

The Church Lives Today

23

WE GATHER

✝ **Leader:** Let us listen to a reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Reader: “Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all.”
(Philippians 4: 4–5)

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

🎵 Rejoice in the Lord Always

Rejoice in the Lord always,
Again I say, rejoice!
Rejoice in the Lord always,
Again I say, rejoice!
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Again I say, rejoice!
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Again I say, rejoice! (Repeat)

☀ You belong to your family and to your class in school. How are these groups the same? How are they different?



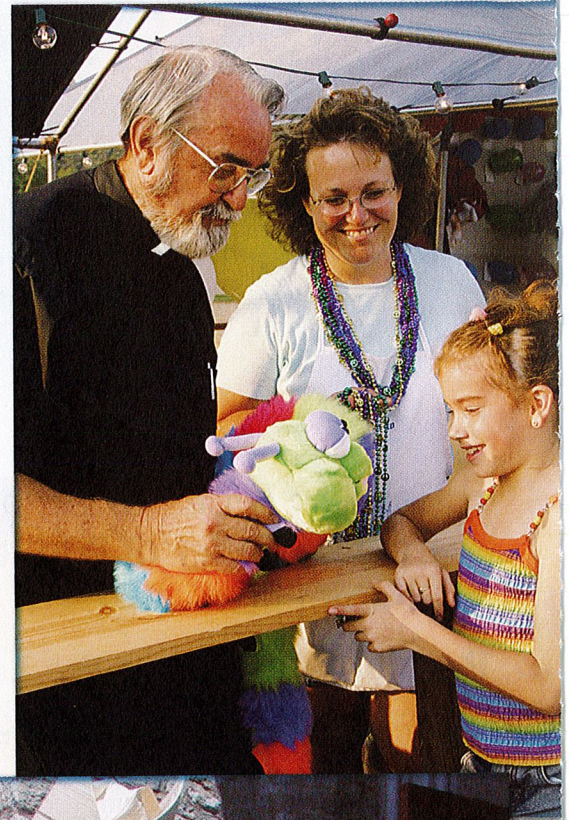
WE BELIEVE


Catholics belong to parish communities.

As Catholics we belong to a parish family. A parish is a community of Catholics who worship and work together. As a parish, we come together to pray. We celebrate the sacraments. We care for those in need. We learn to live as followers of Jesus.

A parish has a pastor who is chosen by the bishop. The **pastor** is the priest who leads and serves the parish. He leads the parish in celebrating the sacraments, in prayer, and in teaching.

Together with the pastor, the members of the parish continue the work of Jesus. Some of these people help in parish ministries. Together the whole parish serves the needs of others.



 Put a check by each thing you can do to take part in your parish.

- _____ Join the parish for Mass.
- _____ Help with projects for those in need.
- _____ Welcome others by being friendly.
- _____ Sing in the children's choir.
- _____ Be part of activities for children and families.

Bishops lead and serve the Church.


Jesus chose the twelve Apostles to lead and care for his followers. He chose the Apostle Peter to be the leader of the Apostles. Peter and the other Apostles were the first leaders of the Church.

Peter and the Apostles chose other men to lead and serve the Church. These leaders became known as bishops. Bishops still lead and serve the Church today.

Bishops are leaders of the Church who carry on the work of the Apostles.

A bishop is chosen by the pope to lead and care for a diocese. A **diocese** is an area of the Church led by a bishop. A diocese is made up of all the Catholics who live in a certain area.

The bishop guides and serves the members of his diocese. He passes on the teachings of Jesus. He helps the people to grow closer to God.

