

Chapter 15

Fight for Freedom

We prayed to the Lord, and our prayer was heard; we offered sacrifices of fine flour; we lighted the lamps.

2 Maccabees 1:8

For the Parents:

In chapter 15 your child learned to:

- Identify key episodes in the books of Maccabees as examples of Israel's struggle for its faith
- Describe how his or her actions can fulfill baptismal commitment to reject evil and do good
- Identify ways that Jews and Christians honor and pray for the dead

After their return from exile, the people were ruled by a succession of foreign empires that were generally tolerant of the religion of Israel. Not long after the Seleucid dynasty of Syria took power, however, the Jews were subjected to intense pressure to abandon their religion and to worship the Greek gods. The conflict caused an armed revolt led by Judas Maccabeus. The success of this revolt of the Jews against a much larger and more powerful foreign empire was seen as miraculous and as a direct result of God's intervention. The Temple was cleansed and reestablished, and 70 years of political independence began.

With Your Child:

1. As a family pray for the relatives who have died. In your prayer, remember to ask those who have died also to pray for your family.
2. Read about Saint Stephen on the Review and Explore page.