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Introduction to the Image of God Series

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LESSON FOCUS

Emphasis

We are all made in the image of God. This concept may cause some confusion in the children's minds. They may think that, since we are all made in the image of God, we look like God. This confusion can be clarified by pointing out physical differences among the children. For example, some have brown hair, some blond; some have blue eyes, some brown; some are tall, some short; yet we are all made in the image of God. Even twins who strongly resemble each other have personal differences: one is quiet, one talkative; one likes to eat something that the other does not like. We all reflect God in different ways. Stress that no one or two of us or even a million of us reflect God completely or accurately. We should want to reflect God as clearly as we are able.

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Man created in the image of God: CCC 355–57, 380–81

Equality and difference willed by God: CCC 369

Vocabulary

image: the reflection of ourselves and others as in a mirror

soul: the gift from God that gives us life

Concepts of Faith

Why are we special to God?

We are special because we are made in the image of God.

LESSON PRESENTATION

Proclamation

All persons are made in the image of God.

LESSON EXPLANATION

Begin by holding a large mirror toward the children. What they see is their reflection. Refer to this reflection as an image. Turning your back to the class, and facing the mirror, place the mirror in such a way that the children can see you in it. Change your expression (smile or frown), and then ask the children to guess what you are doing. When they guess correctly, ask them how they know. They should respond that they can see you in the mirror. Your image in the mirror shows the children something about you. As images of God, we want to teach others about God and His love for us. The good things we think, say, and do help others see and learn about God through us.

Materials needed:

large mirror

Review Questions

1. Who made each of us?

God made each of us.

2. How are we made?

We are made in the image of God.

3. Are we all exactly alike?

No.

4. Do we all reflect God in the same way?

No, we all do things in a different way, but all the good things we think, say, and do reflect God.

5. What are some ways you can act as images of God?

We can act as images of God by picking up our toys, helping our parents, sharing our toys, etc.

6. Is everyone an image of God?

Yes, but when we make the wrong choice and do things that we know are not right, we are not as clear images of God—like the sun on a cloudy day.

SCRIPTURE STORY: Adam and Eve

Based on Genesis 1:26 and 2:18–23

After God made the angels, He made the world and all the plants and animals. God then made Adam, the first man. Adam was special because he was made in the image of God. Adam did not look like God, but he could love and work like God. He could also share God's life.

God had some work for Adam to do. All the animals that God made needed names. God asked Adam to name them. Adam obeyed God because he loved God very much. Adam looked at all the animals as he was naming them and saw that he was different from them. Adam knew he was special. He could think and make choices, but the animals could not. He could act like God, but the animals could not. Only Adam was made in the image of God. Only Adam was a person.

Adam loved God and took care of God's world, but Adam was very lonely. There was no one to share God's love with Adam. He was the only person God made with a body. The angels were persons, but they did not have bodies. The animals had bodies, but they were not persons. Poor Adam was very lonesome!

God knew it was not good for Adam to be alone, so He made the first woman. Her name was Eve. Eve did not look exactly like Adam, but she was made in the image of God, just like Adam. She was a person too. Adam and Eve could love each other with a God-like love. Best of all, they could grow as a family in God's love.

Have the children complete page 7 in their workbooks.

LESSON 3: I AM SPECIAL TO GOD WHO MADE ME

Directions: Find and color the hidden animals.



God asked Adam to name all the animals.

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Review Questions

- 1. Who was the first man?**
Adam was the first man.
- 2. What did God ask Adam to do?**
God asked Adam to name the animals.
- 3. Who was the first woman?**
Eve was the first woman.
- 4. Why did God make Eve?**
God made Eve to love Him and to love Adam as God did.
- 5. Why did God make Adam?**
God made Adam to love Him and to love Eve as God did.
- 6. Did Adam and Eve look like God?**
No.
- 7. How were Adam and Eve different from the animals?**
They could think and make choices. They were persons.
- 8. How were Adam and Eve like God?**
They were both made in the image of God to do what God does, love and work.

ENHANCING THE LESSON • LESSON EXPLANATION PART 2

Ask: Are we plants? *No.*

Are we animals? *No.*

What are we? (Lead the children to answer)
Persons or people.

Materials needed:

picture of Saint John Bosco

We are persons. All persons are made in the image of God. Each of us is made with a body and a soul. (Write the word "soul" on the board.)

We can see our bodies, but our souls are invisible. The soul is a wonderful gift from God. Our souls give us life. Our souls live forever. Even when our bodies die, our souls will live forever. Our souls give us the powers to think and choose. God gave us this wonderful gift when He made us in His image. We can think about how we should act and we can choose to act as images of God.

STORY OF FAITH: Saint John Bosco

(Show children a picture of Saint John Bosco.)

There was a man who lived a long time ago who always tried to act as an image of God. He helped others to act as images of God, also. His name was John Bosco. As a young boy, John liked to run and play, laugh and make jokes. John had many friends because he was so fun to play with. He never let his friends talk him into doing things that were wrong. He would think about what to do and make the right choice. If his friends were fighting, John would try to make them stop because he knew fighting was wrong. When he was young, John liked to go to the circus. Sometimes he would put on his own shows for his friends and do tricks he learned at the circus. After the shows, he would talk to his friends about God. He knew that when he grew up he wanted to help many children learn about God.

John's dream came true when he became a priest. He lived at a time when most people were very poor. Children liked Father John because he found them safe places to play. He also taught them how to pray. Some of the boys who came to Father John had no mothers or fathers to take care of them. They did not

LESSON 3: I AM SPECIAL TO GOD WHO MADE ME

even have houses to live in. Father John would take care of these boys. Some of the boys made wrong choices and Father John would talk to them. He would set a good example for them to follow. He would never say “No” to a boy who needed his help.

Saint John Bosco spent his whole life helping young people who were poor or in trouble. He is an example for us of someone who used the powers of his soul to think about how to act and then made the right choice to act as an image of God. He helped others to think and choose the right things in life.

Review Questions

1. What is the gift from God that gives us life?

The soul is the gift from God that gives us life.

2. What are the powers of the soul?

The powers of the soul are thinking and choosing.

3. Do our souls ever die?

No, our souls live forever.

4. What did Saint John Bosco do for the children?

Saint John Bosco found them safe places to play, taught them prayers, took care of them, helped them make the right choices, etc.

