



Word of Life Reference Guide for Teachers and Catechists: The Ecclesial Method

The *Word of Life* series follows the Ecclesial Method. This lesson structure invites God's grace to proceed, accompany, and then send forth learners from the classroom. It is important to allocate your time so you can cover all five steps of the Ecclesial Method.

The method is built around five steps used in every lesson across all grades, from Kindergarten through 8th grade: Preparation, Proclamation, Explanation, Application, and Celebration.

The Five Steps:

1. Prepare

Students are guided into a prayerful learning space by setting aside distractions and focusing their hearts and minds. This step has options for an opening prayer, including *Lectio Divina* (praying with Sacred Scripture). There is also a short review of the previous chapter to prepare students for the next lesson.

2. Proclaim

A short, clear statement of truth introduces the central message of the lesson. Rooted in Scripture and Church teaching, the Proclamation announces a truth of our faith and prepares students to receive the lesson.

Teachers are encouraged to display and repeat the Proclamation throughout the week, share it with families, and even invite students to memorize it.

3. Explain

This is the main teaching portion of the lesson. Students encounter and learn the core content of the chapter through structured instruction and guided learning activities. This is where most instructional time is spent.

- **K–5:** Includes multiple lesson focuses within each chapter.
- **6–8:** Core content appears in the student text before the Chapter Summary and yellow Engage Pages.

4. Apply / Engage

Once the material has been presented and explained, teachers can facilitate a response of faith and call to conversion. Students are given the opportunity to absorb and incorporate the faith into their lives. This step helps students interact with the lesson and apply it to their lives.

- **K–5:** Includes saint stories and real-life scenarios.
- **6–8:** Guided reflection and application found in the yellow Engage Pages of each chapter.

5. Celebrate

Each lesson concludes in prayer, giving thanks and praise to God for what has been learned. Students are sent forth to live as witnesses of Christ in their homes, schools, and communities.