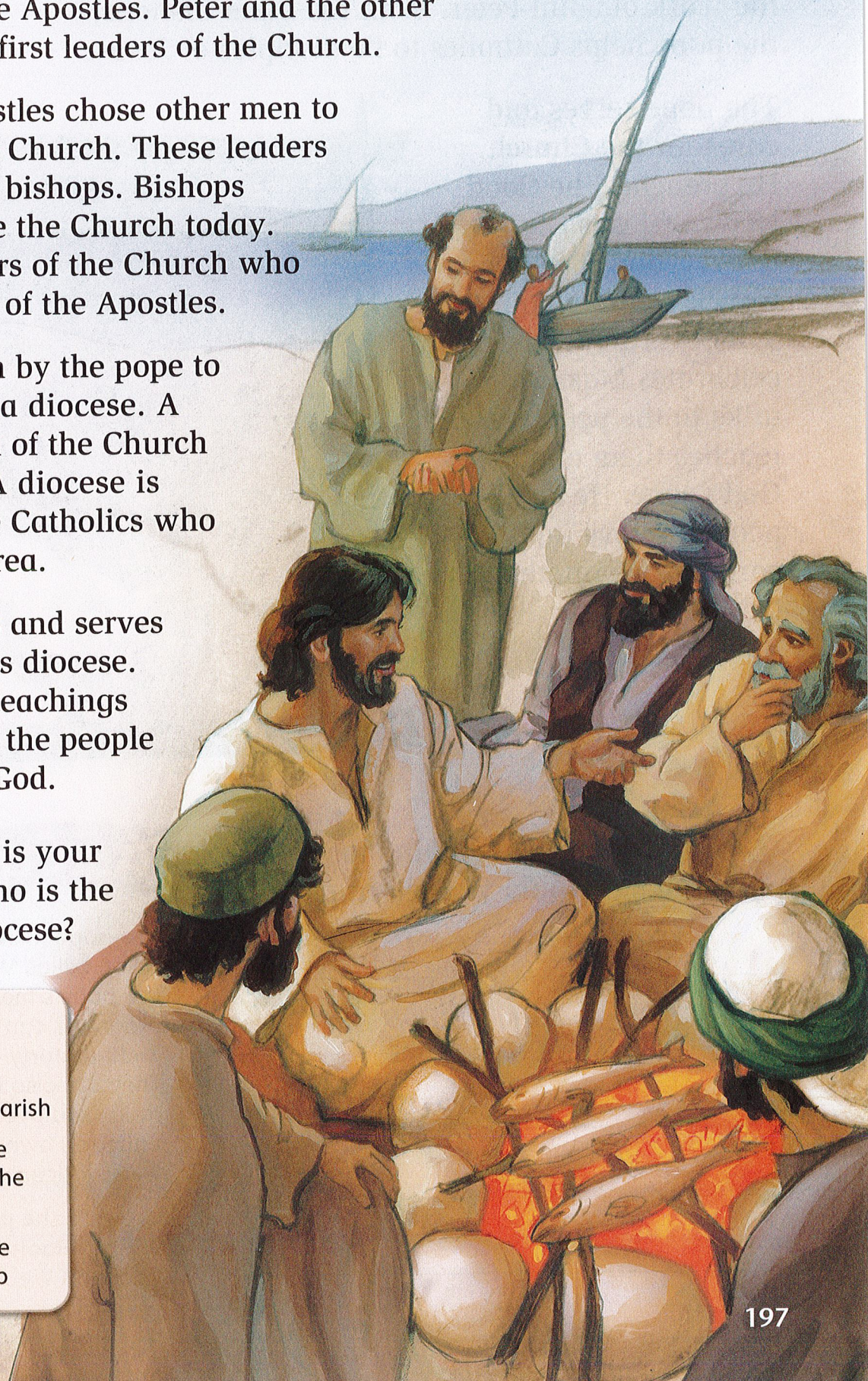
 What diocese is your parish part of? Who is the bishop of your diocese?

Key Words

pastor the priest who leads and serves the parish

bishops leaders of the Church who carry on the work of the Apostles

diocese an area of the Church led by a bishop




The pope is the leader of the Church.

The pope is the Bishop of Rome in Italy. The **pope** is the leader of the Church who continues the work of Saint Peter. With the other bishops, the pope helps Catholics to be disciples of Jesus.

The pope serves and cares for the Church. He preaches the Good News of Jesus Christ to everyone. The pope travels to other countries. Wherever he is, the pope celebrates Mass and talks to the people. He teaches them about God's love. He asks people to love and care for one another.



 If the pope were coming to your parish, what would you tell or ask him?

As Catholics...

The pope lives in a special part of Rome called Vatican City. Every day the pope's messages and other programs can be heard on Vatican Radio in forty different languages. They are also broadcast on the radio and over the Internet on the Vatican's own Web site at www.vatican.va.

Listen to the pope's message on Vatican Radio or log on to the Vatican's Web site.

The Church is in every part of the world.

Catholics in every part of the world have the same beliefs. They share and celebrate the same beliefs about the Blessed Trinity, Jesus, the Son of God, the Church, Mary, and the saints. They all celebrate the Eucharist and the other sacraments. They look to the pope as the leader of the Church.

However, Catholics around the world also show their faith in different ways. Look at the pictures and some of the ways Catholics pray and show their faith.

These Catholics are Polish. It is Christmas Eve. The father of this family is breaking a wafer called *oplatki*. He will give a piece of the wafer to each member of his family. This is a sign of love and peace.



Key Word

pope the leader of the Church who continues the work of Saint Peter



These Catholics are celebrating the Feast of Corpus Christi, or the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. The priest is carrying the Eucharist for all to worship. The priest and people sing songs to Jesus as they walk through their town.

WE RESPOND



What could you tell children from another country about the way your parish prays and celebrates?

Pray
Learn
Celebrate
Share
Choose
Live

PROJECT

Show What *you* Know

Use the **Key Words** to fill in the blanks. Write the missing letters in the spaces.

pastor

bishop

diocese

pope

A p _____ leads the parish.

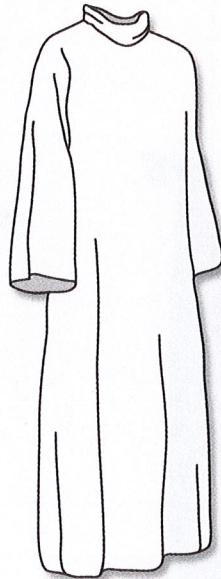
A b _____ leads the d _____.

