



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 11, Folder 10, Archdiocese of Cincinnati classes on Judaism, 1977.

April 12

Dear Marc,

Good things are happening here and I want to tell you about them.

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati is giving a series of classes on Judaism ("Roots of Our Catholic Faith"), which I helped design, for religious education teachers. In preparation for the last session of the series, which is a workshop, I offered to study some books used in elementary and junior high schools. The enclosed critique is the result. My conclusions will be used as the basis for the workshop.

I hope all is well with you.



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Significant advances in Roman Catholic relations with Jews are unrecognized in The Word is Life series of Catholic education materials published by Benziger and used in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. They reflect the historic "teaching of contempt" identified by Jules Isaac in his moving and effective presentation to Pope John XXIII before Vatican II. Careful reading of the texts and teachers' guides uncovers these lapses from official Church pronouncements and practices today:

- \* Judaism is negated or belittled through omission or distortion of history. Most references to Jews and Judaism are in the past tense, as though neither lives today. The People of God only is in the Church now.

- \* Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament) is not portrayed as a series of affirmations of the devotion of man to God and God to man. Instead, it is portrayed as a series of incidents which demonstrate the weak and sinful nature of the Israelites who never live up to the Covenant. For some mystery of history, God continued to care for the Jews.

- \* The true nature of Judaism is not acknowledged.

- \* The divisions within Judaism when Jesus lived are not described adequately. Political and social events surrounding Jesus' life, death and resurrection are not included.

- \* Roman rule goes unnoticed.

- \* Jesus is not presented as a Jew throughout the series. Jesus was an educated, religious, practicing Jew who preached to Jews in a Jewish fashion, according to the Gospels and this is absent from the series.

- \* Most of the Apostles are not identified as Jews.

- \* Mary and Joseph are not identified as Jews.

- \* Judaism, as a positive, living faith for Jews after 100 B.C.E., rarely is mentioned.

- \* No effort is made to see Jews as Jews see themselves.

Each of these omissions exists in texts used today despite official Church teachings to the contrary in Vatican II documents and those which followed: Nostra Aetate (4), 1965; Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (4), by the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, 1974; and the Document on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations of the Sixth Synod of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 1971.

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366 Terrace Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45220  
513-751-6381

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"The history of Judaism did not end with the destruction of Jerusalem, but rather went on to develop a religious tradition."

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### Chapter 2

"When commenting on biblical texts, emphasis will be laid on the continuity of our faith with that of the earlier Covenant, in the perspective of the promises, without minimizing those elements of Christianity which are original."

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### Chapter 3

"The Old Testament and the Jewish tradition founded upon it must not be set against the New Testament in such a way that the former seems to constitute a religion of only Justice, fear and legalism, with no appeal to the love of God and neighbour (cf. Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18, Matt. 22:34-40)."

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### Chapter 4

"Judaism in the time of Christ and the Apostles was a complex reality, embracing many different strands, many spiritual, religious, social and cultural values."

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### Chapter 5

"Jesus was born of the Jewish people, as were his Apostles and a large number of his first disciples....Jesus also used teaching methods similar to those employed by the rabbis of his time."

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### Chapter 6

"With regard to the trial and death of Jesus, the Council recalled 'what happened in his passion cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, not upon the Jews of today' (Nostra Aetate, 4)."

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### Chapter 7

"Fidelity to the Covenant has always been linked to the gift of a land promised to Abraham and his seed....Roman Catholics should strive to understand and respect the religious significance of the link between the people and the land."

Page 26

### Chapter 8

"Christians must therefore strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of Judaism; they must strive to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in light of their own religious experiences."

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## Chapter 1

"Likewise, the Church keeps ever before her mind the words of the apostle Paul about his kinsmen: 'they are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race according to the flesh, is Christ' (Rom. 9: 4-5), the son of the virgin Mary. She is mindful, moreover, that the apostles, the Pillars on which the Church stands, are of Jewish descent, as are many of those early disciples who proclaimed the Gospel of Christ to the world."

From Vatican II, Nostra Aetate, 1965

"The history of Judaism did not end with the destruction of Jerusalem, but rather went on to develop a religious tradition."

Guidelines and suggestions for implementing  
the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate



There are only a few references to the fact that Jews exist today.

When freedom was won, Judas, the leader of the Maccabees, repaired the Temple which was damaged by the Syrian king. A great feast was held to celebrate the event. It was called Hanukkah, which means "feast of lights." The Jewish people celebrated the feast every year after that. They still celebrate this feast today.

Grade 6 Text  
p.177

In many parishes, a Seder service, modeled on the Jewish Passover, is held to help people understand better what Jesus was doing at the Last Supper and to help the people understand their Jewish brothers and sisters better. Other parishes have a potluck dinner after Mass to bring...

Grade 7 Text  
p.249

The following excerpt illustrate a universalistic approach to the Family of God and leaves room for the existence of differences within the group.

## **We Are All Members of God's Family**

We are members of God's Family.  
Jesus says that all people who  
love His Father are His  
brothers and sisters.

We become a special part  
of God's Family at Baptism.  
At Baptism, we become children  
of God our Father.  
We also become brothers  
and sisters of Jesus.

Grade 1 Text  
p.52

We sing songs and say these  
prayers together at Mass.  
We sing and pray as part  
of God's Family at Mass.

Grade 2 Text  
p.62

Generally the Family of God is confined to Christians in The Word is Life series. The excerpts on pages 3 through 6 illustrate this.

## The Family of God Gathers at Mass

We are the Family of God.  
Each week, we go to Mass.  
We pray to our Father at Mass.  
We listen to God's words.  
We remember what Jesus did  
at the Last Supper.

Grade 1 Text  
p. 57

The family's new baby is one  
of the friends of Jesus.  
The friends of Jesus are a family.  
It is called the Family of God.  
The baby, too, now belongs  
to the Family of God.

Grade 2 Text  
p. 29

## The Friends of Jesus Help Others

At Mass, the friends of Jesus  
meet as the Family of God.  
They hear the words of Jesus.  
They remember that Jesus wants  
them to help everyone.

Grade 2 Text  
p. 32

This unit is centered on the child as a member of the Family of God,  
the Church.

Grade 2 Guide  
p. 64



Jesus said that He came to make the sightless see. Jesus meant that He came to tell people how to live, how to grow, how to become themselves. Jesus came to save people from their blindness and bring them to God. Without the message of Jesus, we would be sightless. We would be blind.

Grade 5 Text  
p175

But there are some who close their eyes to Jesus. They refuse to accept the message that He brings them from God. Some of the people who lived at the time of Jesus made themselves blind in this way. These people made themselves enemies of Jesus. They were angry with Jesus because He loved the poor. They hated Jesus because He showed them up. They were hypocrites. These people pretended to be good, but they were selfish and sinful at heart. They pretended to love, but they really did not love.

Grade 5 Text  
p175-176

AMERICAN JEWISH  
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The message of Jesus is a message of love. A person who refuses to love turns his back on the message of Jesus. Refusing to love is a great and serious sin.

The people who plotted to put Jesus to death turned their backs on the message of Jesus. They made themselves blind. They refused to love. They turned to hate. They committed great sin.

The people who killed St. Stephen committed great sin, too. Stephen was one of the first followers of Jesus. He preached to the people about Jesus. He told them that Jesus had died for them. He told them that Jesus wanted them to love one another. Some of the people did not want to hear the message of Jesus. They put their hands over their ears. They rushed at Stephen. They picked up large rocks and stoned him to death. These people refused to love. They turned to hate. They were sinners.

Grade 5 Text  
p177-179

The rest of the unit is devoted to the Church, the People of God, and we try to look at the Church from the point of view of a fifth grader.

Grade 5 Guide  
p131

In the chapters on the New Testament, we show that God has formed a new People in Christ through the Holy Spirit, and, in the last chapters we show that these people today, after four thousand years of salvation history, are called to faith in as challenging a way as Abraham, that they have to risk as much as he did, and that they ask the same questions and face the same human problems. In the chapter on the sacraments, we look at them only from one aspect.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 291

Christians today, and not least of all Catholics, can be tempted to think, as the Pharisees did, that they are "in" because they have been born into (i.e., baptized at birth into) the true faith. The chapter strives to impress on us that more than membership and incorporation into the Church is required. We are to live according to the Gospels, to live as Jesus lived and would have us live. To live this kind of Christian life means a constant change of heart and renewal, a continual struggle against the selfishness and other un-Christ-like tendencies within us.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 292

We are members of a people who are bound together by faith. We believe that God loves man and that the Bible is the record of the loving things God did for man in the past. Church history picks up where the Bible ends and tells us how God has loved His People right up until the present time. The teachers in the Church, especially the Pope and the bishops, help us to understand how God loves us and helps us in our lives today. They help us understand the faith which keeps us together.

Grade 6 Text  
p 224

The prophets blamed the people for putting money before God. This very fault caused the downfall of many in Old Testament times.

The same danger is present today. The People of God today need buildings. They need churches and they need schools.

Grade 6 Text  
p 211

One of the basic ideas underlying our Catholic faith is that Jesus came to help people belong to the community of the children of God, His Church.

Grade 7 Text  
p 19

Jesus came to offer the light of faith to all. Some, like the blind man, eagerly accepted the gift of faith. These were the "sightless" whom Jesus enabled to "see." Others, like some of the Pharisees, rejected the light of faith which Jesus offered. They were "the seeing" who were really "blind."

Grade 7 Text  
p 126

And so the Church, the People of God, the Pilgrim People are a people who are constantly in search. They have security, but they also are called to try the new, the unpredictable.

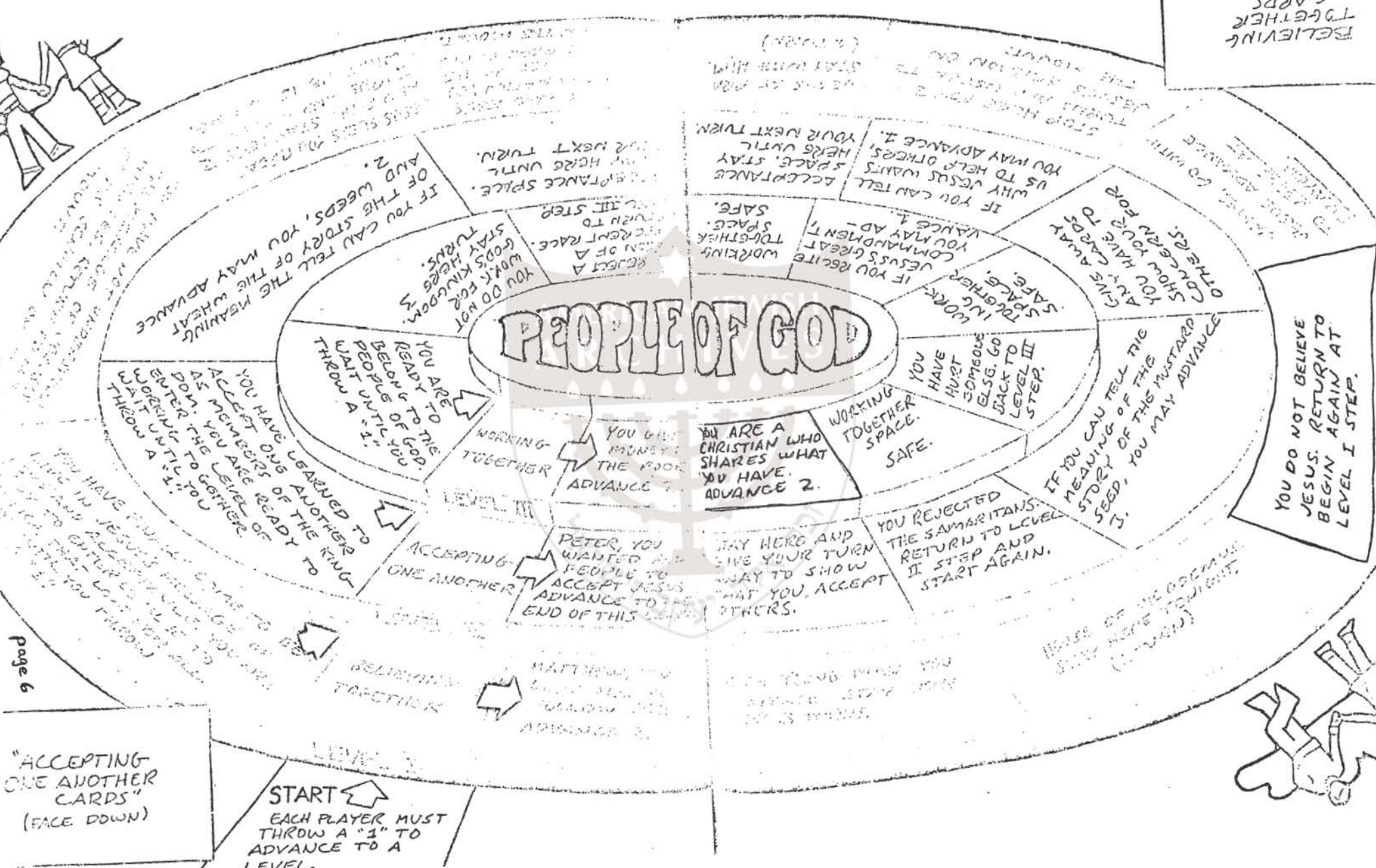
Grade 8 Text  
p 205



BELIEVING  
TOGETHER  
CARDS



# PEOPLE OF GOD



"ACCEPTING ONE ANOTHER CARDS" (FACE DOWN)

START  
EACH PLAYER MUST THROW A "1" TO ADVANCE TO A LEVEL.

## Chapter 2

"Likewise, the Church keeps ever before her mind the words of the apostle Paul about his kinsmen: 'they are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race according to the flesh, is the Christ' (Rom. 9:4-5), the son of the virgin Mary."

### Vatican II, Nostra Aetate, 1965

"When commenting on biblical texts, emphasis will be laid on the continuity of our faith with that of the earlier Covenant, in the perspective of the promises, without minimizing those elements of Christianity which are original."

