

The Story of Christmas

Objective: Announce the Good News of the Birth of Our Savior, Lesson One

Target Group: Grades 9-12

Time Required: 40 minutes

Materials Required: Nativity, Student Bibles, Catechism



Lesson Plan

Resources for educators: Luke 2:1-40, *The Domestic Church* from the Catechism (1655-1658)

Lesson Topic: The Birth of Jesus and the Domestic Church

Goals:

- a. Remove modern commercialization from the Nativity Story
- b. Explore the concept of the domestic church
- c. Consider new ways that students can make their families more like the Holy Family

Lesson:

- a. Have each student read the story of the birth of Jesus, Luke 2:1-40, Matthew
- b. Show 7 minute video about Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem (available online and on DVD)
- c. Provide each student with a story about a family served at Holy Family Hospital
- d. Discussion questions:
 - a. What is a modern-day manger?
 - b. What is the relevance of the birth of Jesus today?
 - c. What other stories are filling the airspace at this time of year?
 - d. Compare the Holy Family's story with the story from Holy Family Hospital.
- e. What is the domestic church?
 - a. Domestic church references in the Gospel and Catechism
 - i. Matthew 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.
 - ii. 2204 "The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason it can and should be called a *domestic church*."⁹ It is a community of faith, hope, and charity; it assumes singular importance in the Church, as is evident in the New Testament.¹⁰ (533)
 - iii. 1658 We must also remember the great number of *single persons* who, because of the particular circumstances in which they have to live—often not of their choosing—are especially close to Jesus' heart and therefore deserve the special affection and active solicitude of the Church, especially of pastors. Many remain *without a human family*, often due to conditions of poverty. Some live their situation in the spirit of the Beatitudes, serving God and neighbor in exemplary fashion. The doors of homes, the "domestic churches," and of the great family which is the Church must be open to all of them. "No one is without a family in this world: the Church is a home and family for everyone, especially those who 'labor and are heavy laden.'"
 - iv. 1666 The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason the family home is rightly called "the domestic church," a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity.

Activity: How can you contribute to your domestic church? Write a paragraph or essay on your thoughts and share with the class.