

THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH

MEMORY VERSE FOR THIS UNIT

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV*).

OBJECTIVES OF THIS UNIT

This unit will help your preadolescents:• Realize that the arrival of the Holy Spirit transformed the disciples' lives and guided the birth of the Church. • Know some of the first steps of the early Church and how we can imitate them today. • Understand that God does not favor certain people; therefore, we must learn to overcome our prejudices and show love to all, even to those who are different from us. • Recognize that although God does not prevent all Christians from suffering persecution, he keeps the Church alive and growing.

THE REASON WE TEACH THIS UNIT

A popular saying may be applied to almost every area of our lives: "What does not cost anything is not worth it." It implies that we do not find the value of things until we've invested money, time, energy, or reflection into it. Many preadolescents do not properly appreciate having the opportunity to meet regularly in the church. They may not know that in some parts of the world Christians still suffer and risk their lives simply by expressing their beliefs. This unit will help them have more appreciation for the Church and for the task that the Holy Spirit carries out in it. It was only by the Holy Spirit that believers remained faithful after generations of intense persecution. These Christians were able to bear or endure it because they loved God and wanted to share the message of Christ with others.