

**GRADE 8**  
**LESSON PLAN 4**

# **HERESIES AND COUNCILS**



**GRADE LEVEL:** 8

**THEME/TOPIC:** Heresies and Councils: Nicaea, Ephesus, Vatican II

### **SUMMARY OF THE VIGNETTE:**

During the recitation of the Nicene Creed, Sunday after Sunday, the Church rises to declare victory over Arianism, a heretical view that was corrected at the Council of Nicaea. Another Council was held in Ephesus to defend and clarify the belief that Jesus was both God and man, divine and human, sent from above and born of the Virgin Mary.

The Second Vatican Council refers to the Liturgy as the “source and summit of Christian life.” This Council touched on all areas of Christian life. Vatican II redirected the Church to focus on bringing Christ to the modern world, paying special attention to the role of the laity.



## GRADE 8 LESSON PLAN 4

# HERESIES AND COUNCILS

**OBJECTIVES:** *Students will be able to . . .*

- Describe how two of the early Church councils clarified Catholic teachings.
- Discuss the process of each of the early Councils and how issues were resolved.
- Compare and contrast the Arian heresy from the Nestorian heresy.
- Explain the lines in the Nicene Creed that deal with Christ as God.
- Explore the ways the Church changed and grew after the Second Vatican Council.

### MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

- DVD Vignette: “Heresies and Councils”
- New American Bible
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- Graphic Organizer: T- Chart
- Word Search Activity
- Excerpt from Vatican II’s *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*
- Video Worksheet

### RELATED BIBLE & CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH PASSAGES:

- John 5:18 (This saying made the Jewish authorities all the more determined to kill him...)
- John 10:30 (The Father and I are one.)
- John 14: 9-10 (For a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know me...)
- John 14:26 (The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name...)
- CCC 2085 -2083 (I Believe in One God...)



# PROCEDURES & TASKS:

## PREPARATION:

1. Welcome the students with warmth and enthusiasm.
2. Begin with *prayer*. This should help the students disengage from their preoccupations and have an open heart before God. You may choose to pray in a number of different ways, including with Scripture, with music, in silence, with traditional prayers, or with extemporaneous prayer that arises from the heart.
3. Or, have a short prayer with the students using the Scripture Passages from John 5: 18 and 10:30. Then ask the students to reflect on the readings silently as soft background music is played. End preparation with The Lord's Prayer.

## PRESENTATION:

1. Group students and have them write problem situations that can create conflict among themselves.
2. Show the following words to the students using flashcards: *heresy, heretic, creed, council, Nicaea (Ny-see-ah), and Ephesus (Ehf-eh-sus)*.
3. Show the video on Heresies and Councils. Give the video activity sheet.
4. Teachers should lead a discussion on the video.
5. Have students work with a partner to compare and contrast the two early Councils. They can use the T-chart as a graphic organizer .
6. Share each pair's findings with the group.
7. Give the students a copy of the Nicene Creed. Explain lines from the Creed that deal with Christ as God.
8. End the lesson by reading John 14:26 aloud.

## **ACTIVITIES & ENRICHMENT:**

- Have students memorize the Nicene Creed
- Word Puzzle Activity
- Pray together the Apostles or Nicene Creed
- Read aloud the excerpt below, from Vatican II's *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, to the students:  
*"Young persons exert very substantial influence on modern society... They themselves ought to become the prime and direct apostles of youth, exercising (the apostolate) among themselves and through themselves and reckoning with the social environment in which they live."*
- Invite the students to reflect on their role as "apostles to the youth" and how they can best accomplish this mission. Remind them, as young apostles, to use all the communication tools at their disposal to invite others to friendship with Jesus, including social media, music, TV and movies. Stress that the Church recognizes them as "apostles of youth."

## **ASSESSMENT(S):**

1. Briefly explain the excerpt from the Second Vatican Council's *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*
2. Cite and explain at least three problems and issues the Church faces today.
3. What will you do specifically in the next few weeks to become a better "apostle of youth" in your circle of family and friends?

# ASSESSMENTS

## *Suggested Responses*

1. Briefly explain the excerpt from the Second Vatican Council's Decree on *the Apostolate of the Laity*.

*Possible answer:*

*In the Document of Vatican II, the lay person in the Church is the bridge to the modern world. As young apostles, they can use all the communication tools like music, TV, movies, and other social media at their disposal to invite others to friendship with Jesus.*

*They can bring Christ to others by promoting virtues relating to social behavior, namely, honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness, chastity, and courage. The Church recognizes them as “apostles of youth.”*

2. Cite and explain at least three problems and issues the Church faces today:

*Possible answers:*

1. Poor Mass attendance by young Catholics
2. Increasing cases of teenage pregnancy and abortion
3. The closing of Catholic churches due to poor attendance and increasing cost of maintenance
4. A Shortage of vocations to the priesthood

*Accept other answers based on their experiences in their own parish.*

3. What will you do specifically in the next few weeks to become a better “apostle of youth” in your own circle of family and friends?

