

FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

**TOPIC: GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM AND HIS DESCENDANTS.
JESUS' FAMILY FAITH TREE!**

GOAL(S):

- Families will share about experiences of the Family Epiphany Blessing.
- Families will share about how they see the light of Christ living in one another.
- Families will reflect on how they are blessed through Jesus and will reflect on their mission in the world.

MATERIALS

- Crayons, markers or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Choose a pattern from links: [8 inch Star](#) or [Bethlehem star](#)

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,

We entrust our family to You and ask for Your blessing and protection. We love You Lord Jesus with all our hearts and we ask that You help our family become more like the Holy Family. Help us to be kind, loving, and patient with one another. Give us all the grace we need to become saints and Your faithful disciples. Amen.

ICE BREAKER

Crocodile Race

What You Will Need: A beginning line and a finish line.

Set Up: Choose teams of 4 to 10 players (which may require grouping families together) and form the teams in straight lines.

How to Play: When the teams and lines are formed, the first person on each team will be the leader. Everyone behind the leader will place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. Each team should crouch down to look like a crocodile. All the crocodiles will race to the finish line, or from the start to the finish and back to start again. The first team to finish wins.

Or Option 2: Name a favorite food that you would eat everyday if you could.

FAMILY SHARING

Ask each family to share about their Family Epiphany Blessing experience and show the pictures of their front doors. How would they describe their experience? How did it make them feel, about their family, their home, themselves? (Tip: To help make the participants feel more comfortable about sharing, you may consider telling about your experience and explaining your answers to those questions first, before asking everyone to share.)

REVIEW MAIN CONCEPT

Let's Review!

Watch: God's Story: Abraham and Sarah
"God Keeps His Promises" (3:46 min)



CONTENT

God told Abraham that we, his children, would be like the stars in the sky. As Christians, we have the brilliant light of Jesus within us. In Baptism, we receive Jesus into our hearts and souls by the Holy Spirit. Just as the three Magi followed the light of the star that led them to the Christ Child, we must allow our love for God to shine brightly too, because that is how we lead one another to Christ. Jesus tells us: *Let your light shine* (see Mt 5:16).

FAMILY CONVERSATION

Families form a circle. Then, beginning with the oldest member, each person names two positive qualities in the person on their right that show the light of Christ within them. Examples of these qualities could be: joy, humor, caring, sacrifices, listening well, compassion, generosity, etc...

After families have completed the circle, and if there is time, ask them to do the same activity by reversing and naming qualities on the person on their left until the circle is completed.

CONTENT CONTINUED

Read: Matthew 1:1-17 (or paraphrase to show that Abraham and Jesus are in the same family line)

Explain: Adam and Eve, Noah, and Abraham and Sarah are leaves on Jesus' family faith tree, as are all of us who are God's children.

Watch: What Is a Covenant?
Church Words (end at 4:24)



Explain: As Catholics, we don't believe that God the Father punished Jesus, but rather that Jesus freely took upon Himself our sins, and the consequences of our sins, out of love for the Father and for us. When Jesus died on the Cross, as the sacrificial Lamb for our sins, the need or obligation on the part of Israel to sacrifice animals was ended. Jesus' sacrifice of His Body and Blood, out of love for the Father and for us, is more than enough for every covenant. This is why the Eucharist is the greatest of the sacraments and the center of the New Covenant.

In Matthew 28:18-20, right before Jesus ascended into Heaven and took his place as High Priest, He told his disciples what to do since He would not be with them in the same way as He had been. It was the moment for Him to tell them what was most important, as you would if you were leaving to go somewhere for good. Jesus said, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

With these words Jesus was sending His disciples to all nations to baptize and teach about His love for them. These words were the beginning of the world-wide blessing that continues on to this day with each new generation. We must remember God's promise to Abraham: "All the families of the earth shall find blessing in you!" (Gen 12:3), and realize that Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise. And even more, you and your family are called to be disciples as well! It is a mission that Jesus sends you on, to be a blessing to the world, beginning within your own family by having those you care for baptized, and teaching them about the love of God through your own love and sacrifices. By living this life of being a family of disciples, you are a sign of God's covenant.

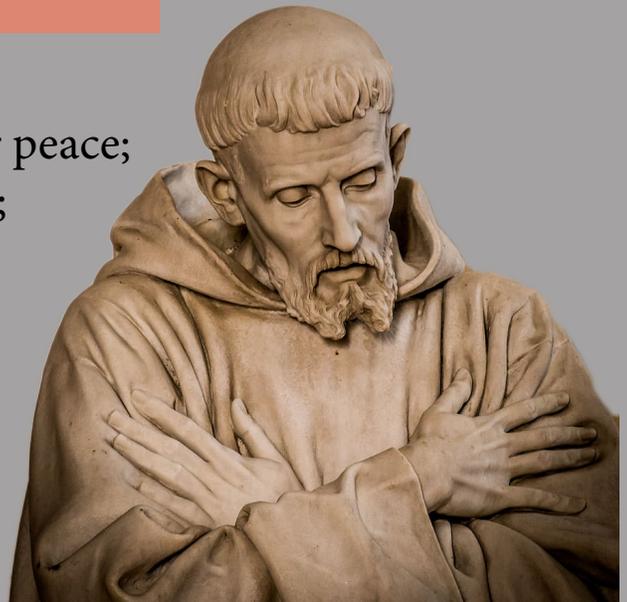
FAMILY ACTIVITY

1. Give each family a star to cut out (see link above).
2. Together as a family, make a list of all the ways that you can think of that you are living as disciples of Christ, and as blessings to one another and the world around you. Write your list on one side of your star.
3. Turn your star over and write your family's name on the other side.
4. Families can decorate the name side.
5. Give stars to your parish leader.
6. Parish leaders can hang the stars (with family name side showing) where everyone can see them with the quote, "All the families of the earth shall find blessing in you!" (Gen. 12:3), posted above them.
7. This would be a great time to share treats too!

PRAY

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is discord, union;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.



REMIND

Remind families about the next meeting date and time.