### Guidelines and suggestions for implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate

When commenting on biblical texts in The Word is Life series, the bonds between the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and Christianity are recognized.

We do not wish to give the children the impression that the Commandments reflect the entire Christian ethic, but we certainly do want them to realize that they are an integral part of the teachings of Jesus, who came to fulfill the Law, not to destroy it.

Grade 3  
p. 13

Guide

All through the Old Testament, various ideas of God ebb and surge, often in a seemingly contradictory fashion. God is the Father of all people, who loves even the enemies of Israel and sends a prophet, Jonah, to call them to conversion. God is the mighty Lord of hosts, who marches with His People into battle and slaughters their enemies by the thousands. We hear the prophets picture God as a stern judge, punishing those who deviate from the Law, and we hear the same prophets picture Him as a loving mother or spouse who can never turn His back on His children or His spouse.

The New Testament holds the key for our understanding of God.

Grade 5  
p. 53

Guide

Genesis shows us how the Israelites found meaning for their lives in the mystery of God's love. But, more important for us, this book which is part of the Bible helps us when we ask ourselves important questions about life. It helps us to understand ourselves better and to see how God cares about us and for us.

Grade 6 Text  
p. 55

In these sections, we use the situation of the Israelites in exile to show how hope comes out of the most desperate of situations when people put their trust in God. The Israelites in exile had just as difficult a time putting their trust in God as we do. When Jerusalem fell, God seemed to have deserted them. There seemed to be no basis for hope, and there was none in the ordinary course of events. Some of the Israelites believed and hoped but many did not, just as today some Christians place their hope in God's word and some do not.

Grade 7  
p. 21

Guide

We have heard most of these stories many times. But now we are able to look at them in a new way. We see that the people involved were very much like ourselves. They had to choose between the tried and true way of the Old Testament and the new and unpredictable way of Jesus.

Grade 8 Text  
p. 19



However, the continuity of the covenant is absent in The Word is Life series; the continuation of the covenant between God and Jews is not recognized.

We are the Family of God.  
Each week, we go to Mass.  
We pray to our Father at Mass.  
We listen to God's words.  
We remember what Jesus did  
at the Last Supper.

Grade 1 Text  
p. 57

This unit is centered on the child as a member of the Family of God, the Church.

Grade 2 Guide  
p. 64

The family's new baby is one  
of the friends of Jesus.  
The friends of Jesus are a family.  
It is called the Family of God.  
The baby, too, now belongs  
to the Family of God.

Grade 2 Text  
p. 29

*Not Ready for the Full Christian Message.* When God intervened in the history of mankind, His revelation did not come all at once, in some final and irrevocable form. Rather, He prepared His people slowly, step by step, for the ultimate revelation in Jesus. So, too, with the moral development of the people. On the very first day that God spoke to man, He did not demand of him the ultimate ethic outlined by Jesus. The moral attitudes of the Israelites matured very slowly over two thousand years until some of the people were ready to hear from Jesus the full meaning of the Law of Love.

Grade 3 Guide  
p. 144

God still speaks to His People today.  
First, He speaks through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus speaks to everyone. But Jesus does much more than just tell people what to do. He *shows* people how to act. He shows them how to please God our Father. And He shows them how to love one another.

God also speaks to His People today through His Church. He speaks through the Pope, bishops, and priests. Through them, God reminds us of the Ten Commandments He gave to His people long ago.

Grade 3 Text  
p. 122

The rest of the unit is devoted to the Church, the People of God, and we try to look at the Church from the point of view of a fifth grader.

Grade 5 Guide  
p131

But there are some who close their eyes to Jesus. They refuse to accept the message that He brings them from God. Some of the people who lived at the time of Jesus made themselves blind in this way. These people made themselves enemies of Jesus. They were angry with Jesus because He loved the poor. They hated Jesus because He showed them up. They were hypocrites. These people pretended to be good, but they were selfish and sinful at heart. They pretended to love, but they really did not love.

Grade 5 Text  
p175-176

## AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

In the chapters on the New Testament, we show that God has formed a new People in Christ through the Holy Spirit, and, in the last chapters we show that these people today, after four thousand years of salvation history, are called to faith in as challenging a way as Abraham, that they have to risk as much as he did, and that they ask the same questions and face the same human problems.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 291

### THE NEW CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM (text, pages 194-201)

#### Aim

To show the students that the members of Christ's Kingdom live and work in the present because of their hope in the future fulfillment of the Kingdom.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 302

The new children of Abraham would be all who would try to live the great law of love that God had given His People of old: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart. . . . You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37, 39; Deuteronomy 6:5). They would also be followers of Jesus, the Promised King, and would be baptized by water and the Holy Spirit. They would try to live the new and greater law of love which Jesus gave: "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

Grade 6 Text  
p. 200

We are members of a people who are bound together by faith. We believe that God loves man and that the Bible is the record of the loving things God did for man in the past. Church history picks up where the Bible ends and tells us how God has loved His People right up until the present time. The teachers in the Church, especially the Pope and the bishops, help us to understand how God loves us and helps us in our lives today. They help us understand the faith which keeps us together.

Grade 6 Text  
p 224

One of the basic ideas underlying our Catholic faith is that Jesus came to help people belong to the community of the children of God, His Church.

Grade 7 Text  
p 19

Jesus came to offer the light of faith to all. Some, like the blind man, eagerly accepted the gift of faith. These were the "sightless" whom Jesus enabled to "see." Others, like some of the Pharisees, rejected the light of faith which Jesus offered. They were "the seeing" who were really "blind."

Grade 7 Text  
p 126

And so the Church, the People of God, the Pilgrim People are a people who are constantly in search. They have security, but they also are called to try the new, the unpredictable.

Grade 8 Text  
p 205

Additional excerpts are in Appendix A.



### Chapter 3

"The Old Testament and the Jewish tradition founded upon it must not be set against the New Testament in such a way that the former seems to constitute a religion of only justice, fear and legalism, with no appeal to the love of God and neighbour (cf. Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19: 18, Matt. 22:34-40)."

Guidelines and suggestions for implementing  
the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate

The guidelines generally are followed well on this issue in  
The Word is Life series.

"You are both right," their mother said.  
"God made us. We are His children. We depend on Him for everything. Some of these Commandments tell us that we must worship God and have respect for His name."

"Those are the first two!" Billy shouted.  
"Right again!" his mother said. "Now, what about the third, the one about the Sabbath?"

"That's a special one," Ruth said.  
"Other people didn't know about that one. Only God's People, the Israelites, knew."

"And we keep Sunday as our holy day now instead of the Sabbath," Billy added.

Billy's father seemed proud of the answers the children had given. "That's right," he said. "The first three Commandments tell us how to show our love for God."

Grade 3 Text  
p100

But one great difference between the Old Testament and the pagan description of their deities is that the Bible triumphs over this human tendency to endow God with our frailties and unattractive qualities. The picture which strongly emerges is that of a loving Father. When we come to the New Testament, however, we have a quite different situation. Here we have a Man, a unique Man, a Man who is all-man yet merciful beyond anything we have ever seen. In Jesus we see a Person who is completely attractive, one whom publicans, prostitutes, and sinners of all kinds find eminently approachable, loving and loveable.

Grade 5 Guide  
p55

The Jews had learned a great lesson. They had learned that their God was the only God. They had learned that God was Creator of heaven and earth. They had learned that God was everywhere.

Grade 5 Text p48



We want the children to understand the message which the Book of Genesis has for them today. Therefore, we show what it meant for God's People in the Old Testament. We don't want the children to have either a fundamentalist or fairy-story attitude towards Genesis. We want them to see it as the word of God, but to see it as God meant us to see it, neither to accept it as science and history, nor to dismiss it as unreal and miss the religious message it contains. The text itself makes the point clearly. It brings out the idea, which the teacher can amplify; that the concept of a God of love is one of the things which stands out in the inspired stories of Genesis, a concept which is not present in the myths of pagan peoples.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 101

What comes through in the Old Testament, again and again in book after book, is what is called the "Mystery of God's Love." God loves His people. Nothing they can do is able to exhaust that love. Nothing can explain it; nothing can frustrate or kill it. But the Bible does more than tell us of God's love for His People in times past. It is the living word of God. The Bible tells us, and speaks to us personally, of God's love for us today. It is for us to make the application of the Israelites' God-experience to ourselves and to be aware of the same mystery of God's love in our own lives.

Grade 6 P Guide  
pp 209-210

## AMERICAN JEWISH

Stories like this are part of the lives of every people. The Israelites, the People of God, were no exception. In fact, the stories about their history and their ancestors were especially important to them. The Israelites knew that they were God's Chosen People. And they understood that there was something special about them because God had chosen them. They knew *who* they were. But they were always seeking to find out more and more about *how* they came to be what they were. They knew that they were bound to God by a solemn agreement which they called the Covenant. Many of the stories that the Israelites told over and over among themselves and passed down to their children had to do with the Covenant.

Grade 6 Text  
p 50

Additional excerpts are in Appendix B.

"Judaism in the time of Christ and the Apostles was a complex reality, embracing many different trends, many spiritual, religious, social and cultural values."

Guidelines and suggestions for implementing  
the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate

There are a few instances in The Word is Life series which indicate that Judaism was a living religion in Jesus' time.

#### A Religious Meal

If we would have been in Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover about the year 29 A.D. we could have watched two ex-fishermen, Peter and John, hurrying to a house with the hindquarter of a lamb which had been sacrificed in the Temple. They had to cook the lamb, to bake unleavened bread, mix bitter herbs, get wine, and prepare for the arrival of the others. Their Master had told them, "Go and prepare our Passover supper for us." They were to get ready for a solemn meal which was part of the great Jewish celebration of the Passover.

Centuries before, the Lord told Moses to prepare the people to leave the slavery of Egypt and go into the freedom of the Promised Land. He told him to have each family kill a lamb, sprinkle the doorposts of its house with the blood of the lamb, roast the lamb and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

Moses called the elders of the people together. He told them what the Lord had said. Then he added:

You shall observe this as a perpetual ordinance for yourselves and your descendants. Thus, you must observe this rite when you have entered the land which the Lord will give you as he promised. When your children ask you, "What does this rite of yours mean?" you shall reply, "This is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt; when he struck down the Egyptians, he spared our houses." (Exodus 12:24-27)

Moses commanded the people to have a special meal which was also a religious ritual. By this meal the Israelites were reaching to God. They wanted to be His friends, they wanted to be His Chosen People.

Each year, by this meal, they remembered who they had been. They remembered their misery as slaves in Egypt. They thought of who they were now. They were free from slavery, God's Chosen People.

Each year, by eating this meal they renewed the promise their ancestors made at Mt. Sinai. There, after Moses had spoken to God, he wrote down the covenant to the people. The people with great joy called out, "All that the Lord has said, we will heed and do" (Exodus 24:7).

Human beings celebrate and express their friendship by eating and drinking together. Both primitive people and civilized people have often eaten religious meals, such as the Passover meal, to express their desire to be united with God. They usually ate food that belonged to God because it had been sacrificed to Him.

The religious meal was a ritual that reminded the people who they were, and helped them express in a way better than words their desire to be friends with God.

Grade 7 Text  
pp. 163-164

God loved His People even when they went their own way. When Jesus was born there were many Jews who were true sons of Abraham. They truly loved and served God. They prayed and helped one another. They were usually poor, but they were faithful to God in their hearts. Jesus came to call these People to His Kingdom. Many accepted His call.

There were also people who said that they were God's People, but they really wanted power and money and pleasure. Jesus loved them, too, and called them to His Kingdom.

There were also the Pharisees. Many of them did not have true religion in their hearts. They only kept the externals of the Law. But Jesus loved them, too, and called them to His Kingdom. Some of them accepted His call and changed.

From the time of Abraham on, God called the Israelites to be men of faith, to live together as brothers, to observe the Covenant and the Law, and to hope for His final victory over evil. Some men responded and some did not. This is the story of all mankind.

Grade 6 Text  
p181

## AMERICAN JEWISH

Generally, Judaism of Jesus' time is portrayed in The Word is Life series as empty and unsatisfying, without comfort or warmth, unrelated to political and social issues.

God is our Father. This is the first thing Jesus taught the people. Jesus was speaking to people who knew about God. They even knew that God was their Father. But Jesus told the people how much God loved them. He told them that God is the Father of *all* the people in the world.

Grade 3 Text  
p162

Philip and Nathanael were Jews. They were God's People. They had always known the true God. They had always known that God their Father loved them. But they usually thought of God as living far away in heaven. They knew that God was present in some way in His Temple, too. But only the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, as God's special dwelling place in the Temple was called. In fact, Philip and Nathanael hardly dared to speak God's name. They had such a feeling of awe for God that they seldom spoke His name out loud, even when they were praying to God Himself.

Somehow, when Jesus spoke, God did not seem far away in heaven. He did not seem closed away in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. When Jesus spoke, God the Father seemed to be right there with His People.

Grade 5 Text  
p56



Christians today, and not least of all Catholics, can be tempted to think, as the Pharisees did, that they are "in" because they have been born into (i.e., baptized at birth into) the true faith. The chapter strives to impress on us that more than membership and incorporation into the Church is required.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 292

When Jesus called people, He told them that they were to change the way they lived. Some of the Pharisees did not think they had to change. They were proud of the fact that they were sons of Abraham. This was enough, they thought. But Jesus told them, "Give some evidence that you mean to reform. Do not pride yourselves on the claim, 'Abraham is our father.' I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these very stones" (Matthew 3:8-9).

Grade 6 Text  
p 91

They taught the people. They tried to make the people realize that the important thing was to live up to God's Covenant. These men were called Pharisees.

But after a time some of the Pharisees changed. Many of them were so strict about keeping the Law that they forgot the reason for the Law. They insisted on every little thing that the Law demanded. But many of them despised the poor. They prayed with their tongues but not with their hearts. They were strict with the people but often did not live up to God's laws in their own hearts.

