

GOD'S ROAD MAP



SAINTS AMONG US



TEACHER BOOK 1

English



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
DENVER

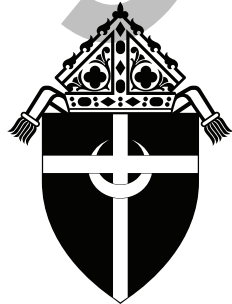
SAMPLE

SAINTS AMONG US

Restored Order Curriculum

Teacher Book

BOOK 1: GOD'S ROAD MAP



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
DENVER

'Saints Among Us' originally developed by Hanna Muldowney, PhD/
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Saints Among Us, Sacramental Preparation Curriculum
Book 1: God's Road Map

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INTRODUCTION



Saints Among Us

Saints Among Us, a two-year curriculum, prepares second graders for First Reconciliation and third graders for Confirmation and First Communion. This curriculum arose to support the implementation of the restored order of the sacraments of initiation in the Archdiocese of Denver. In his pastoral letter, *Saints Among Us*, Archbishop Samuel Aquila explains the importance of the restored order of the sacraments:

The world needs saints. Even as our society becomes more distant from faith and more forgetful of God, it still hungers for joyful witnesses who have been transformed by Christ. At the same time, new generations of Catholics need grace to sustain them in a non-Christian environment.

To answer these needs, I have decided to restore the Sacraments of Initiation to their original order, that is, Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. This will make available every sacramental grace the Church has to offer to children who have reached the age of reason.

*When I was Bishop of Fargo, I restored Confirmation to its original place in 2002 by issuing the pastoral letter *Send Forth Your Spirit*. I was convinced of the theological and pastoral reasons for doing this, but I was further convinced by hearing from parents and children about the effects of the graces they received.*

Grace, the Catechism teaches us, is the free gift that “God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it” (Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC], paragraph 1999).

Many people today live as if God does not exist, or if he does, then only as a remote ruler who rarely intervenes in human affairs. Instead of seeking God's grace and an intimate relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, our society turns to technology, science, and selfreliance to solve its problems.

The last century has made it clear that innovations do not save humanity. We still have wars, sickness, corruption and injustice. What will save us is not the next "thing," but rather, the flood of grace and love that the Holy Trinity desires to pour out upon us.

This is what restoring the sacraments of Christian initiation to their original order is all about. The ancient order begins with life in Christ through Baptism. This is followed by Confirmation, which perfects the grace of Baptism, fills us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, prepares us to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, and helps us commit ourselves to be his lifelong disciples.

As the Catechism explains, "The holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist" (CCC, 1321).

It also beautifully teaches that the other sacraments "are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself" (CCC, 1324).

This curriculum is designed not only to impart the necessary content of the faith to second and third graders, but also seeks to form their hearts as they prepare for the sacraments. It does so by drawing students to the divine Persons of the Holy Trinity, especially Jesus, the Son of God who became Incarnate to save us. The students meet Jesus in the curriculum by listening to the Word of God, learning to pray with the Bible, learning other forms of prayer, and by relating the content to their lives both in the classroom and with follow up at homes. The goal of this curriculum is to help students to encounter God more fully when they receive the sacraments.

The curriculum is structured in four books. Book One places the students and the sacraments they will receive within the story of Salvation History. This story shows God's plan of salvation from Creation, through the Old and New Testaments, to the life of the Church. Book Two focuses specifically on preparation for First Reconciliation. Book Three focuses on the sacrament of Confirmation and the gifts of the Spirit that are increased by the reception of the sacrament. Book Four focuses on the Eucharist as the culmination of the sacraments of initiation and the source and summit of the Catholic faith. Throughout the four books, the curriculum shows the links between these three sacraments and how they complete the initiation begun at Baptism.

INTRODUCTION



The catechist provides an essential service in making this curriculum come alive. Whether for use in the school, parish, or home, the teacher helps the student to understand, apply, and pray through the content of the curriculum. The teacher follows the call of Christ to proclaim the good news and provides personal witness to the importance of the content and the sacraments for which the students are preparing. The curriculum provides additional content and ideas for catechists to help with preparation and instruction. *Saints Among Us* can be used in multiple settings with little need for adaptation. Each book provides content for twelve class sessions, with flexibility to expand or contract activities based on the exact length of the class session.

