

Lesson 13 – The Communion of Saints and Forgiveness of Sins

Grades 6-8

Lesson Preparation:

Read Lesson 13 in the Baltimore Catechism.

Opening Prayer:

Scripture: “I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39

Leader: Lord, You have united us as members of your Body, and as long as we are united to You, we are united to each other. Help us to understand the Communion of Saints, and to appreciate the wonderful gift of our extended spiritual family. Amen.

Together: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolations, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Opening:

This lesson is about the Communion of Saints. Begin to get students reflecting on the topic by reading about the day’s Saint. Using Catholic Brain, you will be able to find the Saint for today’s date. Read about and briefly discuss the Saint’s life.

Watch the Lesson 13 Video on Catholic Brain

Comprehension Questions: *Note: These questions are asked after the video, just to check student comprehension. They are not discussion questions, but be sure students understand the answers to these questions before moving on*

1) What is the Communion of Saints?

Remember that the Church is the mystical Body of Christ. The Communion of Saints is the union of every member of that Body – on earth, in heaven, and in purgatory.

2) How can the Saints (in Heaven) help us?

They pray for us. Because they are so close to God, their prayers are very powerful.

3) How can we help the souls in purgatory?

We can pray for them, make sacrifices for them, have Masses said for them.

4) How can we help each other?

We can pray for others, make sacrifices for them, have Masses said for them. Also, counsel them, set a good example, meet their specific needs.

Discussion Questions: *Note: These questions are for student discussion. The students should consider these questions and comment on them. There are some key points included in this lesson, after each question, that you can use to help guide their discussion toward truth. It's important that the students think about and discuss these things, but that they don't leave the discussion with false impressions about what is true.*

1) Why should we learn about, and pray to, Saints?

The Saints have been where we are and been successful (they are in Heaven). We can learn from their lives. Since the Saints have such varied backgrounds, we can find ones we relate to and receive inspiration and help. They are very close to God, and their prayers are very powerful.

2) If we have a family member or friend in trouble, how can we help them?

Students' answers will vary, but should be related to answer to question 4 in comprehension questions above.

3) Brainstorm – what are some sacrifices we can offer?

Sacrifice is a powerful prayer. Answers will vary, but students should consider that we can plan sacrifices, such as fast days; we can also offer the sufferings and inconveniences we don't plan, but that come to us through everyday life, as sacrifices.

Go Deeper:

Students can write in a journal: How will they help people in need, both the living and the dead? Students should be specific. They should think about people in their lives that they know need help, and journal about ways they can help them. They should also think of specific deceased loved ones for whom they can make a commitment to pray. If you are teaching a parish program, teach the students the steps they can take to have a Mass said for someone.

Activity:

The class can look up, and learn about, students' patron Saints using Catholic Brain. If students don't have a patron Saint with whom they share a name, look up a Saint whose name is close to that of the student, or whose feast day is on a student's birthday.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: God, we thank You for the Communion of Saints and the forgiveness of sins. Help us to support each other in growing closer to You, so that we may all one day rejoice in Your Presence in heaven. Amen.

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