The p _____ leads the whole Church.

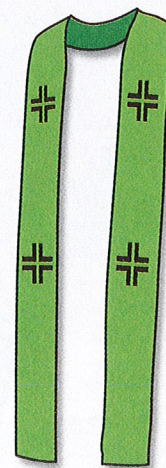
Fast Facts

During the Mass, priests wear special clothes called vestments. They wear an alb, a stole, and a chasuble.

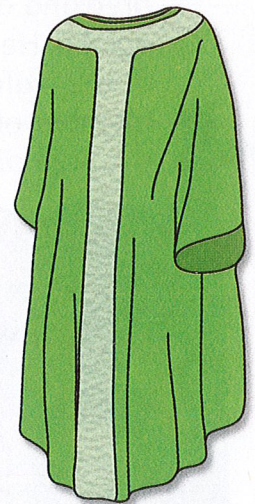
↳ **DISCIPLE CHALLENGE** The color of the chasuble tells us something about the Church season. Notice the color of the priest's chasuble at Mass this week.



alb

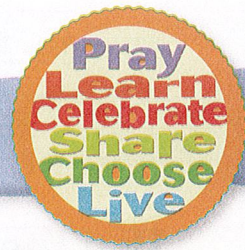


stole



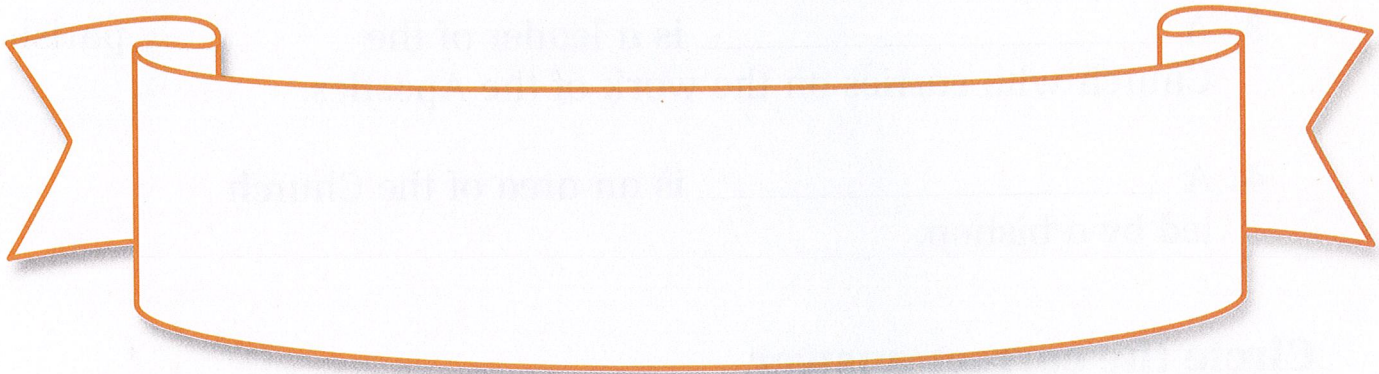
chasuble

DISCIPLE



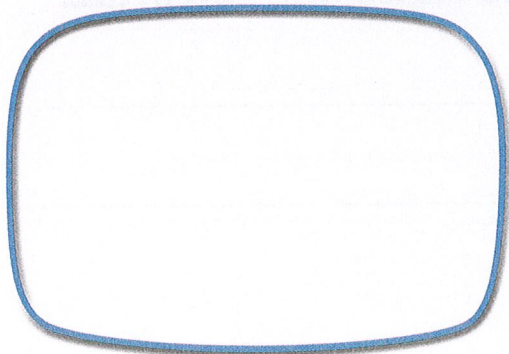
Make *it* Happen

Missionaries teach others about Jesus. They follow Jesus' example. We can be missionaries in our homes, schools, neighborhoods, and world. We can share our belief in Jesus and live as he did. Make a banner that shares your belief in Jesus.



Picture This

Look at the picture of the children celebrating their faith. Then draw a picture of yourself celebrating your faith.



Take Home

Interview friends and relatives about the different ways their families might have celebrated their faith. Write questions to ask.

CHAPTER TEST

Use the words in the box to complete the sentences.

1. A _____ is a community of Catholics who worship and work together.
2. The _____ is the leader of the Church who continues the work of Saint Peter.
3. A _____ is a leader of the Church who carries on the work of the Apostles.
4. A _____ is an area of the Church led by a bishop.

pope
bishop
diocese
parish

Circle the correct answer.

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 5. Is a pastor the Bishop of Rome? | Yes | No |
| 6. Do Catholics around the world have different beliefs about the Blessed Trinity? | Yes | No |
| 7. Did Jesus choose Peter to be the leader of the Apostles? | Yes | No |
| 8. Do Catholics around the world show their faith in different ways? | Yes | No |

9–10. Write two things all Catholics share and celebrate.