One important disposition is necessary to prepare for and to receive the sacraments well: docility to the Holy Spirit. The sacraments of initiation are gifts from God, who invites us to enter more fully into His life. We must respond to this invitation with humility, obedience, and love. It is important to recognize that the sacraments of initiation, including Confirmation, are not primarily concerned with having everything figured out or deciding for ourselves that we want to receive them. While we need to cooperate fully and freely with God in the sacraments, the sacraments are about letting God's grace transform us so that we can become more like Him. Jesus told us: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you" (Jn 15:16). Throughout this curriculum we should keep in mind that our preparation for the sacraments consists ultimately in Christ's own choice and gift of Himself, which we should receive lovingly with open hearts.

The Office of Evangelization and Family Life Ministries of the Archdiocese of Denver will offer accompanying resources on its website to supplement this curriculum for both teachers and parents. Please visit saintsdenver.com for more information.

SaintsDenver.com

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STRUCTURE PER LESSON

Book # Lesson #: Lesson Name

I. 2-4 Objectives

II. List of Materials needed per class

III. Praying with Sacred Scripture.

Modified Lectio Divina for young children.

1. PREPARATION: General directions and context of the passage

2. PRAYER

- Read
- Meditate
- Pray
- Listen

3. Closing prayer

IV. Content of the Lesson

1. CATECHIST BACKGROUND – Parallel to the content of the class, information and resources for catechists to prepare their classes.

2. STUDENT DIRECTION

- Recap from last lesson
- Reading the Story / Read the Scripture passage
- Story Discussion – Main points or objectives
- Content of the Class
- Activity (sometimes done parallel to the Content of the Class)

