

Bible Presentation Celebration

Introduction

Handing on the Word of God to Grade 4 students in a Bible Presentation Celebration is an invitational practice in which many Catholic School Boards engage. The needs, circumstances, and traditions of individual Catholic boards vary widely. The purpose of this document is to support those Catholic School Boards where this is common practice. It contains suggestions for, and an exemplar of, a Bible Presentation Celebration.

Planning

In Unit 1, the students learn about the Old and New Testaments and how God's interaction with His people is a sign of His love. The Unit begins with a Bible enthronement ceremony in which the teacher in the Student Book, Mr. Jerome, shares his experience of receiving his own personal Bible (see Student Book pp. 9–21). The beginning of Unit 1 highlights how ritual, Scripture, Sacraments, symbols, and our stories unite us as one Body of Christ. Therefore, a celebration that includes rituals and symbols, and celebrates the passing on of God's Word fits well in this unit of study.

Timing of Celebration: The celebration may be organized to take place during Week 4 of Unit 1. Placement here will coincide with the Feast of St. Jerome (September 30), who is the patron saint of Scripture studies. St. Jerome is mentioned in the litany of saints on p. 52 of the Student Book.

Alternatively, the Bible Presentation Celebration may take place at the end of Unit 1, before Advent begins. The Gospel for this celebration refers to Jesus, the Word of God, coming as Light for the world (see John 1:1–5, 14).

Place of Celebration: It is ideal when this celebration can be seen as a cooperation and collaboration between home, school, and parish. Therefore, inviting the participation of the parish priest and other parish staff, such as a lay parish minister, along with the principal, is encouraged. Inviting parents to be present for the celebration as they are able also underscores the shared

responsibility for the child's faith development and makes for a joyous and memorable celebration. There may be hospitality provided following the celebration as well. There are many possibilities for where this celebration takes place.

- *Celebration at the Parish*

Some Catholic School Boards may have the Bible Presentation Celebration hosted in the parish. These celebrations may be held during a Mass or as a separate celebration during the day or evening at the parish. For these celebrations, planning would take place with the parish directly according to the established guidelines or practices of your Board for such celebrations.

- *Celebration at the School*

Some Catholic School Boards may have the Bible Presentation Celebration during a school-wide liturgy or in one communal celebration for all Grade 4 students.

- *Celebration in the Classroom*

Some Catholic School Boards may have the Bible Presentation Celebration during a classroom celebration.

Inviting

The following guests may be invited to the Bible Presentation Ceremony:

- Parents/guardians, siblings, and grandparents
- Representative(s) from the parish (some parish organizations, such as Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Women's League, etc., support the purchase and presentation of the Bibles and some parishes may have a pastoral minister, youth minister, or permanent deacon)
- School Superintendent
- School System Chaplaincy Leader
- Special Education Teacher
- Educational Assistant

Sample invitations are included here.

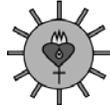
Preparing

There are several key places in Unit 1 that could be connected to the Bible Presentation Ceremony.

RESOURCE	LOCATION	LESSON FOCUS	CONNECTION
Student Book	p. 10	Narrative: Mr. Jerome tells of the special reception of his own personal Bible.	Discuss: How might we feel when we receive our own Bible? Where might we keep our Bible at home? How might we plan to use it in our prayer life, etc.?
Student Book	p. 19	Graphic: Ritual action used before reading the gospel	Highlight: Students will use this ritual action in the Bible Presentation Ceremony
Teacher Resource	Unit 1, p. 57 Lesson 2, Day 3: During	Question: How do we use the Bible in our liturgies?	Discuss: We will be receiving our own Bibles in a special celebration. What important pieces might we include in our celebration?
Teacher Resource	Unit 1, p. 59 Lesson 2, Day 3: After	Reflect and Connect: Arts Connection—The students will make art pieces of Bible scenes	Teaching Tip: Save these art pieces for decoration at the Bible Presentation Celebration
Song Track 1	First appears in Unit 1, TR p. 21 God's Plan for Our Salvation: Before	<i>Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ (Version 2)</i>	Highlight: This song will used as the opening song in the Bible Presentation Celebration
Song Track 14	First appears in Unit 5 Lesson 1, TR p. 27 Unit 5 Lesson 1, Day 2: After	<i>Go Out and Tell the World</i>	Highlight: This song will used as the closing song in the Bible Presentation Celebration Teaching Tip: Because this song appears in a later unit, it will need to be rehearsed before the celebration.
Song Tracks 3 and 4 (Christian meditation music from Unit 1)	First appears in Unit 1 Lesson 2, TR p. 53 Lesson 2, Day 2: Before and Lesson 3, TR p. 76 Lesson 3, Day 4: Before	<i>I Hear His Voice</i> <i>Open My Heart to Your Love</i>	Highlight: This music may be used as the Bibles are presented in the Bible Presentation Celebration

