

Teaching Guide

Amos 6.1,4-7; 1 Timothy 6.11-16; Luke 16.19-31

OVERVIEW

Gospel Theme: I can share.

Welcome to *Promise*, a lectionary-based program that invites young children to meet Jesus in the Sunday Gospels and the Sunday assembly. This week's story and activities help children understand and experience what Jesus' message about sharing means for them.

Jesus' story about the rich man and Lazarus the beggar teaches us about noticing the needs around us and sharing the riches God has given us. For young children, sharing is a challenge, but one they have a lifetime to learn.

Doctrinal Concept: Catechesis aims to bring about in the believer an ever-more mature faith in Jesus Christ, a deeper knowledge and love of his person and message, and a firm commitment to follow him. With God's grace, catechesis continually unfolds the mystery of Christ until the believer willingly becomes his disciple (*National Directory for Catechesis* #19.A) *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1718-19, 2831.

Materials: Scissors, paste or tape, paper punch, yarn lengths.

Note: Look ahead in next week's guide to note the materials needed for that lesson.

Connecting the Weekly Issue of *Promise* to the *What the Church Believes and Teaches Handbook*

✠ As you look through this Guide, you will sometimes see a Chi Rho in the margin. This icon is your signal to look at the brackets where the Chi Rho appears. Within the brackets you will see a bold-faced citation, for example, [**Believe 10, page 16**]. This citation directs you to the section in *What the Church Believes and Teaches* that expands on the theme of the story you are reading in the issue of *Promise*. Be sure to explore this section with the children to discover how the *Catechism* treats this theme for people their age.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

NAME TAGS Enlist an aide to help you print the children's names on name tags. Pin the tags to a bulletin board. The children find their tag when they come into the room and use double-sided tape to stick it on their clothing. Any tags left on the board alert you to children who are missing.

GATHER AND SING Begin *Promise* class by gathering in a prayer circle. Sing one of the songs from the *Promise* music CD or sing the following words to "Did You Ever See a Lassie?" Repeat this ritual each week.

We gather here together, together, together.
 We gather here together to show we love God.
 To hear Jesus' stories, to clap, pray, and sing.
 We gather here together to show we love God.

Have the children clap on the word *clap*. Conclude with a short prayer asking God's blessing on your time together.

Objective: The children will recognize the importance of sharing.

STORY: Shopping and Sharing (page 2) Have the children sit in a story circle. Ask how they have shared today. *For example, they probably shared a bathroom, toothpaste, box of cereal, and car or bus ride. At school they share books, art supplies, and snacks.* Tell them that today you will tell them a story about a boy and his mom and how they shared. Read the following story aloud from the guide or tell it in your own words.

James and his mother parked the car in the grocery store parking lot. Mom opened her purse and took out the shopping list. "Carrots, hamburger, macaroni and cheese, milk," Mom read aloud. "And gummi bears," James added. Mom laughed, "You always want candy, James," she said. "But today I want you to shop for something else. Today we are going to buy food for the food shelf." James asked, "What is a food shelf?" Mom said, "This Sunday our church is collecting food for people who do not have enough money to buy their own food. Many people have children like you. So, I want you to help choose the food we will share." James smiled. "I want to help," he said.

James and his mom got a big cart and went up and down the aisles of the grocery store. What do you think James picked out for the food shelf? (Let the children guess. Only packaged food can be stored in a food shelf program.) After they paid for the food, James and his mom put all the food for the food shelf in a separate bag. "We will take it to church on Sunday," Mom said. "I will take it up to the altar," said James. "Now, I have a surprise for you," Mom said. She reached into one of the grocery bags and pulled out two bags of gummi bears. "One for me and one for the food shelf," James said. "That's right," said Mom. She gave James a big hug.

Ask the children to retell the story to you so you can check their grasp of the details. Ask if any of them give food to others as James and his mom did. If your church supports a food shelf, tell the children how it works. Have the children retell the story by placing a finger on the home where James and his mother live and printing 1 in the circle there. Children follow the road from home to the grocery store and write 2 in that circle. They follow the road to church where James will bring up the food to the altar and write a 3 there. Finally they write 4 in the circle by the Community Center, where the food will be distributed. Tell the children to use their illustration at home to tell the story to their families.