3. WRAP UP

4. FINAL PRAYER

IV. At Home

- Activity or prayer to do at home with their parents



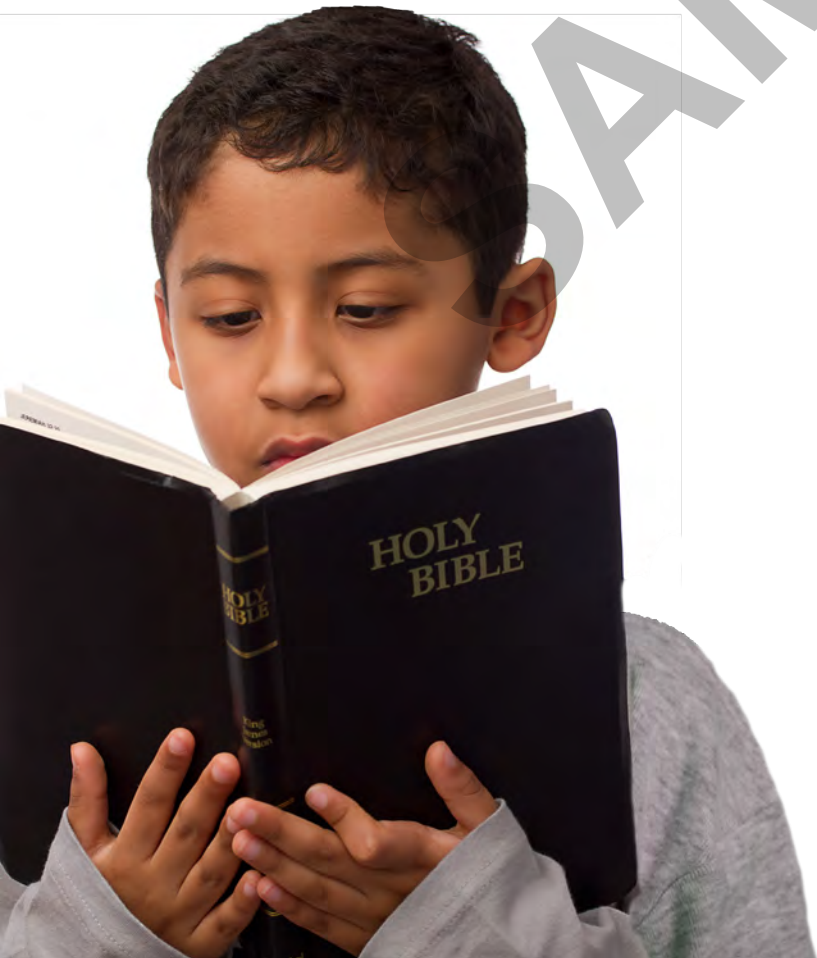
PRAYING WITH THE BIBLE



At the beginning of most classes there will be a time to pray a simple version of Lectio Divina with the children. This will be the opening prayer for the lesson. The goal is to help the children to be familiar with Sacred Scripture.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYING WITH THE BIBLE

1. You may read from an adult Bible, which usually is more precise in translation, or use a children's Bible. If you use the adult Bible, you may have to explain some of the words.
2. In order to help focus, encourage the children to close their eyes while listening to the reading, follow the reading in their own Bibles (if everyone has the same Bible), or use the image provided for some of the lessons.
3. When "reviewing the elements of the text" utilize a question and answer format or just address the key ideas.
4. Journaling and group sharing: you may or may not have time. If you decide to journal you will need:
 - At least 15 minutes.
 - If you have a large group, make sure that there are not too many people who want to talk. You could split into smaller groups for discussion.



STRUCTURE OF PRAYER



PREPARATION

Explain that you are praying with the Word of God in the Bible, so God will be talking to the children directly.

CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE: DIFFERENT PER LESSON.

Tip for concentration: while listening to the reading, encourage them to close their eyes or follow the story in their own Bibles.

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

READ

Read the following passage slowly one time, all students should be quiet at this point.

BIBLE PASSAGE: DIFFERENT PER LESSON.

Review some important elements of the text:

Leader: Answer the following questions:

(Ask the questions and receive quick answers or answer them quickly.) Different per lesson.

Leader: I'm going to read the passage again, pay attention and see if something stands out or draws your attention, it can be a word or phrase that speaks to your heart. Read the passage one more time.

MEDITATE:

Leader: Was there a word or phrase that stood out to you, drew your attention, or that you liked the most? Is God telling you something through it? You can suggest that they journal in their workbooks to answer this question. Give students time (1 minute) to meditate or reflect on the passage. Remind them to be silent.

PRAY:

Leader: Lead the children in the following prayer or any other you find adequate. You can suggest that they write silently in their workbooks:

1. A prayer related to the reading.
2. Tell God what is on your heart and ask Him for what you need.

Give students time (1 minute) to speak to God silently in their hearts.

LISTEN:

Leader: Now that we have prayed to God about this story, let's be quiet so we can hear what God might be saying back to us, inside our hearts. (1 minute in silence).

Optional: If time allows, this is a good time for sharing. Have the students share as a class, with other students in pairs, or as a family. Remind them that this is still a time of prayer.

Close with a prayer.