*Answers will vary.*

# VIDEO WORKSHEET: HERESIES AND COUNCILS

Directions: Watch the video and fill in the blanks.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ did not believe in the divinity of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Sunday after Sunday the Church rises to declare \_\_\_\_\_ over Arius by reciting the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Council of Nicaea happened in the year \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The Council of \_\_\_\_\_ confirmed Jesus' divinity.
5. The Arian heresy was started by a priest named \_\_\_\_\_, and the Nestorian heresy was named after \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The Council of \_\_\_\_\_ declared that Jesus is both human and divine, and that Mary is the Mother of God.
7. When we recite the Creed, also known as the Nicene Creed, Sunday after Sunday, we say:  
“... I believe in one Lord \_\_\_\_\_ Christ the only Begotten Son of \_\_\_\_\_,  
born of the Father before all ages, God from \_\_\_\_\_, Light from \_\_\_\_\_,  
true God from \_\_\_\_\_ God, begotten not made, \_\_\_\_\_ with the Father.  
Through him all things were made...”

# VIDEO WORKSHEET: HERESIES AND COUNCILS

## *Suggested Responses*

1. *Arius* did not believe in the divinity of *Jesus*.
2. Sunday after Sunday the Church rises to declare *victory* over Arius by reciting the *Creed* also known as *The Apostles' Creed*.
3. The Council of Nicaea happened in the year *325*.
4. The Council of *Nicaea* confirmed Jesus' divinity.
5. The Arian heresy was started by a priest named *Arius*, and the Nestorian heresy was named after *Nestorius*.
6. The Council of *Ephesus* declared that Jesus is both human and divine, and that Mary is the Mother of God.
7. When we recite the Creed, also known as The Nicene Creed Sunday after Sunday, we say,

“... I believe in one Lord *Jesus* Christ, the only Begotten Son of the *Father*, born of the Father before all ages, God from *God* , Light from *light* , true God from *true* God, begotten, not made, *consubstantial* with the Father. Through him all things were made...”

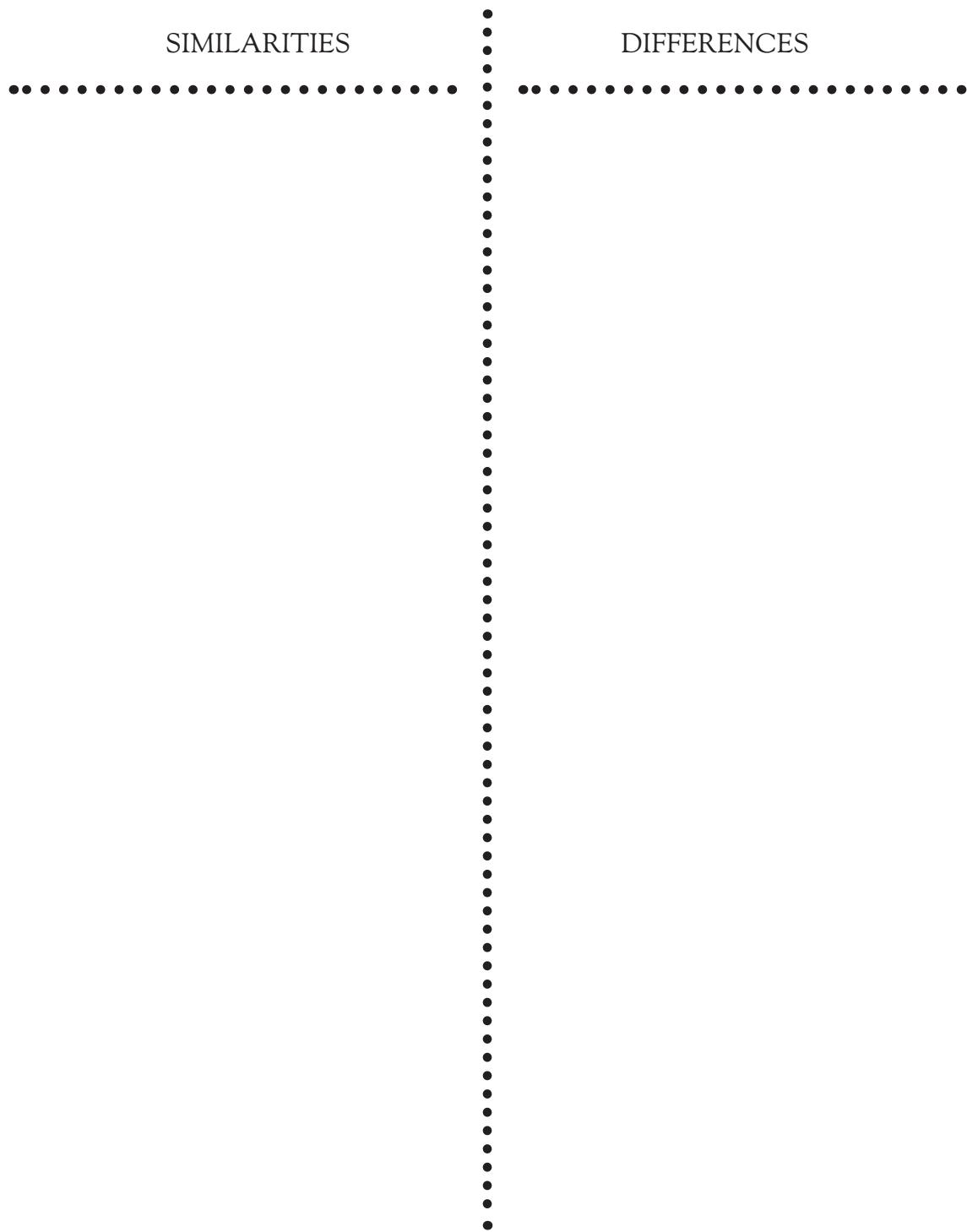
NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY**