Sample Invitation

Come join us for our Bible Presentation Celebration

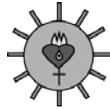


Date:

Time:

Location:

Come join us for our Bible Presentation Celebration



Date:

Time:

Location:

Sample Ceremony

Gathering Song

Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ (version 2)

Greeting

Presider: *Let us begin with the sign of the cross.*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Opening Prayer

Presider: *Let us pray.*

Almighty God and Father,

You reveal your love for us in so many ways—in the beauty of Creation, in the many blessings we receive, and most perfectly in your Son, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Help us to know your Word as a living Word so that we may come to love one another more deeply and to proclaim your Word to the world.

We ask this through your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

All: *Amen*

Ritual Action

Invite a student to come forward to light a candle using these or similar words:

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World and the eternal Word of God.

In lighting this candle, we remember how the Word brings light to all darkness.

Gospel

Presider: *A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.*

All: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

The assembly will sign themselves on the forehead, lips, and heart. This action is familiar to students and was part of the Week 2 lesson.

Gospel: John 1:1–5, 14.

Presider: *The Gospel of the Lord.*

All: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

Reflection

A brief reflection on the Gospel is now offered to the students and those gathered. The reflection can make the link between Jesus as both the light of the world (highlighted in the action of lighting the candle and in this reading) and the living Word (again, from this reading and also the Word which students are about to receive).

Presentation of Bibles

Presider: *The Church has preserved and passed on the Word of God from generation to generation. In art, music, and liturgy, the Word of God has been proclaimed, celebrated, and treasured. Recognizing that we are all called to grow in faith and the love of Christ, we now prepare to hand on that precious gift to the students gathered here today. Knowing God's Word teaches and guides us, we now call forward the boys and girls to receive their Bible(s).*

As students come forward in line, the presider and those who are assisting stand at the front and present a Bible to each child using these or similar words:

Receive the Good News. May you continue to grow in faith and the love of Christ.

Student responds: *Thanks be to God.*

The student then returns to his or her seat with a Bible.

Prayer of the Faithful

Presider: *Trusting in the goodness of God, we place our prayers before Him.*

First Reader: *Lord, hear our prayer.* [Normally the reader of the first petition makes this pronouncement and the assembly repeats the response before beginning the first petition.]

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

First Reader: *For our bishops and priests and all those who teach us, may they be guided by your Holy Spirit as they help us to encounter your Word made flesh. We pray to the Lord.*

Second Reader: *For all of us who have today received our Bibles and have been called to follow and proclaim your Word, may we be open to growing in faith as we come to know your living Word. We pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Third Reader: *For all those who suffer or struggle, may they encounter your Spirit of mercy and be comforted by your eternal Word. We pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Presider: *Trusting in God as our loving Father, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

(All pray the Lord's Prayer.)

*Our Father, who art in heaven.... [continue with the Lord's Prayer]
Amen.*

Closing Prayer

Presider: *God, our Father,*

You give us your Son as a light for our understanding and food for our spiritual journey. Just as the Word was there in the beginning, let us know and love and proclaim that living Word still with us today. Let these children, who have received their own Bible today, listen attentively to your Word so they may grow in faith and go and tell the Good News of Jesus Christ by their lives.

We ask this in the name of your Son, your eternal Word, with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

All: *Amen.*

Closing Song

Go Out and Tell the World (Track 14). Although this song will be taught later in the program, it makes a fitting closing and can easily be rehearsed with students ahead of time.