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

SAINTS AMONG US

God's Road Map



OBJECTIVES PER LESSON

| Book 1 Lessons | Lesson Objectives |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Lesson 1 God's Road Map | Students will... be introduced to Salvation History. identify why it is important to learn Salvation History. be introduced to Scripture, hymns, or art as a way to prayerfully begin class. be introduced to prayers they are expected to learn this semester. |
| Lesson 2 God Creates the World | Students will... identify that God created the world and everything in it. identify that God reveals Himself through Creation. recognize that God created man and woman, freely and out of love. |
| Lesson 3 The Fall of Man | Students will... state that choices have consequences. identify original sin as the consequence of Adam and Eve's personal sin. recognize that after the Fall of Man, God promises salvation. |
| Lesson 4 Noah and the Ark | Students will... be able to retell the story of Noah and the ark. recognize the rainbow as a sign of God's promise. recognize that our actions should be for the glory of God. |
| Lesson 5 Abraham | Students will... name the three promises that God made to Abraham. recognize that the blessing God gave to Abraham is passed down through Abraham's descendants. |
| Lesson 6 Moses and the Exodus | Students will... recognize that God freed the Israelites from Egypt. recognize that God called Moses to be the leader of the Israelites. state that God freed the Israelites so that they would be free to worship Him. |
| Lesson 7 The Ten Commandments | Students will... recognize that God provided for Israel in the desert. recognize the Ten Commandments as a sign of God's covenant with Moses. recite the Ten Commandments. |
| Lesson 8 King David | Students will... recognize that David was God's chosen king of Israel. identify Jesus as coming from the house of David. recognize that because of sin, the kingdom of Israel was divided and conquered. |
| Lesson 9 Israel Waits for a Savior | Students will... be able to explain how the Incarnation is the center of Salvation History. identify the Annunciation, Visitation, and Nativity. be able to retell the story of the Nativity. |
| Lesson 10 Life of Jesus | Students will... identify Jesus as the Son of God and Savior. identify the major events of Jesus' life. recognize that Jesus came to bring the kingdom of God to the people. |
| Lesson 11 The Pascal Mystery | Students will... define the term Pascal Mystery. recognize that Jesus died for our sins. recognize that God's third promise to Abraham is fulfilled in Jesus. |
| Lesson 12 Pentecost and the Church | Students will... be able to name three Apostles. identify Peter as the leader of the Apostles and as the first pope of the Catholic Church. identify Pentecost as when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and Mary, giving them strength. recognize that they are called to follow Jesus. |

SAINTS AMONG US

God's Road Map



GOD'S ROAD MAP

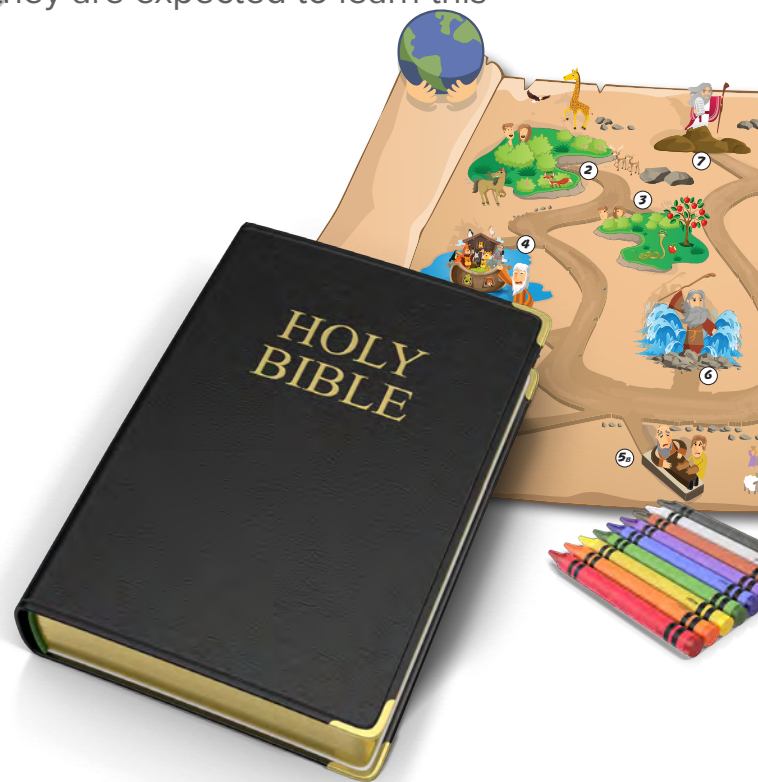


Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to Salvation History.
- Students will identify why it is important to learn Salvation History.
- Students will be introduced to Scripture, hymns, or art as a way to prayerfully begin class.
- Students will be introduced to prayers they are expected to learn this semester.

Materials:

- Student Workbook
- Catholic Bible
- Drawing supplies (pencils/pens/colors)
- Road map



CATECHIST BACKGROUND



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Salvation History

Learning about Salvation History relates directly to the reception of the sacraments for which the students are preparing. We want them to learn how the events of the Old and New Testament have led to the sacraments that God is offering them. Our worship at the Mass is shaped by the Bible. The first reading, responsorial Psalm, second reading, and Gospel are all Scripture passages.