So the people went through the motions of practicing their religion. They went to the Temple. They prayed with their lips. They offered animals in sacrifice at the altar. But many of them did not care for other people. They cheated each other. Their idea of success and the good life was the same idea that the pagans had. They were the People of God in name. But many were not the People of God in their hearts.

God loved His People even when they went their own way. When Jesus was born there were many Jews who were true sons of Abraham. They truly loved and served God. They prayed and helped one another. They were usually poor, but they were faithful to God in their hearts. Jesus came to call these People to His Kingdom. Many accepted His call.

There were also people who said that they were God's People, but they really wanted power and money and pleasure. Jesus loved them, too, and called them to His Kingdom.

There were also the Pharisees. Many of them did not have true religion in their hearts. They only kept the externals of the Law. But Jesus loved them, too, and called them to His Kingdom. Some of them accepted His call and changed.

From the time of Abraham on, God called the Israelites to be men of faith, to live together as brothers, to observe the Covenant and the Law, and to hope for His final victory over evil. Some men responded and some did not. This is the story of all mankind.

Grade 6 Text  
pp. 190-181



The apostles might have lived dull lives. They might have spent their days fishing from sunup to sundown. They might have gone on living day after day in a tiny village on the shore of the lake of Galilee.

But Jesus, the Light, came into their lives. The effect was greater than the effect of sunshine on a dreary landscape.

Jesus gave meaning and purpose to the lives of the apostles. Once they responded to His call, they had something important to do—all day, every day. Now their days, their thoughts and their hearts were to be spent in the most important work in the world—the work of spreading the Kingdom.

Because Jesus, the Light, had come into their lives, the apostles always had something to lift their hearts out of sadness and depression into the light of cheerfulness and hope. Even suffering could not down them.

Grade 7 Text  
P.115

When Peter preached his first sermon on Pentecost, he challenged the Jews who were looking for a Messiah to accept Jesus: "Therefore, let the whole house of Israel know beyond any doubt that God has made both Lord and Messiah this Jesus whom you crucified."

When they heard this, they were deeply shaken. They asked Peter and the other apostles: "What are we to do, brothers?" Peter answered:

You must reform and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, that your sins may be forgiven; then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:36-39)

Grade 8 Text  
P.214

Additional excerpts are in Appendix C.

## Chapter 5

"Jesus was born of the Jewish people, as were his Apostles and a large number of his first disciples....Jesus also used teaching methods similar to those employed by the rabbis of his time."

Guidelines and suggestions for implementing  
the conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate

Jesus was a religious Jew and every aspect of his life was colored by this fact. The Apostles and early Church followers were also Jewish. There are only a few brief mentions of this in The Word is Life series.

Philip and Nathanael were Jews. They were God's People. They had always known the true God. They had always known that God their Father loved them. But they usually thought of God as living far away in heaven.

Grade 5 Text  
pp 55-56

Jesus did preach first of all and most of all to the Jews. He did work most of His miracles among His own people, the Jews.

Grade 6 Text  
p 198

The first Christians, the people who accepted Jesus and were baptized, were all Jews.

Grade 6 Text  
p 199

Jesus was born into the People of God. He was a Jew. He was a descendant of King David. He studied and loved the Scriptures. He prayed in the synagogue with his family and friends and worshiped at the Temple in Jerusalem on the great feasts. He lived His whole life in the Holy Land and loved His people and their Law and their Covenant to the day he died. Finally, when His enemies killed Him, they crucified Him on the day before the holiest feast of the year, the Passover.

Grade 6 Text  
p 238

Generally Jesus and the Apostles appear to have grown up and lived without any religious context. The presentation of their lives is as though Judaism did not constitute enough religious or moral content worth mentioning.

In the past the efforts to show that Christ was man were limited mainly to showing that He had a body. We showed that He was born, grew up and died, that He ate and slept, that He felt fatigue and suffered like other men. These activities are biological functions in man. They are not the things which make a person a person. We want to stress those things which bring out the humanity (the humanness) of Christ: His feelings, such as loneliness, acceptance, rejection; His life thrust of confidence in Himself and in others; His hope and His care for others. We want to show that the process of individuation was most perfectly completed in Him. He fought and conquered the negative forces of hate, fear, and doubt.

It is amazing how much of the truly human comes through in all four Gospels when we read them carefully and look for the little indications in a verb or adjective which show Jesus and His feelings.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 257

Mary and Joseph, her husband,  
went to Bethlehem.

There was no place to sleep  
in the town.

It was cold and dark.

They had to stay in a stable.

Jesus was born in that stable.

Shepherds came to see Jesus.

Wise men from far away  
brought Him gifts.

Soon, the Holy Family went to live  
in Nazareth.

Jesus grew up in Nazareth.

When He became a man,

He began to teach the people.

Grade 1 Text  
p 66

Jesus taught the people  
for a long time.

Then, Jesus and His close friends,  
the apostles, had a special  
meal together.

It is called the Last Supper.

Grade 1 Text  
p 69

In this chapter we are not so much interested in the miracles Jesus worked as in how He reacted as a human being. He was tired after talking with people all day. He drained Himself in caring for people, but He did not stop because He was trying to help people in the way His Father wanted Him to help them. His work was hard and tiring, and it took a great deal of time. Thus we see that Jesus validates our human condition that anything worthwhile takes time and effort. In this particular chapter, we show that learning about Jesus takes time and effort on our part.

Grade 2 Guide  
p 33

The people came and met Jesus.  
They ate and talked with Him.  
They heard what He said.

Jesus was happy.  
The people were happy.  
Zacchaeus said, "I learned  
a lot from Jesus."

Grade 2 Text  
p 11

Jesus sat talking to the people.  
They listened to Him.  
They wanted to find out how  
to be happy.  
They wanted Jesus to help them  
to be good.

Grade 2 Text  
p. 50

The teacher should, of course, go over the story and do all the usual things for Christmas. But in telling the story and in preparing for Christmas, the teacher should also stress the fact that Jesus, by becoming one of us, by becoming our Brother, has made us all brothers and sisters.

Grade 3 Guide  
p 205

Jesus would often go off by Himself and talk to His Father. Sometimes He spent the whole night praying.

One day, the apostles saw Jesus praying. He looked so peaceful when He prayed. There was such hope and love in His eyes.

The apostles wished that they could talk to God as Jesus did. They went to Him and said, "Lord, teach us how to pray."

Jesus told the apostles that when they wanted to pray, they should try to be by themselves. They should have a quiet time with God. He said that fancy words were not important. Instead, Jesus told them to talk to God as a child talks to his loving father.

The apostles took Jesus's advice. They learned to talk to God. They felt closer to God when they talked to Him in prayer.

Grade 3 Text  
p 153



He is able to see, in the stories from the New Testament, that Jesus was a Man who was interested in people, who cared for them and who was able and anxious to help others and to bring all together in love and unity. When he is told that Jesus, the Son of God, is now interested in him and able and willing to help him now, he accepts this as a fact because he, too, may wish to follow Jesus in loving God and others.

Grade 5 Evidence  
p 9

Jesus felt the same struggle within Himself. Like everyone else, He had to grow. He had to learn to make choices. He had to become master of Himself. And Jesus did learn to make choices. He did grow until, as an adult, He was truly "His own man."

When Jesus was twelve years old, Mary and Joseph took Him to Jerusalem to celebrate the holy days. In the Temple, Jesus came upon a group of wise men. They were having a discussion. Jesus sat with them and listened to what they were saying. He asked questions. The answers the wise men gave were very interesting.

Grade 5 Text  
p 112

Throughout His whole life, Jesus followed His conscience. He did not let His feelings tell Him what to do. He did what He knew was right. He did what He knew His Father wanted Him to do. When Jesus had to make a choice that would cause Him trouble or pain, He prayed to His Father. Then He said to God, "Let it be as you would have it, not as I" (Matthew 26:39).

These were the words Jesus said to His Father just before He was arrested. Jesus knew that His enemies were planning to put Him to death. When He thought about this and other things, He suffered so much that He broke out in a sweat of blood.

Grade 5 Text  
p 116

It was late at night. The street in front of the Temple was deserted now. A man stepped out of the shadows and walked over to where another man was standing, waiting. The man who was waiting was Jesus. The man who came to see Him at night was an important person. He was Nicodemus, a leader among the Pharisees. Jesus and Nicodemus spoke for some time. When they parted for the night, Nicodemus felt that his mind was made up. He would become a disciple of Jesus.

Jesus called many people. His call was like God's call which came to Abraham. It was also like the call which came to the prophets. It was like the call which came to the Israelites from God through Moses. It was a call which asked people to change their lives. To everyone who listened to Him Jesus said, "Reform your lives! The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17).

Grade 6 Text  
p 188

In order to understand Jesus and what He said and did, we have to understand the People of Israel and their history.

Every year Christians celebrate Holy Week, which was the high point of the life of Jesus. In order to understand this week we have to see it in light of the Old Testament.

On the Sunday before Easter, we have the blessing of the palms before Mass and the procession into the church. We recall Jesus riding on a donkey into Jerusalem. The people sang songs and waved palm branches before Him. The people of Jerusalem were happy that Jesus was coming into the city. Some of them hoped that He was the King promised by the prophets. And some of them were sure He was the Messiah of whom the prophets had spoken. All of them were sure that He was a man of God who taught them about God.

As he rode into the city, Jesus did not look like a great King, but He was a great King, coming to take over His Kingdom. His Kingdom does not have armies and cities and wealth. His Kingdom is made up of simple, good people who love God and each other.

Grade 6 Text  
p239

## AMERICAN JEWISH

This chapter will help them see and, in some way, share in the interaction which went on between Jesus and the people He called to become His people in His Father's Kingdom.

Working from the ideas the students have explored about groups, crowds, and communities, we look at those who came to Jesus to determine whether they were merely a crowd or whether they were a real community. We see in a small number of people the gradual development of a common goal, the same goal as of Jesus, namely, the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Grade 7 Guide  
p36

Jesus toured all of Galilee. He taught in their synagogues, proclaimed the good news of the kingdom, and cured the people of every disease and illness.

As a consequence of this, his reputation traveled the length of Syria. They carried to him all those afflicted with various diseases

and racked with pain: the possessed, the lunatics, the paralyzed. He cured them all.

The great crowds that followed him came from Galilee, the Ten Cities, Jerusalem and Judea, and from across the Jordan. (Matthew 4:23-25)

Grade 7 Text  
p20

The apostles might have lived dull lives. They might have spent their days fishing from sunup to sundown. They might have gone on living day after day in a tiny village on the shore of the lake of Galilee.

But Jesus, the Light, came into their lives. The effect was greater than the effect of sunshine on a dreary landscape.

Jesus gave meaning and purpose to the lives of the apostles. Once they responded to His call, they had something important to do—all day, every day. Now their days, their thoughts and their hearts were to be spent in the most important work in the world—the work of spreading the Kingdom.

Grade 7 Text  
p115

Jesus is the best example of a person who knew how to balance various approaches in His life. He was not afraid to confront His enemies; at other times, He went into the hill country so that they could not find Him; and, finally, He was content to face and accept the death they plotted for Him.

Grade 8 Text  
p 90

St. Paul said:

Out of love, place yourselves at one another's service. If you go on biting and tearing one another to pieces, take care! You will end up in mutual destruction. (Galatians 5:13-15)

Jesus said it all:

As the Father has loved me,  
so I have loved you.  
Live on in my love.  
You will live in my love  
if you keep my commandments,  
even as I have kept my Father's commandments,  
and live in his Love.

Grade 8 Text  
p 98

One thing we often forget is that Jesus was fully a man with feelings like our own. He never denied his sexuality. His Mother, Mary, was a woman and she understood her sexuality. Read Luke 1:26-2:19 to see how Mary accepted and gloried in the fact that she was a woman who could bear a child.

Grade 8 Text  
p 98

Additional excerpts are in Appendix D.



## Chapter 6

"With regard to the trial and death of Jesus, the Council recalled 'what happened in his passion cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, not upon the Jews of today' (Nostra Aetate, 4)."

Guidelines and suggestions for implementing  
the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate

Jews are not named as the executioners of Jesus in The Word is Life series. However, the entire issue is inadequately covered in the teacher's guide and student's text: the political and social circumstances surrounding Jesus' death are never described.

Have the children turn to pages 70-71 of their texts. While they are looking at the picture, tell them the story of Jesus's death. Refer to Matthew 26:36-27:61, Mark 14:32-16:47, Luke 23, John 19. Discuss the following points in the story:

- the people who wanted to kill Jesus. *Stress that some people loved Jesus, but that He had enemies who did not want Him to preach about God, His Father. Do not blame His death on the Jews. It was the leaders of the people, and not even all of them (Nicodemus was a leader and a friend), who brought about His death.*
- what the garden might have been like and what Jesus prayed about.
- what kind of prayers the children say when they are afraid. Jesus, after all was afraid when He was in the garden.
- what the children think being arrested means. *They will have all different kinds of ideas from television.*
- what ideas they have about judges. *Television will give them some idea of the function of a judge. It will be interesting to hear what the children think about judges.*
- what the soldiers said to Jesus when they arrested Him.
- why the enemies of Jesus decided He had to die.
- how the friends of Jesus felt and acted when they saw Him being put to death.
- how Mary, His Mother, felt.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 263

After the Last Supper, Jesus  
and His apostles went to pray  
in a garden.

Some men were angry with Jesus.  
They sent soldiers to the garden.  
The soldiers arrested Jesus.  
They took Him to the judges.

Jesus said to the judges,  
"I am the Son of God."  
This made them very angry.  
They did not believe Jesus.  
They said Jesus must die.

Stress these two sentences.

The soldiers hurt Jesus.  
They made Him carry a cross.  
They nailed Jesus to the cross.  
Jesus died, and His friends  
buried Him in a tomb.

Grade 1 Text  
p 70

On Easter, we are happy because  
Jesus is alive.  
Jesus died on Good Friday.  
His friends were sad because  
He was gone.  
But, on Easter Sunday, Jesus  
came back to His friends.