Optional Activity

Have the children draw a picture of a scene from the story of Saint John Bosco. The pictures should show how Saint John Bosco helped the children.

Materials needed:

drawing paper
crayons or markers

LESSON EXPLANATION PART 3

God created all people. He loves each and every one of us. We should love all people, too. All people are created in God’s image. People may look different, act differently, speak different languages or come from different countries, but God created all people in His image. We should never call people names or tease people. We should be kind and respectful to all people whether they are born or not born, young or old, physically or mentally challenged, sick or well. Our lives begin at the very moment God creates us and all human life is precious.

Ask: **How can we be kind and respectful to others?** (Accept all reasonable answers such as) *By saying “please” and “thank you”.*

Everyone has different likes and dislikes. I might want to have a tuna sandwich for lunch and you might want a pepperoni pizza. My favorite color is (state your favorite color). You may like a different color. All people deserve our respect no matter what they like or dislike and no matter what they have or do not have.

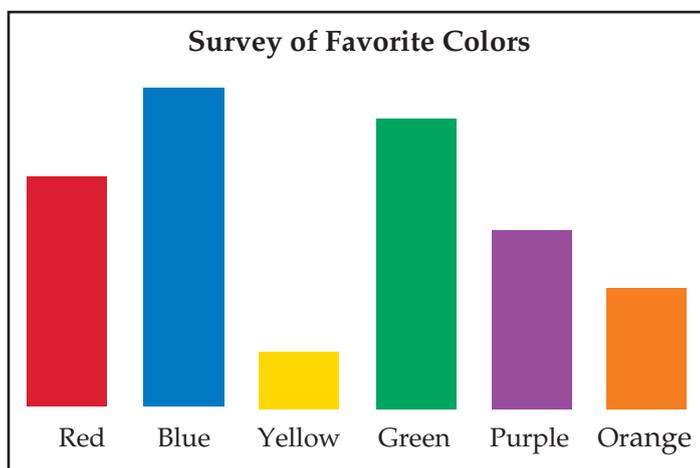
Optional Activity—Survey

Tell the children that they will each create a chart (a list) of how many people like the colors they choose. Discuss with the children what colors they should use for their survey. Choose the most popular four or five colors. Give each child a piece of drawing paper. At the top of the paper, have the children write, “My Favorite Color”. Help the children divide the paper into four or five sections (this can be done ahead of time for the children). Have them write the name of one color with that color crayon or marker in each section. (For example, write the word “red” with a red crayon or marker.) Have the children take their surveys home to ask each member of their families what their favorite color is. They should then make a mark next to the color that each person picks.

Materials needed:

drawing paper
crayons or markers

When the children return their surveys, create a bar chart matching their surveys to display in the classroom. Include all the children’s responses. Have the children count the number of people who choose each color. Which color was the winner? Even though we might like different colors, or other things, we are all made in the image of God.



Review Questions

1. Who made all persons?

God made all persons.

2. Did God make us all the same?

No.

3. Are all people made in the image of God?

Yes.

LIVING THE LESSON—APPLICATION

SCRIPTURE STORY: Jesus and the Children

Based on Luke 18:15–17

When Jesus was living on earth, there were no cars, or buses, or even bicycles. Jesus traveled from one town to another on foot. He walked many miles with His friends, the disciples. He wanted all the people to hear about God and to know about His love.

One day, Jesus was sitting on a hillside teaching many people about God. Some mothers heard that Jesus was near their neighborhood.

“We want to take you to see Jesus”, the mothers told their children. “Jesus is a great teacher. He can teach you about God.”

So off they went to walk to the hill where Jesus was teaching. When they got there, they could hardly believe their eyes! There were people everywhere! People were sitting under trees, and people were sitting on the hill. There were even people standing in the road. Slowly and patiently, the mothers helped the children through the crowd. The children could not see Jesus, because all the grownups were so tall. Finally, the mothers and their children made their way to the front of the crowd. They could see Jesus now! He was sitting with His disciples. As the mothers and the children came close to Jesus, the disciples stopped them.

“Can’t you see Jesus is busy?” they said. “Jesus does not have time for your children now.”

Sadly, the mothers began to leave with their children. But Jesus saw what had happened.

“Let the children come to me”, Jesus said. “Do not stop them.”

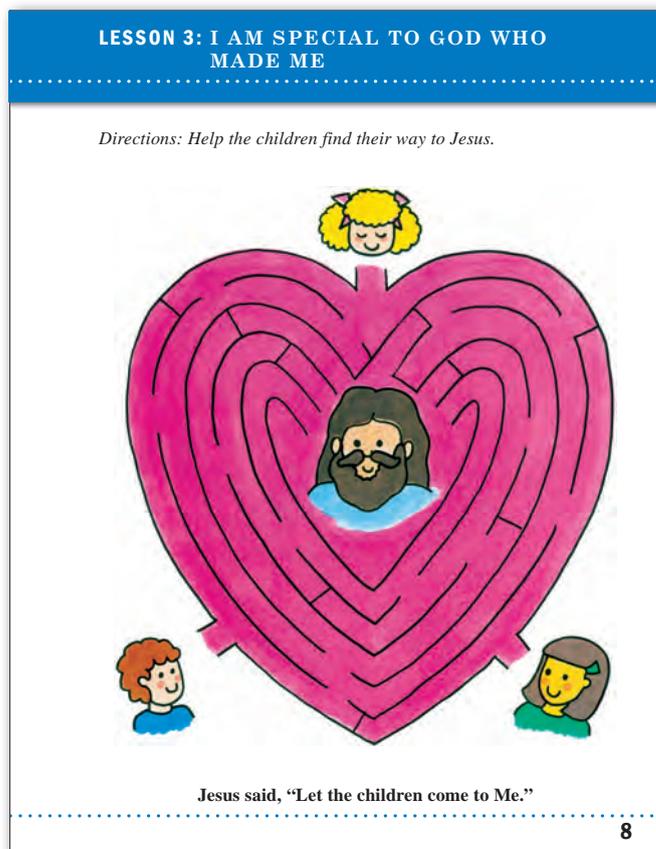
Quickly the children ran to Jesus. He laid His hands on their heads, blessing them. Then He lifted the littlest child onto His lap.

