

**"Always be ready to give an explanation...
for a reason for your hope"** 1 Peter 3:15

CATECHIST BACKGROUND

Before gathering the children in the prayer center, prepare the prayer table with a green cloth, a Bible opened to 1 Peter 3:14-16, and a candle.

Gather the children in the prayer center. Invite them to recall what they have learned about Jesus in religion class, at Mass, and in their families. Then invite each child to name a person who has taught him or her about Jesus. Be prepared to give an example of your own. Explain that today's prayer is a prayer of thanks for all who help us learn about Jesus.

OPENING PRAYER

- Lead the children in praying the Sign of the Cross, and then offer the following prayer:

Lord Jesus, you have given us a model to follow. As your disciples, help us to follow you even if we are made fun of, bad things said of us, or left alone.

Open our hearts to share with others through our words and actions that our hope is in you. Amen.

- Ask, "How easy or difficult is it for you to offer forgiveness in a tense situation? How might forgiveness teach others to love like Jesus?"

WORD OF GOD

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the Scripture passage that is the basis for this year's Catechetical Sunday theme (1 Peter 3:14-16):

A reading from the first letter of Saint Peter

But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, blessed are you. Do not be afraid or terrified with fear of them, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts.

Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, . . .

- List on the board or large paper responses to the following questions, "Who has taught you how to be gentle and reverent? What does a gentle and reverent action look like? How can you be gentle and reverent this week?"

CONCLUDING PRAYER

- Lead the class in offering prayers of thanks for all who help them learn about Jesus. Invite them to respond, **"Thank you, Lord."**

*For the many saints who taught others about Jesus through their words and actions, we pray: **Thank you, Lord.***

*For those in our parish who help us live our faith by teaching us about Jesus, we pray: **Thank you, Lord.***

*For our families and all they do to teach us how to follow Jesus, we pray: **Thank you, Lord.***

*For catechists all over the world who serve those in need and teach others about God's love, we pray: **Thank you, Lord.***

*For each of us, that we may imitate Jesus with humble hearts, gentle gestures, and reverence for everyone, we pray: **Thank you, Lord.***

*Lord, you are our model of love and teacher of hope. May we teach others through our words and actions with gentleness and reverence so that we become witnesses of your love to others, today and always. **Amen.***

- Conclude by leading the children in praying the Sign of the Cross.