Grade 2 Text p76

This is what Jesus tells us about His Father. But Jesus also shows us this love in His own words and actions. It is an unfailing, inexhaustible love, and it is universal, going out to and embracing publicans and Samaritans, Pharisees, Judas, even the men who unjustly condemned Him to death, the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross and the crowds who howled for His blood.

Grade 5 Guide p60

The people who plotted to put Jesus to death turned their backs on the message of Jesus. They made themselves blind. They refused to love. They turned to hate. They committed great sin.

Grade 5 Text p79

St. John tells us that the leaders of the people wanted to kill Jesus because "he was speaking of God as his own Father, thereby making himself God's equal." Jesus told them:

"For whatever the Father does,  
the Son does likewise.  
For the Father loves the Son  
and everything the father does he shows him."

(John 5:18-20)

Grade 5 Text p.147

The last chapter of this unit is a general chapter which tries to show what the political, social, and religious situation was like in Israel at the time Jesus appeared.

Again, we want to be realistic. Some of the people had learned from history a great deal about God and the way He showed His love for the people. Some of the people were good and devout. The New Testament, because it was written in times of rejection and persecution, naturally stresses the evils which existed among the people, but a generation that produced a just man like Joseph, generous men like the apostles, a prophet like John the Baptizer, and a virgin like Mary is a most impressive one. We want the children to have a balanced and realistic picture of the prophets and of the people.

Grade 6 Guide p 236

This chapter is more informative than didactic. It does little more than give the background against which we shall see Christ and the New Testament. It "wraps up" the history of the Israelites up to the time of the coming of Jesus.

The lesson mentions a few things which sixth graders should become acquainted with. The origin and meaning of the feast of Hanukkah is one of these. It is a feast day for Jews to this day, and we should be aware of its meaning. The role of the priests and the position of the Pharisees in the life of the people at the time of Christ are other things which the class should become aware of so that they will better understand the issues and events in the life of Jesus.

The chapter brings out another point which it is necessary to know in order to understand the life of our Lord—the fact that the people expected and longed for a military leader and were not prepared for the kind of Messiah Jesus would prove to be.

Grade 6 Guide p 279



Near the end of His life on earth, Jesus knew that His enemies in Jerusalem were planning to arrest Him and put Him to death. So Jesus went out into the country. He knew that He would be safe there. He knew that if He stayed in the country His enemies would leave Him alone.

Before long, word came to Jesus that His friend Lazarus was very sick. Lazarus lived in Bethany, a village close to Jerusalem. Jesus knew that His life would be in danger if He went there. But His friend needed Him. Jesus made up His mind. He set out for Bethany. By the time He arrived, Lazarus was dead. Jesus went to the cemetery. He stood in front of the tomb where His friend was buried. The crowd watched Him and wondered. Would Jesus be brave enough to work a great miracle now? If He did, would His enemies decide that it was time to arrest Him?

Jesus knew that it was dangerous to give His enemies any excuse to arrest Him. But He did not hesitate. He called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:43). And the dead man came to life. He walked out of the tomb. He joined his family and his friend, Jesus.

Grade 5 Text p124

In the year 63 B.C., the Romans took over the Jewish nation. Now, more than ever, the people looked for a deliverer.

Grade 6 Text p177

The apostles knew that Jesus had powerful enemies who were seeking to put him to death. They knew, too, that most of the people had turned away when Jesus refused the king's crown they had offered Him.

But now these words of Jesus gave the apostles new hope. Good things were going to happen now, they felt. Somehow, Jesus was ready to establish His Kingdom and they would have the best places in it, after all.

Then, just a few hours later, the hopes of the apostles were dashed to pieces. A mob came with blazing torches. They grabbed Jesus and carried Him off to jail.

Now the apostles knew the darkness of despair. Their bright hope was gone. They scattered. They ran for cover. As far as they could see, it was all over.

And, yet, the worst was still to come. The next day, the bottom really fell out of their world. Jesus was dead! He had been nailed to a cross. His dead body had been taken down and placed in a sealed tomb. Now there was no hope at all.

None of the apostles seemed to remember that Jesus had predicted all this. None of them remembered that He had said that He would rise from the dead. Or, if any of them did recall these words, they did not believe them now.

Grade 7 Text p132



## Chapter 7

"Fidelity to the Covenant has always been linked to the gift of a land promised to Abraham and his seed....Roman Catholics should strive to understand and respect the religious significance of the link between the people and the land."

Taken from the Document of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, Sixth Synod of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 1971

All references to the connection between the Jews (Israelites) and the Promised Land in The Word is Life series are confined to biblical times; there is no recognition of the relationship today.

Once again, Abraham was putting his trust in God alone. God had promised him a land. Abraham would not accept gifts of land from any human being. He would trust God.

Grade 6 Text  
p 27

God said to Joshua,

"My servant Moses is dead. So prepare to cross the Jordan here, with all the people into the land I will give the Israelites. . . . No one can withstand you while you live. I will be with you as I was with Moses: I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be firm and steadfast, so that you may give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers I would give them." (Joshua 1:2-6)

Grade 6 Text  
p 92

God had promised to give this wonderful land, the land of Canaan, to the Israelites. He told them that they would be successful in settling there. But there was danger. The Israelites would be living among the pagan Canaanites. They would have to be careful not to live as the pagans lived. They would have to be sure not to fall into idolatry by worshiping the false gods of these people.

The Israelites saw the danger. They understood God's command that they were not to live like the Canaanites. But the Israelites had their own way of doing things. They interpreted God's command as a command to kill the Canaanites or drive them out of the land. They excused their violence and justified their actions by claiming that God had ordered them to do these things.

Grade 6 Text  
p 94

## Chapter 8

"Christians must therefore strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of Judaism; they must strive to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in light of their own religious experiences."

Guidelines and suggestions for implementing  
the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate

Jews see Judaism as a complete, whole and living religion.  
The Word is Life series repeatedly implies that much is  
lacking in Judaism (the Israelites' faith).

The observance of the Commandments is linked to the love of God, essentially and inextricably. Although their observance is not the fullness of love, the Commandments show us the irreducible minimum which love requires

Grade 3 Guide p 113

Much of what is lacking, The Word is Life series implies, is recognition that the hopes of Israel have been fulfilled by Jesus. However, Jews believe that the promises made to Israel by God for peace and tranquility of the Messianic Age have not yet been fulfilled.

He is the One who fulfilled the hopes of Israel, and that God, through Jesus, intervened in human history in an extraordinary way.

Grade 1 Guide  
P 257

The miraculous elements such as the angel, the star, the Wise Men, and the flight into Egypt bring out certain basic truths such as the fact that, although this Child is human, He is not an ordinary person. He is the One who fulfilled the hopes of Israel, and, through Jesus, God intervened in human history in an extraordinary way.

Grade 2 Guide  
P 162

*Not Ready for the Full Christian Message.* When God intervened in the history of mankind, His revelation did not come all at once, in some final and irrevocable form. Rather, He prepared His people slowly, step by step, for the ultimate revelation in Jesus. So, too, with the moral development of the people. On the very first day that God spoke to man, He did not demand of him the ultimate ethic outlined by Jesus. The moral attitudes of the Israelites matured very slowly over two thousand years until some of the people were ready to hear from Jesus the full meaning of the Law of Love.

Grade 3 Guide  
P 144

There are other blind people who have perfectly good eyesight. They are blind because they do not want to see. These are the people of whom it is said, "There are none so blind as those who refuse to see."

Jesus said that He came to make the sightless see. Jesus meant that He came to tell people how to live, how to grow, how to become themselves. Jesus came to save people from their blindness and bring them to God. Without the message of Jesus, we would be sightless. We would be blind.

Grade 5 Text  
P 174

The Israelites were coming to know more and more about God and themselves. Their troubles and experiences helped them see more clearly what God is like.

When Jesus came, He helped people know more about God as a loving Father. Even today, from our own experiences, we can learn about God and His love for us.

Grade 6 Text  
p 165

When Peter preached his first sermon on Pentecost, he challenged the Jews who were looking for a Messiah to accept Jesus: "Therefore, let the whole house of Israel know beyond any doubt that God has made both Lord and Messiah this Jesus whom you crucified."

When they heard this, they were deeply shaken. They asked Peter and the other apostles: "What are we to do, brothers?" Peter answered:

You must reform and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, that your sins may be forgiven; then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:36-39)

Grade 8 Text  
p 214

Additional excerpts are in Appendix E.

Jews today see themselves as descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Jewish People think of themselves as being part of the Family of God. In The Word is Life series, Christians alone are seen as the Family of God.

We are the Family of God.  
Each week, we go to Mass.  
We pray to our Father at Mass.  
We listen to God's words.  
We remember what Jesus did  
at the Last Supper.

Grade 1 Text  
p.57

This unit is centered on the child as a member of the Family of God, the Church.

Grade 2 Guide  
p64

At Mass, the friends of Jesus  
meet as the Family of God.  
They hear the words of Jesus.  
They remember that Jesus wants  
them to help everyone.

Grade 2 Text  
p.32



God still speaks to His People today. First, He speaks through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus speaks to everyone. But Jesus does much more than just tell people what to do. He *shows* people how to act. He shows them how to please God our Father. And He shows them how to love one another.

God also speaks to His People today through His Church. He speaks through the Pope, bishops, and priests. Through them, God reminds us of the Ten Commandments He gave to His people long ago.

Grade 3 Text  
p 122

The rest of the unit is devoted to the Church, the People of God, and we try to look at the Church from the point of view of a fifth grader.

Grade 5 Guide  
p 131

## AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

In the chapters on the New Testament, we show that God has formed a new People in Christ through the Holy Spirit, and, in the last chapters we show that these people today, after four thousand years of salvation history, are called to faith in as challenging a way as Abraham, that they have to risk as much as he did, and that they ask the same questions and face the same human problems.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 291

### THE NEW CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM (text, pages 194-201)

#### Aim

To show the students that the members of Christ's Kingdom live and work in the present because of their hope in the future fulfillment of the Kingdom.

#### Themes

1. Jesus felt the temptation to yield to the wishes of the people.
2. Jesus describes His Kingdom.
3. The members of Christ's Kingdom work to prepare the world for the second coming of Jesus.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 302

The new children of Abraham would be all who would try to live the great law of love that God had given His People of old: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart. . . . You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (*Matthew 22:37, 39; Deuteronomy 6:5*). They would also be followers of Jesus, the Promised King, and would be baptized by water and the Holy Spirit. They would try to live the new and greater law of love which Jesus gave: "Love one another as I have loved you" (*John 15:12*).

Grade 6 Text  
p 200

We are members of a people who are bound together by faith. We believe that God loves man and that the Bible is the record of the loving things God did for man in the past. Church history picks up where the Bible ends and tells us how God has loved His People right up until the present time. The teachers in the Church, especially the Pope and the bishops, help us to understand how God loves us and helps us in our lives today. They help us understand the faith which keeps us together.

Grade 6 Text  
p 224

The prophets blamed the people for putting money before God. This very fault caused the downfall of many in Old Testament times.

The same danger is present today. The People of God today need buildings. They need churches and they need schools.

Grade 6 Text  
p 211

AMERICAN  
A R  
One of the basic ideas underlying our Catholic faith is that Jesus came to help people belong to the community of the children of God, His Church.

Grade 7 Text  
p 19

Jesus came to offer the light of faith to all. Some, like the blind man, eagerly accepted the gift of faith. These were the "sightless" whom Jesus enabled to "see." Others, like some of the Pharisees, rejected the light of faith which Jesus offered. They were "the seeing" who were really "blind."

Grade 7 Text  
p 126

And so the Church, the People of God, the Pilgrim People are a people who are constantly in search. They have security, but they also are called to try the new, the unpredictable.

Grade 8 Text  
p 205

Additional excerpts are in Appendix F.

The Hebrew Scriptures are seen by Jews as affirmations of the covenant between God and his People. Positive aspects of this relationship are sometimes shown in The Word is Life series, as shown in the following examples.

This chapter spells out in some detail the really great problems that these people had and makes the point that—all in all—human as they were, they didn't do so very badly. Hindsight gives us many advantages, and it is easy for us to judge and condemn. It is important for the children to understand this fact. Otherwise they may shrug off "those dumb Israelites" and miss the point—the terrible struggle which the People of God went through and how God was always there in the struggle.

Another important point—the Bible often speaks of the Israelites, the people, as if everything were unanimous, one great monolith, with everyone feeling and acting as one. The sacred writers always saw the people as one, and it is natural that they should express things in this way. We must remember, though, that in every crisis, every event, there were many people who remained faithful and tried very earnestly to live up to the Covenant as well as they could.

Grade 6 Guide  
p221

The exile in Babylon was a very painful experience for the Israelites. But it was also an immensely profitable one. The people, as a whole, had remained unmoved and unaffected by the warnings and exhortations of the prophets. Now, bitter experience and suffering finally caused them to see things they would not see during times of prosperity and freedom. In Babylon the people had time to take a hard look at themselves, to reexamine their history, to sort out their ideas. Reduced to a remnant of a people, they searched for identity and they found it in a new appreciation of themselves as a special people, the Chosen People. They rediscovered what the prophets had been telling them all along that their uniqueness and their greatness was to be found in their identity and destiny as God's People, not in earthly power and splendor.

Grade 6 Guide  
p257

The Israelites passed these stories on from father to son because they were worried that their children would not remain faithful to the God of their fathers. The older people had a sense of belonging because they knew that they were children of the promise. They felt a sense of worth and importance because they were part of God's Chosen People. They wanted their children to realize that God loved them and that they were important because of God's love for them.

Grade 6 Text  
p43

The really wonderful thing is that during these hard years of settling down in the Promised Land the people did survive. Even with all the failures and all the mistakes, the Israelites stayed together as a people. Many grew careless, as people will, and turned away from God. But not all the people turned away at any one time. And, slowly, after many years of struggles and sufferings, the people were united enough to want a king of their own. This was part of their growing up as God's People.

Grade 6 Text  
p137



However, The Word is Life volumes usually portray the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) as a series of failures by a weak and faithless people to uphold a covenant with an incredibly patient, merciful and loving God.