“All of you must come to God with hearts full of love like these children. They love the way God does.”

The children had a wonderful time with Jesus. They listened to all He had to say. The mothers and the children went home, happy that they had seen Jesus and learned more about God’s great love.

We are all God’s children. He made us in His image. He wants us to reflect His love by loving and caring for each other. By doing this, we show in a small way God’s great love for us.

Have the children complete page 8 in their workbooks.



Review Questions

- 1. Who came to see Jesus?**
The mothers and the children came to see Jesus.
- 2. What did Jesus' helpers say to the mothers?**
Jesus' helpers told the mothers to go away because Jesus was busy.
- 3. Why did Jesus want the children to stay?**
Jesus wanted the children to stay because they had hearts full of love, and they reflected God's love.
- 4. Who are God's children?**
All of us are children of God.

We are all special because we are images of God. We can love and act the way God loves and acts. We can share God's life. When we make the wrong choices, we are not acting as images of God, but when we choose to act like God, we are like "mirrors". Other people can see God in us. We are clear and bright images of God.

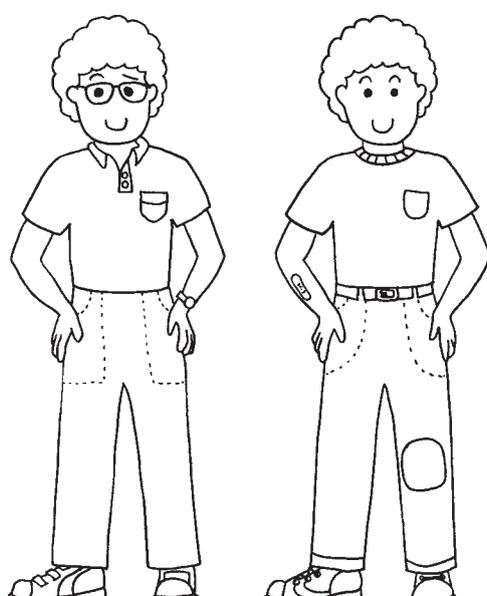
Review Questions

- 1. Why are we special?**
We are special because we are made in God's image.
- 2. Are the trees or animals images of God?**
No, they cannot think or choose.
- 3. List examples for the children of different situations. In which situations would they be reflecting God?**
Obedying parents, saying prayers, following school rules, fighting with a brother or a sister, not sharing toys, sitting quietly at church, etc.
- 4. How do you show that you are made in the image of God at school, at home, at church, or at play?**
(Encourage children to provide examples.)
- 5. Are we all images of God?**
Yes.
- 6. If we make the wrong choices and do not act as images of God, are we still images of God?**
Yes. We are less bright images of God, but we are still images of God.
- 7. Whom do we act like when we show our love for other people?**
God.

Have the children complete page 9 in their workbooks.

LESSON 3: I AM SPECIAL TO GOD WHO MADE ME

Directions: Find and count the things that are different. Put the number here: _____.



We reflect God in different ways.

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CELEBRATION

Prayer

*Dear God,
thank You for making me.
Help me to be a reflection of You to everyone I meet.
Amen.*

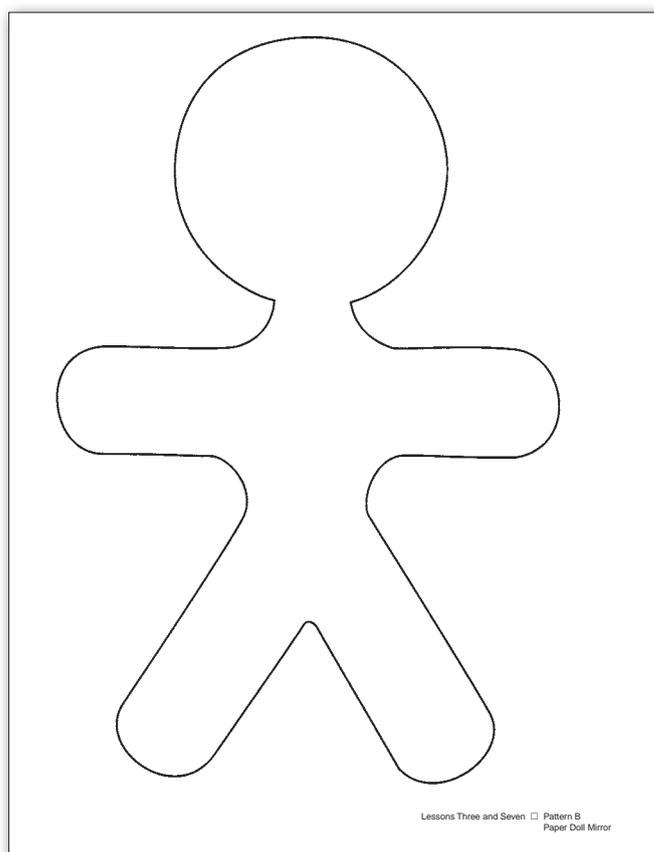
ACTIVITIES

Paper Doll

Materials needed:

paper doll pattern
lightweight poster board
construction paper (one piece per child)
glue
pencil
crayons or markers

Using the pattern, cut one paper doll for each child (or have children trace the pattern and cut the doll). Have the children glue the doll onto a piece of construction paper. Have the children print "I am an image of God" across the top of the paper. The paper doll can be decorated and colored to resemble the child. Have the children print their names at the bottom of the paper. The paper doll helps the children remember that they are images of God.



Life-Sized Picture

Have the children lie on large pieces of paper while you trace their bodies. Have them color the tracings to look like themselves. Remind them that they are special because God made them in His image. Glue a paper heart to the chest and remind the children they should love the way God loves. Glue a circular piece of foil to the face. Print "I am an image of God" around the foil. Remind the children that everything they think, say, and do should reflect God.

Materials needed:

large roll of paper (newsprint paper)
pencil
crayons
red construction paper
heart pattern
shiny foil
glue

Action Rhyme

I am special (*Point to self.*)
because God made me. (*Point to Heaven, then to self.*)
I'm not like the bunny (*Form ears on top of head with hands, and hop up and down.*)
or the apple tree. (*Arms circle head and sway.*)
I can love and think. (*Hands on heart, then point to head.*)
I can talk and say, (*Point to mouth.*)
"I love everybody." (*Arms spread wide.*)
God made me that way.