Salvation means deliverance from sin and its consequences. Salvation History tells the story of sin and God's plan to redeem all people through the life of His chosen people and especially His Son, Jesus Christ.

Salvation History is not simply Bible history, in which students hear stories of the Bible with no real connections to their lives. The purpose is to connect the biblical dots, and to begin to see how all the biblical stories are connected in God's plan to take us from sin to redemption. Salvation History is about the big picture. It is not possible in the scope of this semester or age group to cover all of Salvation History. However, the students can get a good overview that will give them a better understanding of Salvation History.

The stories in the Old Testament and Salvation History still affect us personally. They are our stories as Christians, and all students of Salvation History should learn to apply the Old and New Testament stories to their own lives.

The story of salvation is repeated through the liturgical year. Through the liturgical seasons we relive the story of Israel and the coming of the Messiah. Salvation History leads us to Jesus, and everything that occurs after Jesus points back to Him.

CATECHIST BACKGROUND



Jesus was a great storyteller. He used parables to convey His teaching in an accessible and symbolic way. This shows us that the story of God's plan of salvation is also meant to be engaging and uses symbols, which we are trying to unpack for our students.

You should also think of examples of stories that have been influential in your life. Can you make connections between them and God's story? Was there suffering, self-sacrifice, and a happy ending? Do we see characters making good and bad choices?

Two popular stories that many of your students may know are *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. If students choose these stories you can ask how the character of Aslan relates to Jesus in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. You can also look at how Frodo, who is very humble and self-sacrificing, makes a journey to destroy the Ring, which symbolizes sin.

Some students may also pick super heroes. How do super powers point to something beyond the ordinary that enables us to do great things? This can be a sign of God's power to work miracles.

Each of us have our own roadmap or story, which is part of the overarching story of Salvation History. It is important for you to reflect on your own story. How have you come to know God and grown in your faith? What has led you to volunteer to teach in religious education? What are the next steps in your roadmap to grow closer to God?

Reflecting on your story will help you to witness to your students about how each of us fits into God's story. It will help the content to come alive if you can relate it to your own life and help your students to do the same. Personal witness makes teaching more effective. As a catechist Jesus is looking to you to be His witness in the classroom.

Pope St. John Paul II speaks of the importance of witness for children as they are preparing for the sacraments: "For the child there comes soon, at school and in Church, in institutions connected with the parish or with the spiritual care of the Catholic or state school not only an introduction into a wider social circle, but also the moment for a catechesis aimed at inserting him or her organically into the life of the Church, a moment that includes an immediate preparation for the celebration of the sacraments. This catechesis is didactic in character, but is directed towards the giving of witness in the faith. It is an initial catechesis but not a fragmentary one, since it will have to reveal, although in an elementary way, all the principal mysteries of faith and their effects on the child's moral and religious life. It is a catechesis that gives meaning to the sacraments, but at the same time it receives from the experience of the sacraments a living dimension that keeps it from remaining merely doctrinal, and it communicates to the child the joy of being a witness to Christ in ordinary life" (Catechesi Tradendae).

Always end in prayer. Students are expected to learn Catholic prayers. This semester, they should focus on the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be.

CATECHIST BACKGROUND



Our Father

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Sign of the Cross (do this with motions)

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

Emphasize making a proper Sign of the Cross on the proper places of their body.



STUDENT DIRECTION



Introduction

(15 mins)

Welcome everyone. I am so happy to be with you so that we can learn about God's plan for our lives. We are beginning two years of study and prayer that will bring you to three sacraments: Reconciliation, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. These sacraments will give you God's healing (Reconciliation), strength (Confirmation), and love (Eucharist).

God is inviting you to be His friend and to love Him more. We are beginning our time together with God's written message to you.

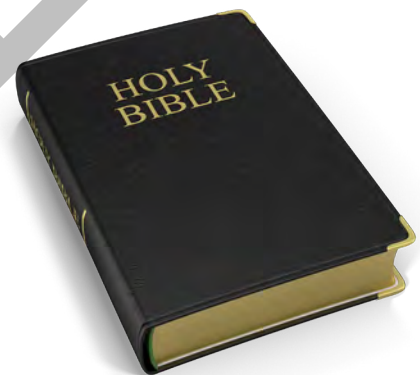
• Hold up a Catholic Bible.