The focal point of the chapter is the faithfulness and solicitude of God. The chapter highlights the anguish of the Israelites.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 118

The main lesson for the children is that God is faithful and merciful, loving and provident. He was then. He is now. The people, on the other hand, did what humans are always prone to do; they were overconfident. They were quick to rely on themselves, to assume that everything would be quick and easy. They had to find out, the hard way (as we shall see in the future chapters), that trusting in God, working hard, persevering and above all, keeping the right values in mind is the only way to peace, security, and happiness.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 118

However, they had to learn the hard way. In fact, it is difficult to see that the people as a whole ever did learn some of these lessons. In time, the people accepted the fact that there was no other God but The Lord, but they responded to the call to glory and power every time they heard it.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 118

#### Aim

To show the students that the Old Testament reflects the struggle of the Israelites to remain faithful to an ever-loving God.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 209

What comes through, and what God wanted to come through, is His election of the Israelites, His constant, unwavering love for them, and His involvement in their history. The sacred writers, writing centuries later, saw the Hand of God in everything that happened to Israel. The people who lived through these events had less knowledge, less awareness, and a more primitive understanding of God and of history.

What comes through in the Old Testament, again and again in book after book, is what is called the "Mystery of God's Love." God loves His people. Nothing they can do is able to exhaust that love. Nothing can explain it; nothing can frustrate or kill it. But the Bible does more than tell us of God's love for His People in times past. It is the living word of God. The Bible tells us, and speaks to us personally, of God's love for us today. It is for us to make the application of the Israelites' God-experience to ourselves and to be aware of the same mystery of God's love in our own lives.

Grade 6 Guide  
p 209

And, even though people continued to be weak and sinful, God's promise to Abraham kept on unfolding.

Grade 6 Text  
p 34

The story of how the sons of Israel came to live in Egypt brings out, once again, the way people hurt one another.

Grade 6 Text  
p 36

The Israelites saw the danger. They understood God's command that they were not to live like the Canaanites. But the Israelites had their own way of doing things. They interpreted God's command as a command to kill the Canaanites or drive them out of the land. They excused their violence and justified their actions by claiming that God had ordered them to do these things.

The Israelite writers who set the story down in the Book of Joshua thought and wrote as Israelites. So they often say that it was God who commanded the Israelites to kill the inhabitants of the Promised Land. Actually, it was the Israelites themselves who decided to use this excuse.

Grade 6 Text  
p 94

The people had been false to God and to His Covenant. The people and their country were in serious danger. Their faith in God was weak. They themselves were weak as a people. They were weak in mind and in heart. They were not living as God's People. As a people and as a nation they were failing. Worse things were yet to happen.

Grade 6 Text  
p 117

The Old Testament shows us the mystery of God's love. God chose the Israelites and loved them even though they never measured up to what He wanted them to be. The people did not keep their promises to God or to each other. The people were ungrateful again and again. They turned away from God. They did not help one another to be faithful. They forgot what their parents and their elders had told them. They worshiped the false gods of the pagans. They trusted in power and wealth.

But God's love is so great that He never refused to hear His People. He always came to their rescue. Again and again, the people turned their backs on God, but He never turned His back on them. This mystery of God's love is to be seen in all the books of the Bible.

Grade 6 Text  
p 129

Additional excerpts are in Appendix H.

## APPENDIX A

The following excerpts illustrate that the continuation of the covenant between God and Jews is not recognized in The Word is Life series.

At Mass, the friends of Jesus  
meet as the Family of God.  
They hear the words of Jesus.  
They remember that Jesus wants  
them to help everyone.

Grade 2 Text p 32

Jesus said that He came to make the sightless see. Jesus meant that He came to tell people how to live, how to grow, how to become themselves. Jesus came to save people from their blindness and bring them to God. Without the message of Jesus, we would be sightless. We would be blind.

Grade 5 Text p 175

The message of Jesus is a message of love. A person who refuses to love turns his back on the message of Jesus. Refusing to love is a great and serious sin.

The people who plotted to put Jesus to death turned their backs on the message of Jesus. They made themselves blind. They refused to love. They turned to hate. They committed great sin.

The people who killed St. Stephen committed great sin, too. Stephen was one of the first followers of Jesus. He preached to the people about Jesus. He told them that Jesus had died for them. He told them that Jesus wanted them to love one another. Some of the people did not want to hear the message of Jesus. They put their hands over their ears. They rushed at Stephen. They picked up large rocks and stoned him to death. These people refused to love. They turned to hate. They were sinners.

Grade 5 Text pp. 177-179

Christians today, and not least of all Catholics, can be tempted to think, as the Pharisees did, that they are "in" because they have been born into (i.e., baptized at birth into) the true faith. The chapter strives to impress on us that more than membership and incorporation into the Church is required. We are to live according to the Gospels, to live as Jesus lived and would have us live. To live this kind of Christian life means a constant change of heart and renewal, a continual struggle against the selfishness and other un-Christ-like tendencies within us.

Grade 6 Guide p 292

The prophets blamed the people for putting money before God. This very fault caused the downfall of many in Old Testament times.

The same danger is present today. The People of God today need buildings. They need churches and they need schools

Grade 6 Text  
p 211



APPENDIX B

"The Old Testament and the Jewish tradition founded upon it must not be set against the New Testament...." The guidelines generally are followed well on this issue in The Word is Life series.

"All right," Mrs. Clark said. "You all know why the Bible tells us the story about Noah and the great flood, don't you?"

"Yes," one of the older girls answered.

"The story tells us that God wiped out sin and washed the world clean. It tells us that God saved Noah and his family and the animals Noah took into the ark."

"That's right," Mrs. Clark said. "The story really tells us that God gave the world a new beginning."

Then Mary asked, "Why did the world need a new beginning?"

One of the boys spoke up. "I know," he said. "People had spoiled the world because they were mean and selfish. They didn't care about God or each other."

"That's right," Mrs. Clark said. "God gave us a beautiful, clean, bright, shining world. But men and women were selfish and cruel. They sinned and spoiled the wonderful world God gave them."

"And God washed the world clean because He wanted to give it a new start?" one of the boys asked.

"Yes," Mrs. Clark said. "God's People, the Israelites, knew the old stories about a great flood. They saw this flood as God's way of washing the world clean of sin and evil."

Grade 3 Text p38

"Do you know where we got them? The Commandments, I mean," asked Billy's sister, Ruth.

"Sure I do," Billy said proudly. "God gave them to Moses. Then Moses gave them to the Israelites, God's chosen People."

Grade Text p93

"That's right," Ruth said. "But now I've got a question." Everyone turned and looked at Ruth. "Was this new news to the people—what Moses told them?"

"That's a very good question, Ruth. What do *you* think?" her mother asked.

"I think they *must* have known," Ruth answered.

"You're right," her father said. "These things are sort of written in our hearts by God."

"But, then, why would God have to tell Moses to give these Commandments to the people?" Billy wanted to know.

"Do you suppose," his mother asked, "that God wanted the people to know these laws come from *Him*?"

"That's right!" Ruth said brightly. "The people always knew it was wrong to lie and steal. But now they knew why. They knew that God was—*behind* these Commandments."

Grade 3 Text p19

Mother cut in. "Well," she said, "let's try to figure it out. The first three Commandments tell us how we must act towards God. What do you suppose the others would tell us?"

Ruth's face lit up. "Oh, I think I know!" she cried. "Do they tell us how we must act towards other people?"

"That's right!" her mother said, smiling. "They tell us how we must act towards ourselves and towards everyone else."

"We are all God's children," their father added. "In His Commandments God spells out how we must respect each person's rights and live together as His children."

"So God tells us that we hurt others if we lie to them, or steal from them, or fight with them, or spread stories about them—and things like that," Ruth said.

"Yes," her mother said. "If we do things like that, we are acting against love of our neighbor."

"And that means we are acting against our love of God, too, doesn't it?" Ruth asked.

"That's right," her father said. "If we don't love God's children, we aren't loving God."

Grade 3 Text pp103-104

We want the children to realize that the Israelites were very much like ourselves and all people so that their experiences and our reflections on them have validity for us.

Grade 6 Guide p117

This chapter seeks to tie in the whole year's study of the People of God in the Old Testament with the life of the children. It points out the fact that the People of God today, as spiritual descendants of the Israelites of the Old Testament, have some of the same problems and temptations.

Grade 6 Guide p324

This chapter reminds us that we can learn a great deal and derive a lot of strength from the history of the Israelites if we take seriously the idea that they are our religious ancestors and that their experiences have meaning and reality for us now.

Grade 6 Guide p. 338

Now, at last, the Israelites were truly free. They had passed from slavery in Egypt through the waters of the Red Sea to freedom in the desert wilderness. They were free now to begin the slow and painful process of growing from a loose grouping of tribes into a nation. The Israelites were to live a wandering life in the desert for a long time. Only after years had passed would they be ready to enter into the land God had promised them.

But first and most important, God made His Covenant with the Israelites. This Covenant was a solemn agreement between God and the Israelites. The Covenant, like every agreement, had two parts. One was God's part, which was a promise to care for the Israelites in a special way. God promised that He would defend the Israelites from their enemies. He said that He would help them become a people with their own country, the Promised Land. Through them a great blessing would come to the whole world.

The other part of the Covenant was the people's part. The people were to promise that they would love and serve The Lord, their God. They were to promise that they would be faithful to Him, and they were to see that they would never serve or worship any other god. They were to keep the Law of the Covenant—the Ten Commandments and other laws that God would give the people through Moses.

The Book of Exodus describes in a very dramatic way the making of the Covenant between God and the Israelites. The Israelites, led by Moses, came to the foot of Mount Horeb, also called Mount Sinai. Moses went up the mountain to speak with God. When he returned, he told the people the terms of the Covenant. God would do His part. God would be faithful. Now, the question was, Would the people accept their part of the Covenant? Would they be faithful to God? Would they live up to the Covenant?

The people gave their answer right away. They were full of enthusiasm. They had no doubts. They had no fears. They would be able to do anything. Nothing was too hard for them.

Grade 6 Text  
pp 71-72



"Everything the Lord has said, we will do!" the people shouted.

The trouble was that the people answered too quickly. They did not know yet how difficult it would be to live up to their part of the Covenant. They did not see all the dangers that were ahead of them. The people trusted in themselves. Now everything looked bright. It would be smooth sailing from now on—or so the people thought.

But one thing was certain. The Israelites were now bound to God by a special sacred Covenant. Moses had written the Law of the Covenant on tablets of stone. These tablets would be a holy reminder of the Covenant and of the Law that was Israel's part of the agreement.

The Israelites built a special box which they called the Ark of the Covenant. They put the stone tablets in this sacred Ark. The Ark was kept in a special tent during the years the people lived in the desert. Many years later, the great Temple would be built. The Ark would be placed in the most sacred part of the Temple, the Holy of Holies.

Grade 6 Text p73

**16. What do the failures of the Israelites teach us today?**

The failures of the Israelites teach us that we can learn from our mistakes, that we can overcome our faults with God's help and in this way continue to grow.

**17. Who were the prophets?**

The prophets were men sent by God to call the people to be faithful once more to the promises they had made to God in the Covenant.

**18. How did the prophets help the Israelites to grow more and more in the love and service of God?**

The prophets helped the Israelites to grow more and more in the love and service of God:

- a. by reminding the people who were tempted to give up that God still loved them and would help them.
- b. by stirring up the people who no longer cared enough about serving God to live as God's People should live.

**19. What did the Israelites discover during their exile in Babylon?**

During their exile in Babylon the Israelites discovered that their God was the only God, the God of all peoples and all places.

**20. What does the story of Jonah teach us?**

The story of Jonah teaches us that God loves and cares for all the people in the world, even though many people do not realize that He loves them.

Grade 6 Text p255  
Review of the year.

Judaism of Jesus' time is portrayed as empty and unsatisfying, without comfort or warmth, unrelated to political and social issues. The following excerpts are additional examples from The Word is Life series.

God is our Father. This is the first thing Jesus taught the people. Jesus was speaking to people who knew about God. They even knew that God was their Father. But Jesus told the people how much God loved them. He told them that God is the Father of *all* the people in the world.

Grade 5 Text p162

The last chapter of this unit is a general chapter which tries to show what the political, social, and religious situation was like in Israel at the time Jesus appeared.

Again, we want to be realistic. Some of the people had learned from history a great deal about God and the way He showed His love for the people. Some of the people were good and devout. The New Testament, because it was written in times of rejection and persecution, naturally stresses the evils which existed among the people, but a generation that produced a just man like Joseph, generous men like the apostles, a prophet like John the Baptizer, and a virgin like Mary is a most impressive one. We want the children to have a balanced and realistic picture of the prophets and of the people.

Grade 6 Guide p 236

This chapter is more informative than didactic. It does little more than give the background against which we shall see Christ and the New Testament. It "wraps up" the history of the Israelites up to the time of the coming of Jesus.

The lesson mentions a few things which sixth graders should become acquainted with. The origin and meaning of the feast of Hanukkah is one of these. It is a feast day for Jews to this day, and we should be aware of its meaning. The role of the priests and the position of the Pharisees in the life of the people at the time of Christ are other things which the class should become aware of so that they will better understand the issues and events in the life of Jesus.

The chapter brings out another point which it is necessary to know in order to understand the life of our Lord—the fact that the people expected and longed for a military leader and were not prepared for the kind of Messiah Jesus would prove to be.

Grade 6 Guide p279

People—great numbers of them—came to see and hear Jesus for many different reasons. Some came out of curiosity. They wanted to see for themselves this Person everyone was talking about. Others came hoping for a cure. Still others came bringing sick relatives and friends. There were some who came hoping that this new preacher might be a real prophet, someone actually sent by God. Finally, there were those who came to see whether Jesus might prove to be a trouble-maker who should be silenced.

Each person in the crowd had his own reason for coming to see Jesus, but they all wanted to see and hear Jesus. They all had a common goal. They were interested in Jesus. But they were not very interested in one another. They were a crowd, not a community.