Read a Story

Saint John Bosco and Saint Dominic Savio, Catherine Beebe, Ignatius Press, 1992.
What Can I Give God?, Neal Lozano, Maple Corners Press, 2010.

Watch a DVD

Saint Don Bosco, My Catholic Family Series, EWTN.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES— THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

LESSON FOCUS

Emphasis

Remind the children of the last lesson—we are all made in the image of God. Mention that the image in the mirror has no choice. It has to do whatever the person in front of the mirror does. God has given us free will. We do not have to act as images of God. We can choose to act or not to act as images of God.

When we choose to act as images of God by following the Commandments, we show our love for God. The Commandments are not rules or laws forced on us, but rather the way an image of God chooses to act. The Commandments are God’s way of helping us know how to act as images of God. They help us make the right choices. They are the ways an image of God should live.

Our actions (the things we do) and our attitudes (how we think) should both show that we love God. We were made to know, love, and serve God in all we think, say, and do.

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

The Old Law: CCC 1962

The Ten Commandments: CCC 2054–69

Vocabulary

Commandments: the ways God acts and the ways God wants us to act as His images

envy: unhappiness over something good that someone has

Concepts of Faith

How should we show our love for God?

We should show our love for God by choosing to follow the Commandments that He gave us.

LESSON PRESENTATION

Proclamation

When we follow the Ten Commandments, we act as images of God.

LESSON EXPLANATION

Begin by having the children pretend that you are holding two ice cream cones (or hold up pictures of two ice cream cones). The cones should be two different flavors—for example, one chocolate and one strawberry.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES— THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Ask: What would happen if both cones were offered to a dog? *The dog would probably eat both, not caring about the flavors.*

What would happen if the two cones were offered to one of you? (Give a few of the children a chance to choose one of the cones.)

God made us in His image. We have minds to think and wills to make choices. Some choices are neither right nor wrong—like the ice cream cones. Some choices are right and some are wrong. If we had two ice cream cones and ate them both, not sharing with a friend, that would be a wrong choice. If we chose one cone and shared the other with a friend, that would be a right choice. We can choose between right and wrong.

Ask: What would we wear on a cold winter day, a jacket or a bathing suit? *A jacket.*

Choosing to wear the jacket would be the right choice. Choosing to wear the bathing suit outside on a cold winter day would be a foolish choice.

Give the children other examples of right and wrong choices—sharing or not sharing a toy, picking up toys when asked or not, etc. When we make the right choices we are bright, shiny images of God. We can choose to act or not to act as images of God. We are always images of God, even when we make the wrong choice. But we are not as bright images of God, like the sun on a cloudy day, when we choose to do wrong.

Ask: How do we know how God acts? *God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us know how to live as images of God. They are a way of life for an image of God.*

How do we know if the choices we make are right choices or a wrong choices? *God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us make good choices and to teach us how an image of God lives.*

Introduce the Ten Commandments now. (The following children’s version might be easier for them to understand.)

1. There is only one God and you should love Him with all your heart (CCC 2084, 2133–36).
2. Keep God’s name holy (CCC 2142, 2160–61).
3. Go to church on Sunday (CCC 2168, 2177, 2180–83).
4. Obey your mom and dad (CCC 2197–2200, 2204–5, 2216–20, 2247, 2248, 2251).
5. Be kind to other people (CCC 2258, 2262).
6. You should love everyone as an image of God (CCC 2331, 2346–47).
7. Do not take things that do not belong to you (CCC 2401, 2408, 2453, 2454).
8. You should tell the truth (CCC 2464–70, 2481–87, 2508, 2510).
9. Do not be envious of other people’s families (CCC 2515–27).
10. Do not be envious of the things other people have (CCC 2538, 2553, 2556).

Point out to the children that the first three commandments help us know how to love and serve God better. The remaining seven help us know how to love and serve others.

Review Questions

1. Who is made in the image of God?

Everyone is made in the image of God.

2. How do we know how an image of God should act?

The Ten Commandments teach us how an image of God should act.

3. What do the Ten Commandments help us do?

The Ten Commandments help us live as images of God, making the right choices.

4. When we make wrong choices, are we still images of God?

Yes, but we are not acting as we should. We are less clear or bright images of God.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES— THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Have the children complete page 10
in their workbooks.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES—
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Directions: Circle the good actions.



Our actions should show we love God.

10

SCRIPTURE STORY: Moses and the Ten Commandments

Based on Exodus 3:7–12;
5:1–2; and 19:1–20

God chose a man named Moses to help the slaves in Egypt. The slaves were being punished by the king because they loved God.

“Moses, I want you to help the slaves”, God said. “They are my chosen people. Tell them I have sent you.”

At first Moses was afraid. “How can I help these people?” Moses asked. “I am only one man, and the king will never listen to me.”

“Do not be afraid”, God told him. “I will be with you always. I will give you the help you need.”

Moses listened to God and obeyed Him. Moses told the king that God wanted the slaves to be free, but the king would not listen to Moses.

“The slaves should love and serve me”, said the king, “but they only love and serve God. I will not set them free.”

Again and again Moses asked the king to free the slaves, and, finally, the king agreed. Moses then led the chosen people of God across the desert to the place that God had ready for them. In that place there was a huge mountain called Sinai. It was a holy mountain. God asked Moses to climb to the top of the mountain. Moses obeyed God and climbed to the very top.

Moses and all the people were made in the image of God. They wanted to know how to act as images of God. God loved the people and wanted to help them live as His images. So God gave Moses the Ten Commandments to help all the people. Moses and the people knew if they followed the Ten Commandments they would be living as images of God.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES— THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Moses listened to God and wrote all His Commandments on two stone tablets. Then Moses carried the stone tablets down the mountain. He showed the Commandments of God to the people.

Moses told the people that the Ten Commandments would tell them how to love and serve God and how to share God's love with each other. Moses told the people, "The Commandments will help us know how to live. They can help us get to Heaven."

These same Ten Commandments help us today. They help us know what is right. When we choose to obey the Ten Commandments, we are acting as images of God.