Ask: What is this? Bible

Do you know what the Bible is?

God's word written down .

The Bible tells us the things that God wants us to know and do. We hear from the Bible during each Mass, and you have probably heard stories and passages from the Bible before.



Why do you think it is important to learn about the Bible?

To know God and Jesus, to know what God wants of us, and to know that we are sons and daughters of God.

As we read the Bible together, we will be going on an adventure. This adventure is Salvation History, the story of God's plan and desires for us. We will learn about the people in the Bible: the great heroes, patriarchs, prophets and kings. The story includes people who made bad choices that caused some bad consequences, but also people who made very good choices. Even in the midst of difficulties and sin, we will learn, however, that God is always in control. He teaches us lessons about how to be good and we can turn to Him for help.



STUDENT DIRECTION



Story Telling

(15 mins)

What is your favorite story?

It can be from a book or a movie. I want you to draw a scene from this story in your workbook. Think about where it happened, who was there, and what was happening. Think about the main character of the story and how he or she relates to this scene.

- Give students some time to draw.
- Ask for volunteers to share their pictures.

In the Bible, we learn about the main character of God's story: Jesus. God sent His Son, Jesus into the world to be our Savior, to get us back to God and Heaven. **How is Jesus like the characters we know from other stories?** Accept responses.

Jesus is greater than all the other characters or super heroes we can think of, because he is True God and True Man. In Jesus, God Himself came into the world to enter our story.

If we do not learn about the events in Salvation History, then we cannot really understand why we need Jesus in the first place. Salvation History, and the Bible in general, shows God's overall plan for us.



ROAD MAP TO SALVATION

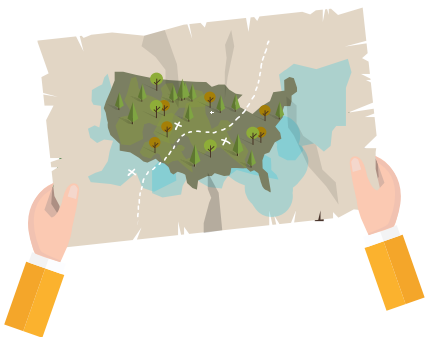
(10 mins)

- **Hold up or draw a map** (any map).

What is this? Map

What is a map for? To give directions, to help you get somewhere

A map helps us to get somewhere. It helps to keep us from getting lost. Salvation History is like a map that helps us to get to Jesus without getting lost.



STUDENT DIRECTION



ROAD MAP TO SALVATION

(CONTINUED)

You are going to be making a road map this semester. Your map will be a map to Jesus through Salvation History.

- Have students look at their own maps:



After each story we read, you will stick a picture for that story on to the appropriate spot. Then, by the end of the semester, we will have a good understanding of how we got to Jesus and where to go from here.

- Each week, the students will cut out the appropriate picture and glue, tape, or stick the picture to the corresponding square on the map.



What are some of the biggest events in the story of your life so far? Accept responses.

What about Baptism? That was the beginning of the story of your relationship with God.

Where is the roadmap of your life headed? Accept responses.

What about the three sacraments you will receive?

Remember, Salvation History is about God's overall plan for us: God created us, but because of sin, Jesus came to redeem us so that we can be close to Him here on earth and then in Heaven. Heaven is the destination of our journey. We pray that our paths will be straight and smooth!



STUDENT DIRECTION



WRAP UP

(5 mins)

1. **What is the name of the story we will learn in which God's people are preparing for the Savior, Jesus Christ?** Salvation History.
2. **Why is it important to learn about Salvation History?** To understand why we need Jesus and to understand how we can get to Heaven.

FINAL PRAYER

(5 mins)

End in prayer. Pray the Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

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

Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



AT HOME

- Practice the Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be with your parents at home.
- Ask your parents about their favorite story and share yours with them. Describe how your story relates to Salvation History.