Grade 7 Text p 42

It is Sabbath Day. The Jewish people of Jerusalem gather in the Temple. The followers of Jesus are there, too, worshiping with them. But on Sunday, the first day of the week, the disciples of Jesus also come together in the home of one of their members. Now they are together to do as Jesus asked them to do when He said, "Do this in memory of me."

These followers are gathered to celebrate the Eucharist. It is a joyful occasion. Everyone has brought food which they all share with one another. The people sing. They listen as Peter, or James, or one of the other apostles speaks to the community. Perhaps they share some thoughts with one another.

Grade 7 Text p26



**N**icodemus, a Pharisee who became a loyal follower of Jesus, was a person searching for light in the darkness. He was "in the dark" about Jesus and His message. Nicodemus was seeking to understand. He was trying to love and serve God by living up to the law of Moses. But he felt uneasy when he heard what Jesus taught. All his life, Nicodemus had been taught one way to love God.

Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus was talking about. He was in the dark, and he wanted to find the light. However, he was afraid to come right out and talk to Jesus. The chief priests and many of the influential people claimed that Jesus was a troublemaker, a rabble-rouser. They were not interested in trying to understand His message.

Nicodemus was afraid of what these important people might say or do. Still, he wanted to know and understand. He took a chance. He arranged a meeting with Jesus. He came to Jesus by night, under cover of darkness. The midnight shadows in which Nicodemus waited were very appropriate. They gave an outward indication of the darkness that was in the mind of Nicodemus.

St. John is the one Gospel writer who tells us the story of Nicodemus. St. John is also the Gospel writer who speaks so often of Jesus as "the Light." And Jesus was, indeed, the Light that pierced the darkness of Nicodemus's mind. After this first midnight session with Jesus, Nicodemus began to see a little clearly and to understand better what Jesus was saying about Himself, about His Father, and about His work among people. And, as Nicodemus saw and heard more and more of Jesus, he became still more enlightened.

The story of Nicodemus tells us something important about the darkness of not knowing, not understanding. Nicodemus shows that this very darkness can be used in a useful and positive way. It was *because* Nicodemus was "in the dark" and knew that he was that he sought the light and found it. If it had not been for the darkness, and if he had not known the darkness, Nicodemus would not have taken the pain and trouble of seeking the light.

Grade 7 Text p109



Jesus came to offer the light of faith to all. Some, like the blind man, eagerly accepted the gift of faith. These were the "sightless" whom Jesus enabled to "see." Others, like some of the Pharisees, rejected the light of faith which Jesus offered. They were "the seeing" who were really "blind."

Grade 7 Text p126

Jesus had to make decisions involving the tried and true and the unpredictable.

The apostles, the people, the enemies of Jesus had to make the same kind of decisions.

Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God in a way which was a challenge to people.

Some people saw the challenge and accepted it wholeheartedly.

Some saw it, but did not want to be challenged.

Grade 8 Text p18

Jesus told a story about a man who was willing to take a risk. He told about a man who was robbed and beaten on the road to Jericho. The wounded man was a Jew. He was lying there in the ditch, bleeding to death.

A priest who passed by and saw him was a fellow Jew. He did not stop. He was afraid to take the risk. He thought that maybe the robbers who had left this man to die would come back.

A Levite who came along next was also a fellow Jew. But he, too, was not willing to take a risk and help the injured man.

Finally, a Samaritan came by. The Samaritans and the Jews detested each other. So the Samaritan had selfish reasons for refusing to help the gravely beaten man.

But he didn't refuse to help. He took a great risk.

He risked his safety. He stopped and went over to the man and bandaged his wounds.

Grade 8 Text p38

## APPENDIX D

The following excerpts from The Word is Life series illustrate the absence of Judaism in the lives of Jesus and the Apostles.

Throughout the year, the stress is on the human Christ, who helps people to live up to their potential as human beings because He was so human Himself. The Man, Jesus Christ, lived among people, worked with His hands, thought with a human mind, acted with a human will, loved with a human heart. He is truly the Son of Man as well as the Son of God.<sup>1</sup>

Catechesis must proclaim Jesus in His concrete existence and in His message; that is, catechesis must open the way for men to the wonderful perfection of His humanity in such a way that they will be able to acknowledge the mystery of His divinity.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 22

This chapter lays a foundation for the conviction that we need Jesus throughout our lives. The stories about Jesus and His activities with adults should also lay the remote foundation for a realization that religion is also for adults and is not something to be laid aside with childhood.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 43

### Aim

To show that Jesus validates our total social experience.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 51

### Aim

To help the children realize that the beauty of flowers is to be enjoyed as something good in itself and that we enjoy them just as Jesus did.

Again, it is Jesus who validates the child's happy experience with nature. Thus, the groundwork begins to be laid for a truly Christian attitude towards the world.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 67

### Aim

To help the children become aware of the joy and wonder of living in a town, city, or suburb, and to show them that Jesus validates this experience.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 110

Whatever local or civic identity is present can be encouraged and validated by showing that Jesus loved His community, Jerusalem and was very much a part of it. For children who live in the country or on a farm, this chapter will have to be revised somewhat by the teacher in order to help them understand and appreciate life in a city, town, or suburb.

Grade 1 Guide  
p 110-111

The care and the concern Jesus had for people is the focal point of this unit. The children will see Jesus helping others. We hope that we will strengthen their realization that Jesus is concerned about them and so build up their sense of belonging and being accepted.

In this unit, we will be working with Jesus's miracles. However, the teacher should not get involved at this time in the question of miracles, giving into the temptation to stress the miraculous nature of Christ's concern, or using the miracles as an indication of His divinity. The teacher should merely say that Jesus cured the sick and helped those who needed help. If the children ask how He did this, the teacher should be content to say only that He had great power. The children will accept this type of explanation.

Grade 1 Guide  
p. 147

What we further want to do here is to help the child realize that Jesus knew how people feel when they are sick and in pain, and that He was always anxious to help and did help people in such cases. The idea, then, is to show that this concern for others, this mercy and sensitivity to the needs of others in sickness and pain is human and a good trait in human nature. As usual, we only lay a foundation, plant a seed, encourage a trait that is in the children in a primitive form now, but which will grow and blossom as they grow up.

Grade I Guide  
p149

#### Aim

To help the children see that Jesus was interested in and available to those who work for a living.

Grade I Guide  
p158

#### Aim

To help the children realize that Jesus was interested in and available to people who were in trouble and who were afraid.

Grade I Guide  
p170

The experience of the child that we build on here is the familiar one of feeling hunger and the need for food. The child knows how it feels to be hungry and realizes in his own way that everyone has this experience. Here we show him that Jesus realized this fact, too, empathized with people, and actually provided food for them.

Grade I Guide  
p180

This chapter sums up and applies to the children this whole unit on service of others. Here we bring home the idea that just as it is right and human that we have needs, so it is right, human and necessary for us to help others. It is Jesus, the fully human Man—the Man for Others—who shows us this fact. Jesus tells us that we should love others and He shows us how love is demonstrated by helping others. The child cannot really realize what loving others means, but he can appreciate to some extent that helping others, sharing with others, being kind and considerate to others, is part of what we mean by loving others.

Grade I Guide  
p188

We have introduced him to the fact that he belongs to the Family of God. The Father of this Family is a loving Father who never fails his children. Jesus and all Christians are brothers in the family and they should help one another.

Grade I Guide  
p245

Jesus wants all children  
to be happy.  
He wants children to laugh,  
and to play,  
and to talk to each other.

Grade I Text  
p6

Once, after Jesus fed many people,  
He said to His friends,  
"Pick up the bread  
that is left over.

Do not let it go to waste."

Why do you think Jesus said that?

Grade I Text  
p22



Do you live in a city or town?  
Jesus did sometimes.  
He loved His own city, Jerusalem.  
He loved to walk in its streets  
and talk to people.  
Jesus loved all the people  
in His city.

Grade 1 Text  
p24

Jesus also loved the country.  
He liked to walk in the fields,  
talking to people.  
He helped them with their troubles.

Grade 1 Text  
p27

Jesus also enjoyed the sun,  
and the rain,  
and the wind.  
Jesus told us that they are gifts  
from God.

Grade 1 p28

Jesus tells us that God  
is His Father.  
He tells us that God is  
our Father, too.

Jesus loves His Father.  
He shows us how to pray to Him.

Grade 1 Text  
p49

Jesus cares for working people.  
Many of His friends were farmers  
and fishermen.

Once, some friends of Jesus  
were fishing.  
But, they could not catch any fish.

Jesus knew how worried  
His friends were.  
He knew that they needed the fish  
to sell for money.  
So, Jesus showed His friends  
where to catch the fish.

Grade 1 Text  
p36

The word "validates" will appear again and again in this Manual. It is used to bring out the fact that the human traits and tendencies, appetites and desires we feel within ourselves, are part of our humanity, to be recognized, developed, and used positively and constructively. Jesus, the fully human Man as well as God, had these same things within His person.

Grade 2 Guide  
p29

This chapter uses the only account we have in the Gospels of one whole day in the life of Jesus (*Mark 1:23-35*). It was a full day. As we look at it, we see a graphic demonstration of the fact that Jesus, the God-Man, was indeed a Man for Others. After His long, hard day, when He was faced with a large crowd of sick people gathered outside Peter's house, Jesus, although tired, took the time and trouble to deal with each one separately. He knew that each would value this moment and would remember and cherish it. Therefore, Jesus did not effect a mass cure but spoke to each, laid His hands on each, dealt personally with each. Mark mentions the expulsion of demons in this section. Do not bring this part of the narrative into the story.

Grade 2 Guide  
p33

What the children learn in this chapter is that the friends of Jesus were terrified when Jesus left them. They became brave, sure of themselves, and full of zeal to tell others about Jesus once the Holy Spirit had come to them, and they realized that Jesus was the Son of God. This change came about as a result of the apostles' thinking over and discussing the meaning of Jesus and how the Spirit helped them realize and comprehend what they were thinking and saying.

Grade 2 Guide  
p. 38

This chapter recapitulates what has been said in the chapters that comprise this unit. It recalls the joy and enthusiasm of the apostles, as seen in Peter, who wanted everyone to know and love Jesus as he knew and loved Him. Using the words of Peter, this chapter reminds the children of what Jesus did during His life and of His death and resurrection.

The chapter also begins to prepare the children for the next unit, in which we shall talk about Baptism. Here we show the reaction of the crowd, reflecting the joy and enthusiasm of the apostles. But the important part of the people's reaction is that they were *converted*, that is, they had a change of heart. They wished to and resolved to change their lives and become followers of Jesus. They asked, "What shall we do?" Peter told them, "Believe in Jesus and be baptized."

Grade 2 Guide  
p55

In the Christmas story, we see Mary as the early Christians saw her—the very human mother of a very human man who at the same time is God. Her loving concern for her baby, her trials in finding a place in which to give birth to Him, etc., are all things which bring out her motherhood in a way the children can appreciate. This year we speak of the Church as a family, and, with Vatican II, we can speak of Mary as the Mother of the Church. However, the teacher should be very careful when talking about Mary not to speak in such a way that children get the idea that somehow or other she is more kind or loving than Christ, or that we must go to Mary before we can find Christ. Christ is the center of our lives, and Mary is His mother—a great honor to be sure—but still she is subordinate to Him.

Whenever we talk about the life of Christ we want to stress the humanity of Christ, within the context of His divinity. The children have heard at home and in Church that Christ is God and that He is different. All too often, the notion that Christ is a "superman," a miracle worker, a god hiding under the cloak of flesh distorts the real picture of Christ. People look upon Him as being so different that He cannot really serve as a model for men.

Grade 2 Guide  
p161

Just as we are happy to be  
with our friends and teacher,  
Jesus liked to be with people.

Grade 2 Text  
p 10

One day, Jesus was busy all day.  
He taught people in the morning.  
He talked to them in the streets  
in the afternoon.  
He made a sick man and woman  
well.  
Jesus was tired.

Grade 2 Text  
p 12

That night, Jesus ate at the house  
of His friend, Peter.  
When they finished supper, Jesus  
was glad to rest.  
But, He heard people outside.  
Many sick people were there,  
waiting for Jesus to help them.  
Though He was tired, Jesus went  
to help the people.  
He spoke to each one of them.  
Then, He cured them.

It took a long time, but the  
people waited.  
They knew that Jesus was a man  
who could teach and help them.  
The people loved Jesus.  
They knew that Jesus  
loved them, too.

Grade 2 Text  
p 13

Paul was a friend of Jesus.  
Paul was happy when he learned  
that Jesus is the Son of God.  
Paul was not afraid to tell  
the people about Jesus  
and His Father.

Grade 2 Text  
p 19



Each year, we love to hear  
about the story of Christmas.  
We love to think of Jesus  
as a baby in His Mother's arms.  
We think of Joseph watching over  
Jesus and Mary.

We are happy that Jesus had  
a family, just as we have.  
At Christmas, we are happy that  
God our Father gave us His Son.  
We love Mary because she is the  
Mother of Jesus.  
We love Mary because she is our  
Mother, too.

Grade 2 Text  
p73

On every Christmas, we recall  
that Jesus came to us.  
Jesus lived among us to show us  
how to be children of our Father.  
At Christmas Mass, we recall  
these things.  
We thank Jesus for coming to us.  
We thank Mary for being the  
Mother of Jesus.  
We thank Joseph for watching over  
Jesus and Mary.

Grade 2 Text  
p74

Jesus said that when we give food,  
drink, or clothes to someone, we give them  
to Him:

For I was hungry and you gave me food.  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,  
naked and you clothed me.

Grade 3 Text  
p174

The second part of the Creed deals with Jesus Christ, and in this unit we look at Christ to see who He is and what sort of a Person He is. In the past four years, the children have gradually picked up a great many facts about what Jesus said and did. We now use this basic information to study what kind of a Person Jesus was because He is the model for Christians. As the children struggle toward maturity, they have to deal with the proper use of freedom, with the will of the Father, with being helpful and available to others, etc. In this unit, we help them see how Jesus worked with the same questions and problems they have and became His own Man, a unique Person. We assent that Jesus is the Son of God, hence true God and true Man, but we do not try to explain *person* and *nature* because these words, as they are used today, have connotations which militate against the understanding of the mystery. Later, when the students are more mature and can understand the precise meaning of *person* and *nature*, there will be time enough to explain that Jesus is two natures in one Person. The apostles understood and loved Jesus without such an explanation. We hope that the children will grasp the basic reality that Jesus Christ is the Lord and that this fact will help them in their efforts at becoming unique and strong Christians.