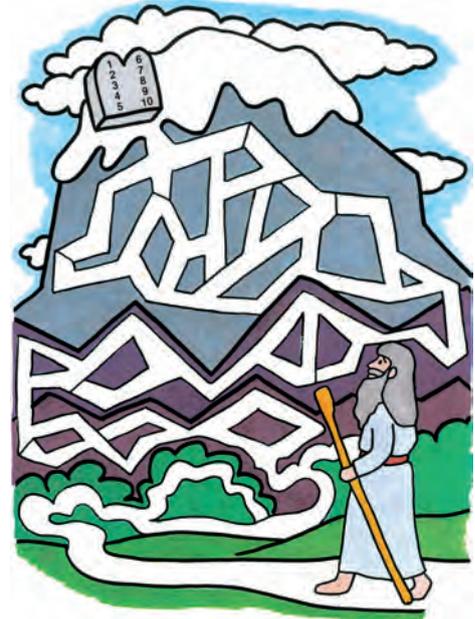
*Have the children complete page 11
in their workbooks.*

Review Questions

- 1. What did God ask Moses to do?**
God asked Moses to help the slaves.
- 2. Was this easy for Moses to do?**
No.
- 3. Did Moses make a good choice?**
Yes, he obeyed God.
- 4. What did God give to Moses?**
God gave Moses the Ten Commandments.
- 5. Why did God give the Ten Commandments to Moses?**
God gave Moses the Ten Commandments so everyone would know how to act as images of God.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES— THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Directions: Help Moses find the right way.



God gave Moses the Ten Commandments.

11

ENHANCING THE LESSON • LESSON EXPLANATION PART 2

We make choices every day.

Ask: *What are some of the choices you have made today? Which clothes to wear, what to eat, which toy to play with, which color crayon (or marker) to use, etc.*

Maybe you choose what to wear or what to eat. Maybe you choose what toy to play with or what book to read. Here is a story from the Bible about two sons who made choices.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES— THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

SCRIPTURE STORY: The Parable of the Two Sons

Based on
Matthew 21:28–32

There was a man who had two sons. He came to the first son and said, “Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.” (A vineyard is a large field where grapes are grown.) The son replied, “I will not”, but afterward the son changed his mind and went and worked in the vineyard after all.

The man came to the other son and also asked him to work in the vineyard. This son replied, “Yes, sir”, but he never actually went to work in the vineyard.

Both of the sons made wrong choices, but the first son changed his wrong choice and made it right. Sometimes we make the right choice and get hurt. At times, we make the wrong choice and get by. We should always try to make the right choice. Anytime that we need to make a choice about what to think or say or do, we should ask ourselves, “Would Jesus think or say or do this?” If the answer is “No”, then we should not think or say or do it.

Review Question

1. Which of the Ten Commandments did the sons not follow?

The sons didn't follow the commandment to obey your mom and dad or the commandment to tell the truth.

LESSON EXPLANATION PART 3

The Ten Commandments may also be explained to the children as a set of directions. If the children were invited to a friend's home, they would need to know where their friend lived—what direction to go, what street their friend lived on, and which house was their friend's, etc. In general, they would need to know how to find their friend's house. God invites us to come to Him in Heaven. The Ten Commandments show us the way so we do not get lost. We can choose to act as an image of God by making the right choices and following the Ten Commandments.

Optional Activity—Learn to Follow Directions

Place objects about 4' apart, ending at the basket.

Ask for a volunteer (or choose a child). Tell the child that he or she will be wearing the blindfold. Tell the rest of the class the goal is to get (name of volunteer) to put the ball in the basket. They will be giving directions so that (name of volunteer) will know which direction to go. (You may want to walk with the volunteer, holding his or her hand). Help the children give clear and simple directions (for example, “Take two steps to the left” or “Take one big hop forward”). Using verbal directions, guide the volunteer around the obstacles until he or she can put the ball in the basket. This activity may be done in the classroom, in a gym, or outside.

Materials needed:

blindfold (such as a scarf)
small obstacles (pillows to step over, cones to go around, etc.)
ball
basket for ball to go into

Remind the children that the Ten Commandments are the directions God gave us to help us find our way to Heaven.

LIVING THE LESSON • APPLICATION

It is not always easy to do what is right and to make right choices. If we ask ourselves what an image of God would do, it is easier to know what is right. We should try very hard to live by the Ten Commandments.

Ask: **What are some places in which we have to make choices about how to act?** *We make choices at home, at school, and at church.*

What are some examples from your lives of how you can live each of the Ten Commandments? (Use the children's version of the Commandments.)

First Commandment

There is only one God, and you should love Him with all your heart. (We should say our prayers.)

Second Commandment

Keep God's name holy. (We should not say bad words.)

Third Commandment

Go to church on Sunday. (We should not misbehave in church.)

Fourth Commandment

Obey your mom and dad. (We should obey our parents and teachers.)

Fifth Commandment

Be kind to other people. (We should not hurt other people.)

Sixth Commandment

You should love everyone as an image of God. (We should love other persons in the right way.)

Seventh Commandment

Do not take things that do not belong to you. (We do not take things from stores or from our friends.)

Eighth Commandment

You should tell the truth. (We should not tell lies.)

Ninth Commandment

Do not be envious of other people's families. (We should not be envious of how other people's families live.)

Tenth Commandment

Do not be envious of the things other people have. (We should not be envious of the toys or nice things that other people have.)

Review Questions

1. Which of the Ten Commandments help us to love and serve God better?

The first three help us to love and serve God better.

2. Which help us know how to love and serve each other better?

The last seven help us to love and serve each other better.

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES— THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

*Have the children complete page 12
in their workbooks.*

LESSON 4: ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES—
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Directions: Match the actions to the words.

	Tell the truth.
	Say your prayers.
	Obey parents.
	Worship God.

The Ten Commandments help us act as images of God.

12

CELEBRATION

Prayer

*Dear God, I love You.
Help me to follow Your Commandments
and make the right choices.
I want to be a bright image of God.
I want to be with You in Heaven.
Amen.*

ACTIVITIES

Ladder to Heaven

Give each child a sheet of paper with the children's Ten Commandments typed or written on it. Have the children cut the Commandments out in strips. Glue each strip of paper with a commandment on it to a craft stick (these will form the ten rungs of a ladder). If the Commandments are numbered, the children can keep the Commandments in the right order by recognizing the correct number. Glue each of the craft sticks with a commandment on it to a full piece of construction paper with the phrase "Ladder to Heaven" written on it.

