

## **Featured Story**

Jesus Wants Us to Hear and Accept  
His Word  
(Mark 4:1–20)

## **Lesson Goals**

- to identify God’s Word as the readings and teachings in the Bible
- to describe the importance of preparing our hearts for God’s Word
- to recall we hear God’s Word at Mass in the Liturgy of the Word

## **Materials Needed**

- The Catholic Children’s Bible
- Chapter 5 activity booklet
- Treasure map
- Stickers
- Journey Book
- Coloring and writing tools
- Soil
- Pebbles
- Small stick broken into many small pieces (thorns)
- 3 Clear plastic or glass cups
- Grass (or other) seeds
- Spray bottle full of water.

# **5**

## **We Learn from the Bible**

### **Background Focus** (for parents)

The Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1–20) presents one of those uncomfortable challenges Jesus often issues. It is a message which, perhaps, brings forth the difference between hearing and listening.

Hearing the Good News is easy. It simply involves paying attention to the words being said. It may even involve agreement with what is being said. Listening, on the other hand, seems to imply something deeper. It includes not only the act of hearing, but also some real sense of reflection and integration into one’s life.

This chapter focuses on the importance of listening to God’s Word and taking care that our hearts are “good soil” in which it can be rooted. As we listen to God’s Word at Mass, it is good for all of us to challenge ourselves to see if we are just hearing the readings or if we are really listening.

## Opening Prayer

- **Child:** Turn to page 1 in the Chapter 5 activity booklet and locate the prayer on the page.

**Together:** Begin prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

- (Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)
- Read the prayer aloud.
- End with an “Amen” and the Sign of the Cross.


## Engage Activity

**Parent:** Create two columns on the next page in your Journey Book. Label one “*Listening*” and the other “*Not Listening.*”

 **Child:** How do you know someone is really listening to you?

**Parent:** Encourage your child to think of the words or actions of someone who is listening (*eye contact, nodding head, asking questions, etc.*).

- Write their responses on the paper under “*Listening.*”

 **Child:** What are the words or actions of someone who is not listening to you. (*moving around, not looking at them, talking while they are talking, etc.*).

**Parent:** Write these responses under the correct column.

- Let your child know this lesson will explain the importance of listening and how we listen to and learn from the words of the Bible during Mass.

## Featured Story

 **Child:** Find **Mark 4:1-20** in The Catholic Children's Bible.


- Turn the page to the Featured Story on page 1534 and place an "I found it!" sticker on the page.
- Look at the pictures.  
What do you think is happening in the pictures?
- Read the title of the story.

**Parent:** This story is often called the **Parable** of the Sower. Explain parables are stories Jesus told to teach important lessons.

- Read the Bible story.
- Ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as these:
  - What happens to the seeds that fall on rocky ground?  
(*they give up*)
  - What happens to the seeds that are planted among the thorn bushes?  
(*they don't bear fruit*)
  - What happens to the seeds planted in good soil?  
(*they bear fruit*)

## Understand It!

**Parent:** Explain, Jesus is not really talking about seeds and soil. The seeds and the different kinds of soil in the story stand for something else—.

 **Child:** What do you think seeds and soil might represent?

- (If you don't know you will find out when you read the story.)

 Read Understand It! on page 1535.

**Parent:** Using the following questions to check for comprehension.

- What do the seeds stand for?  
(*God's Word*)

- What do the different kinds of soil stand for?  
(*our hearts*)
- What kind of soil do we want our hearts to be?  
(*good soil*)

 **Child:** Do you know what God's Word is?

**Parent:** *God's Word* is a name for the readings and teachings in the Bible. The Bible is also called Sacred Scripture.

## Live It!

 **Child:** Read Live It! on page 1809.

- In your Journey Book draw a colorful garden with healthy plants growing in it.
- Think of good acts you can do to help God's Word grow in your heart.
- Beside each plant draw a picture of one of these acts.
- Remember to do a good act every day as God's Word grows in your heart.

 **Child:** Turn to page 2 of the activity booklet and complete the activity.

- Circle one good act you will do today.

## Tell It!

 **Child:** Look at the images in Tell It! on page 1535.

- Use the pictures in Tell it! to retell the story in your own words.
- Use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story pages that capture your interest.


(Remember to save enough stickers to use on the remaining chapters.)