Grade 5 Guide  
p90

This chapter treats of real freedom, freedom of spirit. This is a freedom to be oneself, to do what one knows is right and noble. This is freedom from the cowardice and selfishness that is in us all and that we all deplore, even though we may not be strong enough to rise above it. This kind of freedom can and often does exist even in those who are in chains. St. Paul knew this real freedom all during the years of his imprisonment. Gandhi knew it during the time he was externally fettered. Thomas More knew it as he went cheerfully to the executioner's block. And, above all, Jesus knew it throughout His life. His imprisonment and His death did not deprive Him of His freedom. He laid down His life, as He said He would; it was not taken from Him by force, really. He could have avoided suffering and violent death, but He would never do so at the cost of losing His inner freedom.

Grade 5 Guide p 92

Sin does not merely stem from human weakness. It reaches deeply into our hearts. We are sometimes selfish, mean, and ungrateful because we want to be. Jesus understood the struggle between good and evil that goes on inside human beings. The Bible says, "He was well aware of what was in man's heart" (John 2:25). So when the people lined the streets and cheered as He came into the city, Jesus did not put too much trust in them. And He was right. A few days later, the same people who had cheered Him were shouting, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!"

Jesus saw this same struggle in His own apostles. Once James and John asked Jesus to destroy a town with fire because the people there would not listen to him. Jesus told them that it was wrong to seek revenge.

Jesus knew that His apostles loved Him. But He also knew that they were weak, like all human beings. He knew that they would run away when He was arrested.

Jesus understood how weak all human beings are. He understood that people cannot always carry out their good intentions. They mean well, but they sometimes forget or give up. Jesus summed it up very well for all of us. He said, "The spirit is willing, but nature is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

Grade 5 Text p106

There is one man who stands out among all the great leaders who have ever lived. That man is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus helped people to become the kind of people they really wanted to be. And Jesus still helps people.

Grade 5 Text p106

Jesus did not like the idea of being unpopular. He would have enjoyed being cheered by great crowds. He would have liked to please all the people. For Jesus loved all the people. He wanted everybody to be happy.

Grade 5 Text p114

But, more than anything else, Jesus loved God His Father. And Jesus knew, too, that riches and power cannot make people truly happy. He knew that all people are the children of God. He knew that they can be truly happy only when they understand the great love that God has for them. So Jesus decided that He would not become a king, or a general with an army of soldiers. He decided that He would be a real leader—a man of God.

Grade 5 Text p115

It was late afternoon. The long day of fishing was over. Two young men named James and John were sitting in their father's boat. They were the sons of Zebedee, the fisherman. They were hard at work. Their hands were busy. Their heads were bent over their work. The men were mending their nets, getting ready for the next day. They would push off from the shore before dawn as they did every day.

John paused in his work. He sensed that someone was looking at him. He turned his head. It was Jesus. John called out to his brother. James looked up. Then Jesus spoke. He raised his hand in invitation and said two words: "Follow me."

Grade 6 Text p186

Many of Jesus's sayings about reform are found in the Sermon on the Mount. He told the people to act in such a way that others could see goodness in what they did, and give praise to their heavenly Father. He told them not to become angry with others, and to love those who hate or hurt them. He said that they were not to store up wealth on earth. They were to be poor and merciful and trusting. He told them to pray, trusting that God would hear them. Finally, Jesus summed up everything in these words, "Treat others the way you would have them treat you: this sums up the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12). Jesus told the people that a man who only heard His words was not wise. The wise man was the man who heard His words and put them into practice.

Grade 6 Text p192

Even the apostles and the first followers of Jesus learned the real meaning of the Kingdom slowly and gradually. It took a vision to show Peter that it was now time to baptize Cornelius. Cornelius was not a Jew or even a Samaritan. He was a Gentile. The apostle Paul always preached first to the Jews wherever he went. Only after he thought that he had done all he could with his own people did he turn to the Gentiles and preach to them.

Grade 6 Text p199



And Jesus did speak of His Kingdom, over and over again, day by day. He used parables to describe His Kingdom. These were stories and comparisons which Jesus used to try to help the people to understand.

Jesus said that the Kingdom is like a mustard seed. A mustard seed is a tiny seed. But this seed grows and grows until it becomes a great shrub. All the birds of the sky come and build their nests in its branches (Matthew 13:31-32).

This meant that the Kingdom would begin as something very small. It would grow slowly. Then, when it had spread far and wide, all sorts of people, not only the Jews, would be in it.

This idea did not fit the picture the people had. Their picture was one of a Kingdom which would come in a flash and which would be for them, not for the whole world.

In another parable, Jesus said that His Kingdom would be like a net that picks up both fish and worthless things in it. In still another parable, Jesus compared the Kingdom to a field. The field had both good grain and weeds growing side by side. Jesus was saying that His Kingdom would have both good and bad in it. Only at the end of the world would the good and the bad be sorted out. The Kingdom would not be perfect until the Last Day, when Jesus would come again to make His Kingdom perfect.

This idea did not fit the people's picture either. They expected that the Kingdom would be perfect right from the beginning.

Grade 6 Text p 197

At Christmastime, we see Jesus as a baby, lying in a manger. He comes not as a King seated on a throne in a great palace. He comes as a baby, born of a young girl, Mary, His Mother—the first member of His Kingdom. He lies on a heap of straw in a cave that is open to the world outside; it has no door.

Jesus does not come to us as a great man who cannot be seen except by important people. His first visitors were the humble shepherds who lived out in the fields. He was there for everyone. The townspeople of Bethlehem could have come to Him if they had wanted to. The Wise Men came from far away. Everybody was welcome.

Grade 6 Text p 236

The scene is an upstairs room of a house in Jerusalem. The men and women gathered there have come together to pray, to encourage and give support to one another, and to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is there, as well as the apostles and other followers of Jesus.

They are still not a very large group—this first Christian community. But they are full of hope.

Jesus has gone to His Father but, still, He has promised to be with them. The apostles, particularly, remember His words:

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down on you; then you are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, yes, even to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

Grade 7 Text p 24

Each person in the crowd had his own reason for coming to see Jesus, but they all wanted to see and hear Jesus. They all had a common goal. They were interested in Jesus. But they were not very interested in one another. They were a crowd, not a community.

Jesus announced to the people that the Kingdom of God was at hand. This Kingdom is a community of people who love God and one another. Jesus tried to convince people that they should be concerned about one another. He once pictured a great king sitting on a throne separating those who belonged to the community from those who really did not. The king calls to himself those who were concerned about others, those who were part of the community:

"Come. You have my Father's blessing! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me." Then the just will ask him: "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or see you thirsty and give you drink? When did we welcome you away from home or clothe you in your nakedness? When did we visit you when you were ill or in prison?" The king will answer them: "I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me."

(Matthew 25:34-40)

Those who were not concerned about others could not belong to the kingdom because they did not feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty.

Wherever Jesus went, He attracted a crowd. There was often noise and confusion when Jesus walked among the people, preaching, teaching, and healing the sick. Yet, even in the midst of such a crowd, Jesus was always aware of the individual people who were part of the crowd.

Once, there was a woman who had been sick for many years. She had gone from doctor to doctor, and spent most of her money seeking a cure. Now, years later, she was still suffering. This woman heard about Jesus. She saw the crowd that gathered about Him. One day, she joined it. Not daring to try to speak to Jesus, she was content only to touch the cloak He was wearing.

Even in the midst of the noise and confusion, Jesus was aware of this poor woman. As she touched His cloak, He turned and asked, "Who touched my clothing?"

His disciples were surprised at the question. They said, "You can see how this crowd hems you in, yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

(Mark 5:25-34)

People—great numbers of them—came to see and hear Jesus for many different reasons. Some came out of curiosity. They wanted to see for themselves this Person everyone was talking about. Others came hoping for a cure. Still others came bringing sick relatives and friends. There were some who came hoping that this new preacher might be a real prophet, someone actually sent by God. Finally, there were those who came to see whether Jesus might prove to be a troublemaker who should be silenced.

Grade 7 Text pp 21-22



It is Sabbath Day. The Jewish people of Jerusalem gather in the Temple. The followers of Jesus are there, too, worshipping with them. But on Sunday, the first day of the week, the disciples of Jesus also come together in the home of one of their members. Now they are together to do as Jesus asked them to do when He said, "Do this in memory of me."

These followers are gathered to celebrate the Eucharist. It is a joyful occasion. Everyone has brought food which they all share with one another. The people sing. They listen as Peter, or James, or one of the other apostles speaks to the community. Perhaps they share some thoughts with one another.

Many of these deacons preached to the people outside of Jerusalem. Philip the deacon went to the town of Samaria and told the Jewish people there about Jesus. Many were converted and they formed yet another Christian community. But even in communities such as these, things were not perfect.

In the town of Samaria, there lived a magician named Simon. He heard Philip preaching and saw him healing the people. St. Luke says of Simon's reaction:

Even Simon believed. He was baptized like the rest and became a devoted follower of Philip. He watched the signs and great miracles as they occurred, and was quite carried away. (Acts 8:13)

### *Christian Communities Among the Gentiles*

The apostles were leaders of the Church in Jerusalem, the first Christian community. Peter was the head of the apostles. Jesus Himself had chosen Peter to be the first head of His Church. But Jesus also told Peter and the other apostles that they were to be witnesses to Him not only in Jerusalem and nearby places, but throughout the world.

Therefore, the apostles separated and went to other cities and countries. Everywhere they went, the apostles would try to help people follow Christ and gather them together to form new communities within the Church. Peter would first go to Antioch, then to Rome. James would stay

to lead the Church in Jerusalem. The other apostles would go other places.

One of the apostles, whose missionary journeys we know a good deal about, is Paul. St. Luke says that Paul was a man who had first wanted to destroy the Christians, but that he was converted to Jesus.

After his conversion, he changed completely, and was now welcomed into the Christian community as an apostle of the Lord Himself.

Paul was the first of the apostles to go beyond Palestine and to preach in far-off lands. He became the great apostle to the Gentiles. He preached, baptized, and founded Christian communities throughout Greece, Asia Minor, and the Mediterranean region in general.

Soon, there were not only Christian communities among Jewish people; there were also Christian communities among the Gentiles. This situation gave rise to a serious problem in the early Church.

The Christians who had been raised in the Jewish faith thought that the new converts, who had never been Jews, should keep the Jewish religious laws. These new converts, on the other hand, could not see why they had to adopt Jewish practices and observances.

The apostles and all the Christian communities had to struggle with this problem. Finally, the apostles met in Jerusalem and decided that non-Jewish Christians did not have to follow Jewish customs if there were no Christians of Jewish background in their community. If there were, they were requested to abstain from certain actions which would cause the Jewish Christians among them to be troubled (e.g., eating the meat of strangled animals). Even abstinence from these actions was later eased.

Such a problem might seem odd to us today. But the early Christians had to work very hard to have really Christian communities. They had to love and serve one another. As they grew, they had to accept differences and varying customs in people. They had to respect one another's opinions and habits. We have to do the same, too.

Grade 7 Text pp 26-30



## Nicodemus Sees the Light



Nicodemus, a Pharisee who became a loyal follower of Jesus, was a person searching for light in the darkness. He was "in the dark" about Jesus and His message. Nicodemus was seeking to understand. He was trying to love and serve God by living up to the law of Moses. But he felt uneasy when he heard what Jesus taught. All his life, Nicodemus had been taught one way to love God.

Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus was talking about. He was in the dark, and he wanted to find the light. However, he was afraid to come right out and talk to Jesus. The chief priests and many of the influential people claimed that Jesus was a troublemaker, a rabble-rouser. They were not interested in trying to understand His message.

Nicodemus was afraid of what these important people might say or do. Still, he wanted to know and understand. He took a chance. He arranged a meeting with Jesus. He came to Jesus by night, under cover of darkness. The midnight shadows in which Nicodemus waited were very appropriate. They gave an outward indication of the darkness that was in the mind of Nicodemus.

St. John is the one Gospel writer who tells us the story of Nicodemus.

St. John is also the Gospel writer who speaks so often of Jesus as "the Light." And Jesus was, indeed, the Light that pierced the darkness of Nicodemus's mind. After this first midnight session with Jesus, Nicodemus began to see a little clearly and to understand better what Jesus was saying about Himself, about His Father, and about His work among people. And, as Nicodemus saw and heard more and more of Jesus, he became still more enlightened.

The story of Nicodemus tells us something important about the darkness of not knowing, not understanding. Nicodemus shows that this very darkness can be used in a useful and positive way. It was *because* Nicodemus was "in the dark" and knew that he was that he sought the light and found it. If it had not been for the darkness, and if he had not known the darkness, Nicodemus would not have taken the pain and trouble of seeking the light.

Grade 8 Text P109

### Decisions! Decisions!

The Gospels show us people making decisions. Jesus had to make decisions involving the tried and true and the unpredictable.

The apostles, the people, the enemies of Jesus had to make the same kind of decisions.

Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God in a way which was a challenge to people.

Some people saw the challenge and accepted it wholeheartedly.

Some saw it, but did not want to be challenged.

Others were not sure how they felt about the challenge.

Read the Gospel of St. Mark from Chapter 1 through Chapter 6, verse 29. In this section, St. Mark tells us about the ministry of Jesus to the people of Galilee, His own people. Not everyone was a friend of Jesus. People had to make decisions about Him.

Grade 8 Text P18

Come, follow Me."

These are the words Jesus spoke to each of His apostles. He speaks these words to every Christian. What does it mean to follow Jesus? It means to try to be a "person for others," as Jesus was. It means to be available to others. It means to be approachable to others, to be aware of what others need, and how others feel. It means to be ready to help others.