Materials needed:

lists of the Ten Commandments (one sheet per child)
craft sticks (ten per child)
construction paper (one sheet per child)
glue
scissors

Helping Hands

Trace both hands of each child onto a large sheet of paper. (Have the children spread their fingers when you trace their hands.) Give each child a sheet of paper with the Ten Commandments typed or written on it. Have the children cut the Commandments from the sheet of paper and glue one commandment onto each finger of the hand cutouts. Label the paper, "The Ten Commandments Help Us Love God and Others".

Materials needed:

large sheets of paper (one per child)
glue
scissors
lists of Ten Commandments (one per child)

Action Rhyme

God gave the Ten Commandments to me (*Hold up ten fingers.*)
so an image of God you will see. (*Hand circles face.*)
I should want to think and love and say (*Point to head, heart, then mouth.*)
everything right in the best way. (*Shake finger.*)
And if I choose to disobey and not do what is right, (*Point finger to self, then shake finger.*)
the image of God that I am won't be bright. (*Cover the face with hands.*)
So it's important, don't you see (*Shake finger and point to eyes.*)
to follow God's Commandments so we can be (*Make walking motion with fingers.*)
bright images of God for all to see. (*Open arms wide.*)

Read a Story

God, Who Told Us about Your Plan for Salvation?, Peggy Olds, VirTru Powers, 2006.
Living the 10 Commandments, Rosemarie Gortler and Donna Piscitelli, Our Sunday Visitor, 2007.

Watch a DVD

The Ten Commandments Complete Collection, Lion's Gate, 2007.

LESSON FOCUS

Emphasis

God first loved us through creation, but even more wondrous was the great love shown through the very act of redemption. Jesus gave us the ultimate gift of love, His life. Through the Eucharist, He continually shares with us the special gift of His love, which enables us to grow in love for Him and others.

As God's images, we all have the need to love and be loved. Love is not an emotion (although it includes the emotions), but a total union of the wills of two or more persons. Persons love each other by making a gift of themselves to one another in their wills. Such a love is total, permanent, and life-giving. There are different kinds of love—for example, the love of a husband and wife, the love of children, and the solitary love of a hermit (united to the Church) praying for the world. It is impossible to love God without loving others, and when we truly love others, we can move nearer to God.

The vocabulary word "love" can be explained as choosing to help everyone, including ourselves, be the best images of God we can be. Point out to the children that the word "love" is often used in the wrong way. Sometimes we say "I love my dog" (or cat, etc.). But that is not quite true. We do not care about our pets in the same way that we love our moms and dads or other people. People are made in the image of God. They have minds and wills. They can act like God. Animals do not have minds and wills. They are not persons. They are not made in the image of God as persons are. We can truly love only other persons. We can care about our pets very much, but we do not truly love them. Sometimes we say, "I love pizza" (or ice cream, etc.). But this is not really quite true either. We can really enjoy a certain kind of food, but we do not really love it. We can love only persons.

Correspondence to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

God, "He Who Is," is Truth and Love: CCC 214, 231

God is Love: CCC 221, 231

The Holy Spirit—God's gift: CCC 733

Communion in spiritual goods: CCC 952

Marriage in God's plan: CCC 1602

Male and female He created them: CCC 2331

Holy Orders: CCC 1593–98

The communal character of the human vocations:
CCC 1878

The Christian family: CCC 2204–6

Conversion and society: CCC 1889

Vocabulary

love: choosing to help everyone, including ourselves, be the best images of God we can be

Concepts of Faith

Whom does God love?

God loves everyone.

Whom are we to love?

We are to love God, ourselves, and everyone else.

LESSON PRESENTATION

Proclamation

We should love God and we should love others as God loves us.

LESSON EXPLANATION

Explain to the children that God loves. God loves us; God loves everyone.

We are made in the image of God to do what God does. That means that, because God loves us and everyone, we should love ourselves and everyone else. First, we should love God, then we should love others as God loves us.

Materials needed:

pictures of a bride and groom, a family, a priest, nuns in various habits, a brother, and a single person

There are many ways to show this love for others. Some ways are big and difficult for us. Some are smaller and easier to do. As we grow up, we choose how we will live our lives and show our love of God and of others. We are all called by God to love others in different ways. Some people answer God's call and show their love by getting married and becoming husbands and wives, moms and dads. (Show a picture of a bride and groom.) The people who choose to show their love by being married help themselves and their families lead good lives so they can be happy now and happy together in Heaven someday. (Show a picture of a family.)

Some people choose not to get married. They answer God's call and show their love for others in different ways. Some men become priests. (Show a picture of a priest.) They share their love with all of us, helping themselves and all of us to lead good lives now and to get to Heaven. Other men and women answer God's call and share their love in another way. Some of the women live, work, and pray together. They are called "sisters". (Show a picture of nuns in various habits.) The sisters teach in schools, work in hospitals, do parish work, and take care of the poor. They show their love in many ways. Certain men also answer God's call and share their love in this way. They are called "brothers". (Show a picture of a brother.) The brothers live, work, and pray together, too. They show their love of God by teaching and by helping the poor and the sick. Some people choose not to marry or become priests, sisters, or brothers. They live their lives loving God and loving others, too.

All these people are living their lives as images of God, loving others as God loves them. They are all sharing their love as images of God should. We all have a special way to live and share our love with others. When we love others, we make ourselves happy, because we are acting as God made us to act.

LESSON 5: LOVE OTHERS AS GOD LOVES YOU

Review Questions

- 1. What does God do?**
God loves.
- 2. Whom does God love?**
God loves everyone.
- 3. Because we are made in the image of God, what are we to do?**
We are to love as God loves.
- 4. Whom are we to love?**
We are to love God, ourselves, and everyone.
- 5. Can we love our pets?**
No, not in the same way that we love persons made in the image of God. We care for our pets because God made them for us.
- 6. Can we love certain foods?**
No, not the way we love persons.
- 7. What are some ways people can answer God's call and live their love?**
We can answer God's call by getting married, by living a holy life as a single person, by becoming a priest, by becoming a sister, by becoming a brother.