# Core Learning Activity


## Materials Needed:

- Soil
- Pebbles
- Small stick broken into many small pieces (thorns)
  - 3 Clear plastic or glass cups
    - Grass (or other) seeds
  - Spray bottle full of water


## Heart, of Good Soil

-  **Child:** 1. Fill a clear plastic cups three-quarters full of soil.  
2. Fill another with soil mixed with a lot of rocks  
3. And the third cup with soil topped with a layer of many little sticks (thorns).
- Place a small amount of seeds on top of the soil in the cups.
  - Spray the seeds and soil with water.
  - Set your cups aside for now.

## Process the Activity

-  **Child:** In which cup will a good strong plant grow?
- What type of soil being used in that cup? Rocky soil, soil with thorn bushes, or good soil?  
(*good soil*)

**Parent:** The cups of soil and seeds are a reminder of how we are to make sure our hearts are “good soil” where God’s Word can grow in us.

-  **Child:** Care for the seeds by giving them a bit of water and keeping them near light over the next week or so.
- Wait and watch what happens.

## Additional Activity Option

### Materials Needed

- a computer with Internet access
  - Journey Book
- crayons or markers

### The A Parable Video (15 minutes)

**Parent:** Read, aloud, the longer version of the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1–20) pausing throughout to ask questions and check for understanding.


 **Child:** Watch “Kidz Church: The Parable of the Sower” (4:39)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6LwEW8jX9A>

- In your Journey Book draw a scene from the parable to remind you of this story from Jesus.
- Underneath your drawing explain what part of the story it represents.

## Find (30 minutes)


### God’s Treasure of the Eucharist

 **Child:** What are the four parts of the Mass?  
(*Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Concluding Rites*)

**Parent:** Explain: The Liturgy of the Word is the part of the Mass where we hear God’s Word in the Bible. Sacred Scripture is a guide for our lives. We look to them for guidance about how to be faithful to God as a follower of Jesus.

- Review some basics about the Bible, such as
  - It is made up of the Old and New Testaments.
  - New Testament includes the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John— as well as letters written to the early Church by some of Jesus’ first followers.

- We hear several different Bible readings during the Liturgy of the Word. Write the name of each on a piece of paper and explain in these or similar words:
  - **First Reading:** This is usually from the Old Testament and reminds us of God's love for us.
  - **Responsorial Psalm:** This is a reading or song of a psalm from the Old Testament.
  - **Second Reading:** This is a reading from one of the New Testament letters that were written to the early Church.
  - **Gospel Reading:** This New Testament reading tells us about Jesus and his teachings.
- Explain: There are a lot of words in the different readings in the Liturgy of the Word. Your child might not be able to understand all of them. That is okay, but it is important to listen anyway. Tell them they will understand more as they grow and learn.
- Help your child understand, after the readings, the priest or deacon speaks to help us understand God's Word and how to follow it.

 **Child:** Do you know the name of this talk that the priest or deacon gives? (*homily*)


 **Child:** Turn to page 3 in the activity booklet and complete the activity.

**Parent Note:** This content is presented in a child-friendly way in the *God's Treasure of the Eucharist Student Booklet*. You may wish to have your child read all or parts of Chapter 5 to supplement the lesson. Or use the concluding points under "Things to Remember" to wrap up the lesson before prayer.

## Lesson Wrap-Up

**Parent:** Invite your child to think back over all of the different items discussed in this lesson. Have your child share some of the key things they learned. Ensure the following points are made:

- God's Word is another name for the readings and teachings in the Bible.
- It is important to prepare our hearts for God's Word.
- We hear God's Word at Mass in the Liturgy of the Word.

 **Child:** Place the Chapter 1 sticker in the correct circle on your treasure map.

## Closing Prayer

**Parent:** Direct your child to the words the priest or deacon says after the Gospel reading, found on page 3 of *The Order of the Mass and Key Words* booklet. At the end of the Bible reading, you will read the part of the deacon or priest and they will respond, “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ” (*Roman Missal*, page 525).

**Together:** Begin with the Sign of the Cross.  
(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)

 **Child:** Read **Mark 4:16–20**

**Parent:** Conclude by saying, “**The Gospel of the Lord.**”

 **Child:** “**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**” (*Roman Missal*, page 525).

**Together:** Close with a final sign of the Cross.

**Parent:** Before gluing the activity booklet into the journey book, make sure to read over the Family Page.

**Please make sure you keep all your Eucharist Journey Memories in your “Journey Book”.**

**(The Eucharist activity book, the activities done for each lesson and any other memories you wish to include.)**