Grade 8 Text p 34

Therefore, hard-and-fast rules that apply to each Christian in all circumstances cannot be laid down. St. Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome, telling them that they were to serve one another. But Paul recognized that they could do it in different ways:

We have gifts that differ according to the favor bestowed on each of us. One's gift may be prophecy; its use should be in proportion to his faith. It may be the gift of ministry; it should be for service. One who is a teacher should use his gift for teaching; one with the power of exhortation should exhort. He who gives alms should do so generously; he who rules should exercise his authority with care; he who performs works of mercy should do so cheerfully. (Romans 12:6-8)

Grade 8 Text p 35

The apostles faced many dangers and threats. Sometimes they decided to flee; sometimes they solved their problems in a different way. Look through the first eleven chapters of the Acts of the Apostles and list four incidents which show how the apostles met the dangers, the threats, and the problems they had while they were trying to tell the world about Jesus:

Grade 8 Text p 68

The law of Moses put some proportion between the crime and the punishment. This law seems harsh by our standards, but it was a great step forward:

Whoever takes the life of any human being shall be put to death. Anyone who inflicts injury on his neighbor shall receive the same in return. Limb for limb, eye for eye, tooth for tooth! (Leviticus 24:17, 19-20)

Jesus went much further. He laid down the qualities of the "peaceful man" of God in the Beatitudes, and on crime and retaliation. He said:

You have heard the commandment: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." But what I say to you is: Offer no resistance to injury. When a person strikes you on the right cheek, turn and offer him the other. If anyone wants to go to law over your shirt, hand him your coat as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles. (Matthew 5:38-41)

But Jesus did more than lay down a law. He lived as a man of peace. To see how He reacted to violence, read the four accounts of the passion of Jesus.

Grade 8 Text pp 74-75

There is perhaps nothing in human history as violent as war. Jesus was a man of peace. Scripture underlines His attitude toward violence by saying that even though He could have called twelve legions of angels to defend Himself when His enemies came to seize Him, He did not. Yet, very saintly and good Christians have not only fought in wars; they have led armies of Christians against other Christians.

Grade 8 Text p70

The Bible also has some strong words for those who would take what belongs to another. God, through Moses, said it very simply, "You shall not steal." (*Exodus 20:15*)

Jesus was simple and direct:

If you can trust a man in little things, you can also trust him in greater; while anyone unjust in a slight matter is also unjust in greater. If you cannot be trusted with elusive wealth, who will trust you with lasting? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's money, who will give you what is your own? (*Luke 16:10-12*)

St. Paul was also simple and direct:

You must put on that new man created in God's image, whose justice and holiness are born of truth. . . . The man who has been stealing must steal no longer: rather, let him work with his hands at honest labor so that he will have something to share with those in need. (*Ephesians 4:24-28*) Can you not realize that the unholy will not fall heir to the kingdom of God? Do not deceive yourselves: . . . thieves, misers, or drunkards, no slanderers or robbers will inherit God's kingdom. (*1 Corinthians 6:9-10*)

Grade 8 Text p83

Jesus said it all:

"Love your neighbor as yourself." (*Matthew 19:19*)

What did Jesus mean by this kind of love?

Did He mean what the songwriters mean:

"Falling in love . . .",

"Longing to be with you"?

Did He mean that we ought to feel affection for everyone?

No—

Jesus was not speaking about romantic love.

He was speaking about a true, deep, realistic love—one that shows itself in deeds.

Grade 8 Text p97



The whole life of St. Paul is not written down in the Acts of the Apostles. We read many incidents in the Epistles which are not in the Acts. Examine the life story of St. Paul as we have it in Scripture, and pick out four episodes that really impress you. In a few words, answer the following questions about these four episodes:

1. What problem(s) did Paul face?
2. How would you have felt in these circumstances?
3. How do you think Paul felt?
4. What did Paul do?

Here is an example. In Acts 9:19-22, Paul preaches in Damascus:

1. The people were skeptical.
2. I would become discouraged.
3. He showed great enthusiasm.
4. He was able to silence his enemies.

Grade 8 Text p104

The early Roman converts to Christianity asked many of the same questions that we ask. For example, "Should we obey Caesar? He is against our religion. Do we obey people who are against us, who don't see things the way we do?" St. Paul answered their questions:

Let everyone obey the authorities that are over him, for there is no authority except from God, and all authority that exists is established by God.

In saying this, Paul was echoing the teaching of Jesus. Jesus reaffirmed the commandment, "Honor your father and mother." He also said "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's."

The apostles understood and followed the teachings and example of Jesus. They "gave to Caesar what is Caesar's." They respected and obeyed lawful authority. But when the apostles were ordered not to preach about Jesus, they obeyed a higher Law and went on preaching even though they knew they would be arrested. They remembered the other part of what Jesus said, "Give to God what is God's."

Grade 8 Text p135

## APPENDIX E

The Word is Life series implies that the hopes of Israel have been fulfilled, as the following examples demonstrate.

All through the Old Testament, various ideas of God ebb and surge, often in a seemingly contradictory fashion. God is the Father of all people, who loves even the enemies of Israel and sends a prophet, Jonah, to call them to conversion. God is the mighty Lord of hosts, who marches with His People into battle and slaughters their enemies by the thousands. We hear the prophets picture God as a stern judge, punishing those who deviate from the Law, and we hear the same prophets picture Him as a loving mother or spouse who can never turn His back on His children or His spouse.

The New Testament holds the key for our understanding of God. When we say that Jesus is the Son of God, we are saying that He is the One who embodies God: like Father like Son. When we see Jesus, we see the Father. His life, His preaching, His death, His glory after death are but the merest hint of what God is all about, but these are the surest signs we have.

Grade 5 Guide p53

But there are some who close their eyes to Jesus. They refuse to accept the message that He brings them from God. Some of the people who lived at the time of Jesus made themselves blind in this way. These people made themselves enemies of Jesus. They were angry with Jesus because He loved the poor. They hated Jesus because He showed them up. They were hypocrites. These people pretended to be good, but they were selfish and sinful at heart. They pretended to love, but they really did not love.

Jesus told these people that they were sinners. "If you were blind," Jesus said to them, "there would be no sin in that. 'But we see,' you say, and your sin remains" (John 9:40).

Grade 5 Text pp 175-176

Jesus came to save us from sin. Sin is the opposite of love. Sin closes us up. Sin closes us to other people. It turns us back on ourselves. Love makes us grow. Sin keeps us from growing. Sin is deliberate blindness.

A person who gives himself to sin shuts out Jesus and shuts out others. A person who gives himself to sin seizes what he wants for himself and hurts others to get what he wants. Some people hurt others because they want money for themselves. Some hurt others because they want power. Some hurt other people because they are jealous or want revenge. Still others hurt their neighbors because they hate or fear them. They do not want their neighbors to have as good a life as they have.

The message of Jesus is a message of love. A person who refuses to love turns his back on the message of Jesus. Refusing to love is a great and serious sin.

Grade 5 Text pp. 177-178

Learning to apply these teachings comes gradually, too. Times change. Situations change. It takes wisdom to be able to see how basic ideas, such as "You shall not kill" and "Love your enemies," apply in different ways and circumstances.

The Bible shows us the process of learning, applying, and adapting which went on in *King David's* life, for example. As a young man, David was quick to punish and to seek vengeance. As an older, wiser man, who had lived and suffered, he became more prone to be merciful and forgiving.

The first chapters of the Book of Genesis show how violence grew in the world. *Cain killed Abel* and people grew more violent until they would kill someone just for an insult. In the Book of Genesis, we read, "I have killed a man for wounding me, a boy, for bruising me." (*Genesis 4:23*)


The law of Moses put some proportion between the crime and the punishment. This law seems harsh by our standards, but it was a great step forward:

Whoever takes the life of any human being shall be put to death. Anyone who inflicts injury on his neighbor shall receive the same in return. Limb for limb, eye for eye, tooth for tooth! (*Leviticus 24:17, 19-20*)

Jesus went much further. He laid down the qualities of the "peaceful man" of God in the Beatitudes, and on crime and retaliation. He said:

You have heard the commandment: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." But what I say to you is: Offer no resistance to injury. When a person strikes you on the right cheek, turn and offer him the other. If anyone wants to go to law over your shirt, hand him your coat as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles. (*Matthew 5:38-41*)

Grade 8 Text p75

 We can look at Scripture as a book

which tells us what happened centuries ago.

Then it is merely another great book.

We can look at Scripture as the written record of how the word of God is alive and touches the lives of people.

Then Scripture becomes a means by which the living word of God calls us today to come to God.

In Scripture, we see that the word of God called many people to search.

The Lord called Abraham to a great call and search.

He called Moses to lead his People in a great search.

He called the Prophets to remind the people that life is a search for God, not for wealth or power.

Most of all, we see in the New Testament that Jesus called people to search.

Grade 8 Text p193



APPENDIX F

The following excerpts illustrate that Christians alone are seen as the Family of God in The Word is Life series.

We are members of God's Family.  
Jesus says that all people who  
love His Father are His  
brothers and sisters.

We become a special part  
of God's Family at Baptism.  
At Baptism, we become children  
of God our Father.  
We also become brothers  
and sisters of Jesus.

Grade 1 Text  
p. 52

The family's new baby is one  
of the friends of Jesus.  
The friends of Jesus are a family.  
It is called the Family of God.  
The baby, too, now belongs  
to the Family of God.

Grade 2 Text  
p. 29

We sing songs and say these  
prayers together at Mass.  
We sing and pray as part  
of God's Family at Mass.

Grade 2 Text  
p. 62

This chapter seeks to tie in the whole year's study of the People of God in the Old Testament with the life of the children. It points out the fact that the People of God today, as spiritual descendants of the Israelites of the Old Testament, have some of the same problems and temptations. There is now, as then, the human tendency to seek wealth and power, to be taken up with material considerations. There is the ever-present danger of separatism and exclusiveness. There is the danger of rigidity. To make these things concrete, the chapter speaks explicitly of the problems caused by racial attitudes, the feeling of separateness sometimes expressed by both young people and old people. The reason for speaking of these things is that we want to be realistic. There are very real problems which the Church faces today.

Grade 6 Guide p. 324

## APPENDIX G

Positive aspects of the relationship between God and the Jews (Israelites) are sometimes shown in The Word is Life series. The following excerpts are additional examples.

The Israelites were helped by their failures and their mistakes. They learned from them. They learned that nothing could take the place of their trust in God and their love for each other. Power, riches, and position did not give them real happiness. They did want to be faithful to God and to each other.

*Grade 6 Text p130*

They grew in spite of failure. The Israelites had to constantly reflect on and recall their past history in order to know the present and the future.

*Grade 6 Text p134*

During these hard years, the Israelites came to realize something about God that was very important. When they lived in their own land, they knew that God did not live in one place on earth. But they thought of the Temple as a very special sign that God was among them. They offered sacrifices in the Temple and prayed there. Now they knew that God was everywhere. He did not need a Temple. They could pray to Him even here in a strange land. When they were in Israel, He was there. When they were in Babylon, He was there. They said, "Our God is everywhere. He is here with us. He can see us and hear us and help us."

They also came to understand clearly that there is only one God. Before this, the people knew that The Lord was the only God for them. But some of them thought that there were other gods.

*Grade 6 Text p164*

The Israelites had to face the problems of money, of welcoming people, of sharing their knowledge of God with others. Sometimes, the whole people met these problems in a way that was pleasing to God. At other times, they did not do so well. But we must always remember an important fact. There were always some people among the Israelites who did not put their trust in power and money. There were always some people who trusted in God. And there were always some of the Israelites who welcomed strangers and shared what they knew about God with others.

*Grade 6 Text p216*

## APPENDIX H

The following excerpts illustrate the way in which The Word is Life series portrays the Hebrew Scriptures as a series of failures by a weak and faithless people to uphold a covenant with an incredibly patient, merciful and loving God.

### Aim

To explain to the students the difficulties the Israelites had in keeping their promises to God and in living up to their part of the Covenant during the years in the desert wilderness.

Grade 6 Guide p139

### Aim

To show the students that in consequence of their lack of fidelity to God the Israelites became a divided people and finally lost their identity as the united People of God.

Grade 6 Guide p198

Here we see the consequence of the stubbornness and willfulness of the people, who ignored the warnings of the prophets and continued to live selfishly and in violation of the Covenant. Adults, with years of experience behind them, can see in the fate of the Israelites a verification of the idea that selfishness and smugness and a refusal to live up to what should be one's principles and beliefs leads to unpleasant consequences in the long run.

Grade 6 Guide p 198

This chapter develops the theme of the prophets of Israel further and brings out the salient point that the prophets were the conscience to Israel. They gave the people no rest when they were smug and complacent and unfaithful to God. They continued to prod and to upbraid as a conscience should, even when the people tried to ignore them. And even though the majority of the people tried to ignore them at times, the prophets continued to preach and upbraid, a fact which shows that, no matter what the Israelites as a people did, their conscience never died.

Grade 6 Guide p248

These troubles caused great pain and suffering to the Israelites. But, at the same time, these very troubles caused them to stop and think. When their crops failed or when their enemies conquered them, they would ask themselves, "Why?" Finally, they would think, "Our God promised to take care of us. But there was another part to the Covenant. We were supposed to be faithful to The Lord. We were supposed to keep His Law. We were supposed to stay together and help each other. We were supposed to be Israelites and to live like Israelites."

Thus, these very troubles caused the Israelites to think, "Maybe this is all our fault. We have trusted in the wrong things. We have set our hearts on pleasure and goods. We have worshiped these things. We have worshiped false gods."

Then, finally, the Israelites turned back to The Lord. They cried out to God for help.

Grade 6 Text p98

They looked to the priests to show them how they should live. But many fell back into their old bad ways.

Grade 6 Text p176

### 16. What do the failures of the Israelites teach us today?

The failures of the Israelites teach us that we can learn from our mistakes, that we can overcome our faults with God's help and in this way continue to grow.

Grade 6 Text p 255