

GABRIEL'S QUEST

Getting from Here to There

Lesson Link: God reveals Himself to us through the Bible and through the Church. We respond with faith.

It was Saturday, and some of Gabriel's classmates planned to meet at St. Clare's to play. Gabriel was excited to go. He hoped to make friends. But Gabriel's grandmother was not feeling well. She had a slight fever and sniffles.

"I can't drive you there," Grandma Rosa said.

"I can walk," Gabriel said. Hope Springs was a small town. The school wasn't far from the house.

"Are you sure?" she asked.

"I'm positive," Gabriel replied. "You let me walk to the store on my own. And we drive to school almost every day." Gabriel wanted to show his grandmother how grown-up he was.

"I can draw you a map," Grandma Rosa said as she rubbed her nose with a tissue.

"I don't need a map," said Gabriel.

"Then please be back here by lunchtime," she told him.

Gabriel threw on a coat and raced out. He knew to turn left, walk straight through town, and on to the school. He jogged for a few blocks past the shops and stores. Then he saw a red brick building on a corner. *I remember that building when we drive to school*, he thought.

Gabriel couldn't remember if the building meant they turned right. Or did they stay straight? He turned right. He came to another street and turned left. He walked for several blocks. Nothing looked familiar.

He stopped. *I'm lost!* he thought. *I should go back to the main street.* But he couldn't remember how to get to there. He wished he'd let his grandmother draw him a map.



He was now standing in front of a small shop. A little bell jingled as a woman stepped out. "Hello, Gabriel," she said. It was Sister Lucy from St. Clare's. "Are you all right?" she asked him.

"I was going to play at the school but got lost," he said.

Sister Lucy pointed to a large bag in her hand. "I am going to the school to drop off a few things," she said. "We can walk together."

Gabriel was relieved.

It took longer to get to St. Clare's than Gabriel expected. Some of Gabriel's classmates were already running around in the playground. Gabriel also saw his cousins, Nick and Samantha Perry.

Gabriel thanked Sister Lucy. She smiled and walked into the school.

Gabriel went to the playground and joined his classmates. They played on the swing set and jungle gym and raced around in a game of tag.

After the playing stopped, Gabriel sat down on a bench. It was time to go home, but he was worried about getting lost again. He heard a car horn blast in the parking lot.

Mrs. Perry called out from her minivan, "Get in! I'll take you home."

As they drove home, Gabriel realized that the school was on the same road that led through the town. He did not have to make any turns. He felt foolish.

Grandma Rosa was sitting in her favorite rocking chair when Gabriel arrived home. A leather-backed book sat in her lap. Gabriel knew it was her Bible. She read it every day. She asked if he had fun playing at the school.

"Yes," he said. Then he confessed that he had gotten lost on the way.

"I know. Sister Lucy called to tell me," Grandma Rosa said. "I have lived here all my life and I still get lost."

Grandma Rosa looked down at the Bible on her lap. "This Bible belonged to my grandfather," she said. She waved for Gabriel to come close. She pointed to writing inside the front cover. "He wrote these words: 'Always keep this book close to your heart. God's love and direction are on every page.'"

She smiled at him. "My grandfather knew all about directions. He served our country in two wars as a cartographer," she said.

"A what?" asked Gabriel.

"A man who makes and reads maps," she answered. Then she picked up a small box from the end table. "This is for you."

Inside the box was a gold compass in a worn leather cover. "My grandfather used it when he was in the army. He said, 'You may not always know the way, but God will always give you the tools to find it.'"

The compass was beautiful. Gabriel didn't know what to say. He hugged Grandma Rosa.

Later, when Gabriel was getting ready for bed, he put the compass on his bedside table. Then he saw a folded paper on his pillow. It was a map of Hope Springs.

Questions:

1. ***Have you ever been lost? If so, how did you feel? How did you find your way? (Answers may vary.)***
2. ***How are the compass and the Bible similar? (Both help us know where we are going.)***