STORY OF FAITH: Saint Catherine of Siena

One person who showed her love for God and others was Saint Catherine of Siena. Siena is a city in Italy where Catherine lived. Even as a little girl, Catherine spent time in prayer. It is said that she would sometimes, on her way up or down stairs, kneel on each step and say the Hail Mary. When Catherine was six years old, she had a vision. A vision is rather like having a dream, only you are awake. She saw Jesus seated with the saints Peter, John, and Paul. In her vision, Jesus smiled at her and blessed her. From that time on, Catherine was very devoted to Jesus. She spent much time in prayer. She played with the other children, but she also tried to get them to be more prayerful and more devoted to Jesus.

When Catherine was older she joined the Dominican sisters. She worked in the hospitals as a nurse, always choosing the sickest and most difficult patients. Many people were unkind to Catherine. Nevertheless, she was always patient and kind to others. Catherine also visited people in prison. She hoped to bring these people back to God. Many souls were saved through her acts of love.

Review Questions

- 1. How did Catherine show her love for God and others when she was little?**
She prayed often, and she tried to get the other children to pray more.
- 2. How did Catherine show her love for God and others when she was older?**
She became a Dominican sister, she was a nurse, she was patient and kind to others, and she visited people in prison.

ENHANCING THE LESSON • LESSON EXPLANATION PART 2

There is a special time at Mass when a basket is passed around the church.

Ask: Who can tell me what people put in the basket? *Money.*

Do you know what happens to that money that people put in the basket? (Accept any reasonable answers.) *Some of the money is used to pay for lights, heat, and other utilities for the church. Some of the money helps pay for the people who work at the church, but some of the money is used to help people who do not have enough food or a place to live. Even when Jesus lived on earth, people gave money to help others. Let me read from the Bible what Jesus said about giving money to help others.*

SCRIPTURE STORY: The Poor Woman Who Showed Her Love

Based on
Mark 12:41–44

Jesus was a teacher. He came to teach us how to live as images of God. One day, Jesus went to the temple with His friends. A temple is something like a church. Jesus and His friends were watching the people come into the temple. One by one, the people would put coins into a basket. This money was the people's gift to be shared with the poor.

Jesus watched a very rich man come into the temple. The rich man acted as if he were very important. He wore very fancy clothes. The rich man jingled his money very loudly. "I have lots of money", the man thought to himself. "But I will keep most of it for myself. I want to buy more clothes, and I want to go on a big trip. Oh, and I have to buy a fancier house. I'll just give to the poor what I have left over after I have my fun." When he thought everyone was looking at him, he put his coins in the basket. Even though there were a large number of coins, the gift was not as big a gift as he could have given.

Then a very poor woman came into the temple. She was dressed in old clothes. She reached into her pocket and took out two coins. They were the last two coins she had. Quietly, she put them into the basket. She bowed her head and prayed, "Please help the people who have even less than I do. Help me show my love to others as You have shown Your love to me."

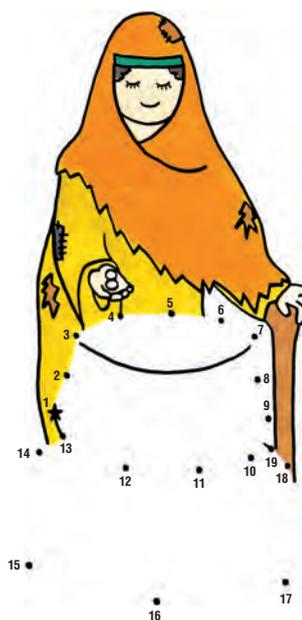
When Jesus saw what had happened, He told His friends, "The poor woman gave more than the rich man did. The poor woman loved God so much that she gave all she had, while the rich man gave only his extra money."

God loves us with His whole Self. Everything we have comes from God, even our very lives. If we want to be the best images of God we can be, then we are to love as God loves. We should show our love for God in all we think, say, and do.

Have the children complete page 13 in their workbooks.

LESSON 5: LOVE OTHERS AS GOD LOVES YOU

Directions: Connect the dots and finish coloring the picture.



The poor woman showed her love for God.

LESSON 5: LOVE OTHERS AS GOD LOVES YOU

Review Questions

- 1. What is a temple?**
A temple is something like a church.
- 2. What did people do when they came into the temple?**
The people put money into a basket.
- 3. How was the money used?**
The money was to help the poor people.
- 4. Who gave the most money?**
The rich man gave the most money.
- 5. Whose gift showed more love?**
The poor woman's gift showed more love.
- 6. Why?**
Because she gave all she had, and the rich man gave only his extra money.
- 7. When we show our love for others, whom are we reflecting?**
We are reflecting God.

LESSON EXPLANATION PART 3

One day when Jesus was teaching the people about how to get to Heaven, He told the people, "You shall love the Lord your God with your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and will all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." One of the men listening to Jesus did not quite understand. He asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" This is the story Jesus told him.

SCRIPTURE STORY: The Stranger Who Turned into a Friend

Based on
Luke 10:30-37

One day, Jesus told a story about a traveler who had been walking down a long and dusty road. The traveler was hurt and had lost all his food and money. The poor traveler could go no farther. He lay down by the side of the road. Soon a man came by carrying a bottle of water.

"Please help me", the traveler said. "I am thirsty and hurt."

But the man with the water did not stop. "I'm in a hurry", he said. "Besides, you have nothing to give me for my water."

The traveler felt very sad as he watched the man walk away. The traveler wondered if anyone coming along the road would help him. After a while, a merchant passed the traveler.

"Please help me", the traveler cried.

"But I do not even know you", the merchant said. "You should ask someone you know." And off he went.

The sun was going down, and soon it would be dark. The traveler still had found no one to help him. Just then, a stranger from another country came by, riding on a donkey. He saw the traveler and felt sorry for him.

"Let me help you", the stranger said. The stranger gave the traveler water to drink, and he put bandages on the traveler's bruises. The stranger let the traveler ride on the donkey.

"You can stay with me at the inn", the stranger said. "I will buy you some food to eat and take care of you."

The traveler was very happy. "You are good and loving", he said to the stranger. "I will never forget you."

We should be like the stranger, showing our love by helping others. We should not ask for rewards for the good things we do or say. We should help others, even those we do not know. We should not say that we are too busy to help. When we show our love for others, we are showing we love God, and we also make ourselves happy.