*Compare & Contrast*

### **TOPIC**

**ARIAN HERESY      VS      NESTORIAN HERESY**



## ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

*Compare & Contrast*

*Suggested Responses*

### TOPIC

#### ARIAN HERESY      VS      NESTORIAN HERESY

##### SIMILARITIES

- They are both heresies. They are false teachings of the Church.
- Both were resolved by councils.
- They were both started by church officials; one a priest and another a bishop.

##### DIFFERENCES

- \* Nestorian heresy denied that Mary is the Mother of God.
- \* Nestorius was the bishop of Constantinople, while Arius was a priest in Alexandria.
- \* Nestorian heresy was resolved by the Council of Ephesus and the Arian heresy by the Council of Nicaea.
- \* The Council of Nicaea happened in the year 325 A.D., and the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D.
- \* Arian heresy denied the divinity of Christ, but Nestorius believed in Jesus' two natures.

# **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY**

*Heresies & Councils*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

B	C	X	M	C	A	W	C	V	U
W	O	R	S	H	I	P	R	A	N
L	U	D	N	A	J	R	E	T	I
A	N	T	S	R	A	A	E	I	T
I	C	F	A	I	T	H	D	C	Y
T	I	X	N	T	O	E	B	A	L
Y	L	S	V	Y	I	R	O	N	E

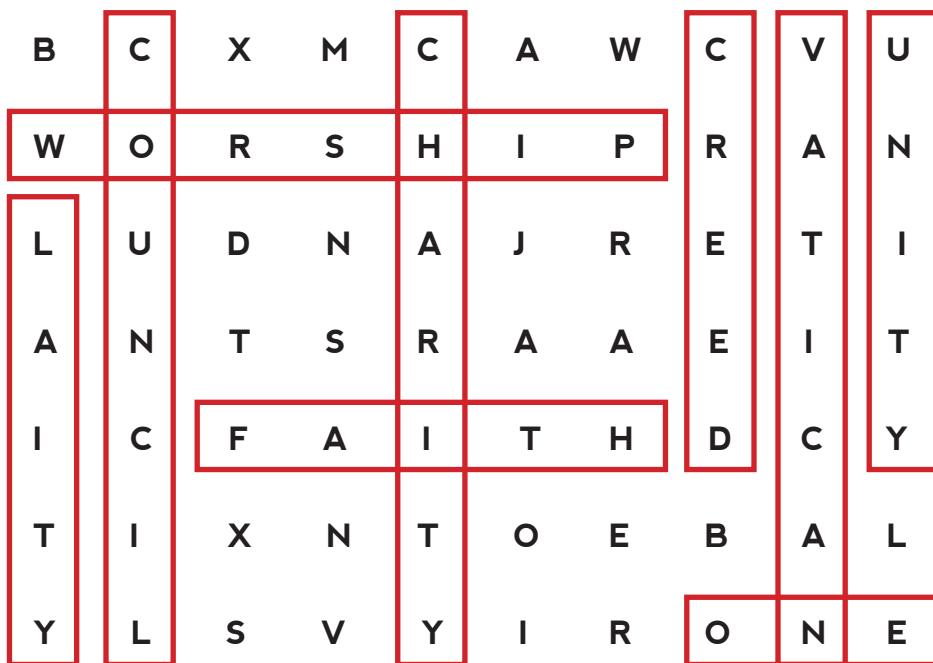
# ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

## *Heresies & Councils*

### Answer Key

#### WORD SEARCH ACTIVITY :

Find and circle NINE words that describe the Church.



#### WORD SEARCH ANSWER KEY:

- |            |          |
|------------|----------|
| 1. worship | 6. faith |
| 2. laity   | 7. creed |
| 3. council | 8. unity |
| 4. faith   | 9. one   |
| 5. charity |          |

