**Grade 8**

**Unit 4: The History of the Church, Part II**

**Chapter 15: The Church Faces Challenges**

**Faith Focus:** Abuses caused division in the Church. Jesus wanted us all to be one. The Church encourages us to work toward unity with all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**Materials:** Student books, Bibles, paper, Prayer or Christian Unity

**Meditation:**

1) Remind students that each week they are going to begin class with quiet prayer time where they can focus on getting to know God better, and talking to him about their day.

2) Dim the lights and lead the class in 5-7 minutes of the Examen or some other form of meditative prayer you deem appropriate for your class.

**Centering:**

1. Ask students if everyone they know is Catholic. Do they know why there are different Christian denominations?
2. Say, over the centuries there were people who disagreed with the Church, and this caused division.

**Sharing:**

1. Ask a few students to read aloud “The Church Faces Challenges” on page 113.
2. Ask student to open to John 14:26
3. Read the verse aloud and ask what Jesus promises.
4. Say, “No matter what mistakes man makes, we know that the Spirit of God remains with the people of the Church.”
5. Invite students to open to page 115 in their book.
6. Say Martin Luther was one man who tried to reform the Church. Things did not turn out as he planned.
7. Split the class into partnerships and instruct the students to read “A Call for Change” on page 115- “A Friend Turned Foe” on page 116.
8. Hand out paper, ask the students to list three things that caused division in the Church.
9. After 5-7 minutes, have students share their lists and write their ideas on the board.

**Acting:**

1. Say, “Jesus wanted all believers to be united in love of Him.”
2. Read aloud John 17:20-23.
3. Say, “The Church also prays for unity and hope that all Christians will be united one day. We are more alike than we are different.”
4. Ask student to brainstorm some things all Christians have in common. Write their ideas on the board.
5. Direct students to “your advice” on page 116 of the student book and have them write the e-mail.
6. Ask each student to share what they wrote.
7. Pray the “Prayer for Christian Unity” together. Give a copy to each student and challenge them to pray it this week.

***Prayer for Christian Unity***

*Lord Jesus Christ, at your Last Supper you prayed to the Father that all should be one. Send your Holy Spirit upon all who bear your name and seek to serve you. Strengthen our faith in you, and lead us to love one another in humility. May we who have been reborn in one baptism be united in one faith under one Shepherd. Amen.*

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