Review Questions

- 1. What happened to the traveler?**
He was hurt and had lost all his food and money.
- 2. What did the traveler need?**
The traveler needed someone to help him.
- 3. What did the first man say to the traveler?**
He was too busy to help.
- 4. What did the merchant say to the traveler?**
He did not know the traveler.
- 5. What did the stranger from another country do?**
He helped the traveler. The stranger put bandages on his bruises, gave him water, put him on his donkey, took him to the inn, and bought him food.
- 6. Who was acting as an image of God?**
The stranger from another country acted as an image of God.
- 7. When we help others, what do we show?**
When we help others we show we love others as God loves us.

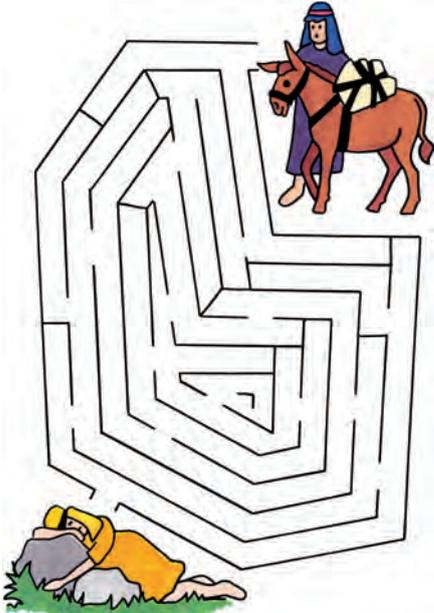
Optional Activity

If your school has children from countries other than the United States, talk about those countries with the students. Find the countries on a map. Tell the students what the people from those countries wear, what they eat, and how they live. Teach the children the word "Love" in the languages of the countries.

Have the children complete page 14 in their workbooks.

LESSON 5: LOVE OTHERS AS GOD LOVES YOU

Directions: Help the kind stranger find the man who needs help.



We should love others as God loves us.

14

LESSON 5: LOVE OTHERS AS GOD LOVES YOU

LIVING THE LESSON • APPLICATION

It is important that the children understand that loving others does not mean loving only people in our family and our friends, but all God's family. When we love others, we form a kind of family.

We each belong to our own families. In our families, we show our love for each other in many different ways.

Ask: How can we show our love for others within our families? (Answers should include) *By obeying our mothers and fathers, picking up our toys, helping with chores, etc. In addition to all those ways, we can pray for the people in our families.*

We all belong to another type of family. Can anyone tell me what family we all belong to? (Lead the children to answer) *God's family. We all belong to God's family—the Church.*

How can we show our love for all the people in God's family? *By praying for our parish family, giving some our money to the church, sharing our toys, clothes, or food with people who do not have any, behaving properly in church so others can pray, etc.*

Our classroom is a kind of family, too. We should show our love for our classmates.

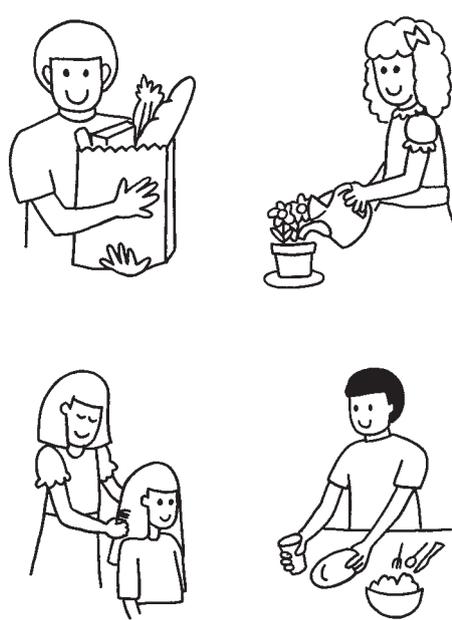
Ask: How can we show our love in the classroom? *Letting others be first in line, saying thank you, forgiving others, not always getting our way but doing what others want, being nice to someone who is lonely, helping someone who cannot do things as well as we can, etc.*

We belong to our families, to God's family and to our classroom family. We are never too little or too young to share our love with others. We can show our love in little ways every day. When we show our love for others, we are acting as God acts. God loves everyone and wants us to love everyone, too.

Have the children complete page 15 in their workbooks.

LESSON 5: LOVE OTHERS AS GOD LOVES YOU

Directions: Color the pictures.



Show your love by helping others.

15

Optional Activity

One way to demonstrate this idea is to have the children participate in a food drive program, the collection and donation of food to a community distribution center. (The collection of nonperishable food can be organized ahead of time so the food can be collected during this lesson, or the collection may take place at a different time.)

Ask: Do you ever get hungry?

What do you do when you are hungry? *Ask our moms for something to eat.*

There are people who do not have enough to eat. They cannot just go into their cupboards or refrigerators and get something to eat, because there is no food there.

CELEBRATION

Prayer

*Dear God,
help us to act as Your images,
loving others as You love us.
We offer You our acts of love.
Amen.*

ACTIVITIES

"I Love . . ."

Give each child a red paper heart (children may cut heart from red construction paper if they are able). Print on the board, "I love God. I love others. I love _____." Discuss with the children the people they love (for example, mom, dad, brother, sister, grandma, grandpa, aunt, uncle, etc.). As each person is named, write the names on the board. Have the children print the sentences from the board, filling in the blank with a list of people they love.

Materials needed:

large pieces of red construction paper (one per child)
Or
large hearts cut from construction paper (one per child)
pencils

Action Rhyme

I have something to share. (*Cup one hand over the other.*)

You have it, too. (*Point to others.*)

The more you share it, the bigger it grows. (*Move hands apart to show growing.*)

It's the gift of love. (*Hand on heart.*)

To love one another is easy to do. (*Nod head "yes".*)

Share your love with others, and they'll share their love with you. (*Arms out, as if to give, then crossed over chest.*)

Read a Story

Little Acts of Grace, Rosemarie Gortler and Donna Piscitelli, Our Sunday Visitor, 2002.

Watch a DVD

Veggie Tales: Are You My Neighbor?, Big Idea, 2006.

Veggie Tales: Lyle: The Kindly Viking, Big Idea, 2001.

The Good Samaritan, NEST Family Productions, 2006.