in this chapter. How did this person live out the theological virtues?
