Noah and the Rainbow Promise

The Story of Noah's Ark

Ages about 7-11 | Video 6:29 | Group lesson about 25-30 minutes

Central truth God preserves life and makes a covenant with Noah, his descendants, and living creatures. Noah responds with trust, obedience, patience, and thanksgiving.

Learning goals Children will retell the movement from the ark to a new beginning, identify the rainbow as the covenant sign, and name one way to practice patient trust in God.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: What can make waiting difficult? Introduce Noah as someone who listened to God. Ask children to notice what Noah does while he waits and which sign God gives at the end.

Watch and notice

Watch the whole story. If useful, pause when the dove brings the olive leaf: What does Noah learn, and does he leave immediately? Keep the final rainbow and Baptism reflection together.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. How did Noah show trust through his actions?
He built the ark, entered with his family and animals, and waited for God's command before leaving. Trust shaped what he did.

2. Why was the little olive leaf good news?
It showed that the waters had gone down and living plants could be reached. Noah still waited; the leaf was not permission to leave.

3. What does the rainbow remind us of in this story?
God's covenant: never again would a flood destroy all life on earth. It does not mean that ordinary storms or local floods cannot happen.

4. What did Noah do after leaving the ark?
He built an altar and offered sacrifice in thanksgiving. Ask children to name something for which they can thank God today.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 10-15 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Read the three picture labels aloud. The child points to the pictures in story order, then draws the rainbow above the ark. Ask what the rainbow means; no writing or color names are required.

Read & Write Children put three events in order, explain the covenant sign, and plan a patient action. An adult may scribe. Keep the focus on God's faithfulness, not memorizing animal counts.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: use the three picture prompts to retell building, waiting, and thanksgiving. Explain covenant before asking about the rainbow.

Ages 9-11: distinguish the olive leaf from the rainbow: evidence that water was receding versus a sign of God's covenant. Add the Baptism connection.

Retell with three gestures | Optional 4 minutes

Choose a gesture for building, waiting, and giving thanks. Invite children to tell the story using the gestures in order. Seated gestures or spoken descriptions work equally well. Ask: Was God faithful only when Noah could see what would happen next?

Look for understanding Ask: What promise does the rainbow remind us of? Listen for the flood covenant. If a child says rain will never come again, gently clarify. Then invite one example of patience that includes a helpful action.

Closing prayer Faithful God, thank you for caring for your creation. Help us trust you, do what is good, and be patient when we must wait. Thank you for new life in Jesus. Amen.

At home Practice one ordinary time of waiting without pushing or unkind words. Ask God for help and choose something useful to do while waiting. Share one reason to give thanks at the end of the day.

Handout answer notes Story order: 3, 1, 2. Rainbow: no flood will again destroy all life. Accept a helpful, patient action.

Teach with care

Read Genesis 6-9 before teaching. The flood involves loss of life; keep the discussion gentle and follow children's questions. Do not use this story to suggest that people affected by today's disasters are being punished. This video retells Genesis rather than quoting it throughout. Forty days of rain are not the whole time in the ark. For a deeper connection, explain that the Church sees Noah's rescue through water as a sign pointing forward to Baptism (CCC 1219). Baptism gives new life in Christ; it is more than a lesson about trying harder.

Words to explain Covenant: a sacred bond established by God, with promises. Faithfulness: keeping a commitment. Thanksgiving: expressing gratitude to God.

Sources for the leader

Story and covenant: Genesis 6-9, especially 8:6-20 and 9:8-17
Waiting and thanksgiving: Genesis 8
Baptism connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church 1219