

Jesus Is God's Best Gift

FOCUS: In this chapter, you will be helping your child to understand that God sent Jesus to die and rise in order to give us new life.

Augustine of Hippo, one of the greatest philosophers the world has ever known, tried to find happiness in the delights of the earth. Eventually, he realized that only through Jesus can a person come to enjoy the intimate and real contact with God, which alone satisfies the deepest human desires.

Jesus is the best gift of the Father, the perfect revelation of the Father, the Savior who died and rose to bring us the Father's love. To know Jesus is to know the Father, whose faithful love continually invites us to share more fully in his life. The image Jesus used to express the nature of our relationship with him expressed clearly the overwhelming bounty of God's love: Christ is the vine, and we are the branches. The branches of a vine yield a fruit that gladdens the human heart, but this delightful fruit results only when the branches remain united to the vine.

Scripture in This Chapter

John 12:23–24 A Buried Seed

John 15:5–7 The Vine and the Branches

John 3:16 God's Greatest Gift

Catechism of the Catholic Church

457, 615–618, 2157

In this chapter, help your child to

- ✦ explain that a seed dies in order to have new life as a plant.
- ✦ explain that Jesus showed the Father's love by dying and rising to give us new life.
- ✦ identify the disciples and themselves as members of the Church, and Mary as the Mother of the Church.
- ✦ explain the parable of the vine and branches.
- ✦ describe how union with Jesus brings happiness.
- ✦ make the Sign of the Cross.

Word Your Child Should Know

- ✦ disciple

Key Terms for Your Information

- ✦ crucifix—a cross with a figure of Jesus on it
- ✦ grace—the life of God in us
- ✦ Savior—Jesus, who died and rose to give us new life
- ✦ union—being one with someone; sharing the same life, ideas, and so on