STRETCH AND MOVE: We Are Artists Tell the children to imagine they are artists who can draw with every part of their body. Tell them they are going to pretend to paint on the side of the wall a huge picture of children sharing. It's going to be a beautiful picture of all the things they share, but

they only have a short time to paint it. Therefore they are going to paint with both hands as well as other body parts.


First of all activate the children's imaginations by asking them what their sharing picture might look like. Next have them begin to paint this picture in the air with one hand. After 15-20 seconds, switch to other ways of painting, using their noses, jaws, one ear, then the other, one shoulder, then the other, one elbow, then the other, stomach, hips, one knee, both knees, one foot, then the other, both feet. This last requires lying on their backs. Then tell them time is running out and they need to paint with both their hands and their nose, both elbows and jaw, both elbows and knees, both shoulders and hips, nose and knees, jaw and hips, one ear and one foot, one ear and the other foot, both hands and one foot, both hands and the other foot. Finally have your children lie on their backs and paint with both feet, both hands and their nose. Conclude by asking each child to describe one way of sharing he or she painted.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

COVER ACTIVITY: How do we share at Mass?

Gather in the work area, which can be tables or desks. Have the children put their copies of *Promise* face up on the work surface. Remind them of the discussion about sharing. Read the cover title aloud and give the children time to examine the illustration. When they are ready, ask for volunteers to tell what acts of sharing they see.

Everyone is sharing the greeting of peace. They have brought food to share with hungry people and donated money to help the church. The open book shows they have shared the Gospel message. The bread and wine are ready to share in Holy Communion. People can share the hymn books.

 Children will know other ways people share in their parishes. [Believe 10, page 16]

GOSPEL RITUAL Move to the area you have set aside for proclaiming the Gospel. Use the first song on the *Promise* music CD to prepare the children to hear the Gospel. Have them add gestures. If you do not have the CD, have the children repeat the following words after you.

*Loving God, we want your Word
to be in our minds,
and on our lips,
and in our hearts.
Amen. Alleluia.*

Objective: The children will understand that Jesus wants us to notice poor people and help them.

GOSPEL STORYTELLING: The Rich Man and the Beggar Gather in a story circle and tell the children a story that Jesus once told his friends.

Once there was a very rich man. He had lots of food to eat and things to drink and friends to party with. A beggar named Lazarus used to come to the rich man's house to see if he could get any leftovers. But the rich man never even noticed Lazarus. Only the stray dogs felt sorry for him. They licked his sores to make him feel better.

Then both the rich man and Lazarus died. Abraham welcomed Lazarus to heaven, but the rich man went to a place of suffering. The rich man asked Lazarus to bring him a glass of water, but Abraham said it was too late for them to be friends. The rich man should have noticed Lazarus when he was alive.

Retell the story using creative movement. Have all the children be the rich man eating and drinking and talking to his friends. Then have them all be the poor man, Lazarus, huddled by the gate, hungry and alone, except for the dogs. Have the children be the rich man again, who suddenly dies. How does he feel when he dies? Whom does he want to help him? What happens when Lazarus dies? Why is it too late for the rich man and Lazarus to be friends?

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Objective: The children will identify ways they share God's world.

ACTIVITY: We Share God's World (pages 3-4) Gather in the work area with page 4 of *Promise* facing up. Remind the children of their discussion about sharing at the beginning of this lesson. Read the sentence on page 4 with the children and identify the photo of the world taken from space. Identify the four illustrations at the bottom of the page—*animals and plants, land and water, people*—with whom we share God's world. Have children separate pages 3-4 from pages 1-2 and cut off the strip of illustrations. Help them paste or tape the illustration squares in the empty shapes on page 3. Punch a hole in the top of the page so the children can lace yarn through.

CONCLUDING PRAYER Have the children stand in a circle holding their worlds. Say aloud together "Thank You, God, for..." and pause as children take turns mentioning things or persons they thank God for.

EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

I SHARE WITH OTHERS POSTER Take a piece of paper and print "I Share" in the middle. Have the children copy the words on a sheet of typing paper or poster paper. Some of them will need your help to print the words. Ask them to think of things they have at home that they can share with others. Brainstorm together a list of things they can share, such as toys, food, pencils, crayons. Have them draw, and label if they wish, these things around the words "I Share" on their papers. Encourage them to share their drawings with their families.

MY SHARING MAP Ask the children to look back to the map on page 2 of *Promise*. Invite them to think of places where people in your community share. Use these ideas to make a map of sharing places in your area. As you put these places on a simple map, ask the children to think of symbols that represent these places. Example: "What should we put by the food shelf so we remember what it is?" Use their ideas to label the map. Encourage the children to look for these sharing places when they are out in the community with their family and friends.

OVERVIEW

Gospel Theme: Jesus asks us to trust him.

In this Sunday's Gospel Jesus' friends ask him to increase their faith. Jesus tells them, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed you could tell a tree to plant itself in the ocean, and it would obey you." This issue of *Promise* asks the children to explore what it means for them to trust the people in their lives.

Promise helps children learn about God the way they learn about the world around them—through sense-involving activities and reflection on their own experiences. Read over this guide. Then adjust the lesson to your own group.

Doctrinal Concept: The liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the foundation from which all her power flows... the liturgy is the privileged place for catechizing the People of God (*National Directory for Catechesis* #33). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #151, 162.

Materials: Small juice cans, scissors, string, thread, or ribbon, small branches, paste, crayons or colored pencils, dirt or sand, *Promise* CD.

Teacher Aides: If you have more than a few children in your *Promise* classroom, you could use a teacher's aide. Having another person available to help with projects and to handle emergencies makes it possible for you to concentrate on the lesson. Junior high or senior high students are ideal as aides. They often need services projects for religion class or Confirmation programs.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

GATHER AND SING Begin the lesson by gathering in a prayer circle. Sing one of the songs from the *Promise* CD or sing the gathering song printed in the *Promise* guide for last week.

WARMUP ACTIVITY: Simon Says Have the children stay in their prayer circle and play a short game of Simon Says. Raise your hand above your head and say "Simon says wave your hand." Everyone will imitate you. Next say "Simon says touch your ear." Do two or three more of these until you give a command without putting Simon says in front of it. For example: make a face. Children will enjoy being tricked and the game will prepare them for the cover activity.

COVER ACTIVITY: We follow Jesus. Distribute *Promise* and ask the children to study the cover illustration. Read aloud the sentence in the middle of the page: *We follow Jesus.* Ask who is depicted in the upper left illustration. *St. Francis, whose feast day is Monday, October 4.* How do they know it is Francis? *Dressed like a Franciscan, has the wolf of Gubbio with him, is known for loving creation so is pictured outdoors.* How did Francis follow Jesus? *He lived a simple*

life and told everyone he met how much God loved them, just as Jesus did. Who is in the upper right? How do they know this is Mother Teresa? *She has the blue and white Indian sari, is tending to a poor, sick person, children trust she will help them, too.* How did Mother Teresa follow Jesus? *She lived a simple life and took care of every sick person she met. She got many other people to help in her work.* Who is with Jesus at bottom right? *Children from his time. They are pointing at some small seeds Jesus has in his hand.* We will hear about those in the Gospel. Who is the child holding a copy of *Promise*? *You!* Tell how you follow Jesus. *Go to Mass, learn about Jesus in Promise class, help others and share with them as Jesus did.* Give the children time to make the child look like them. Conclude by discussing the question at the bottom. **[Follow Jesus 17, page 24]**



Objective: The children will recognize what it means to trust the people they know and love.

STORY: Max trusts his parents Stay in the prayer circle and tell the children this story.

Max was a friendly fish. He liked to have swimming races and play games with his friends. One day when Max and his friends were out having fun they saw three worms floating in the water. Max's friends were hungry for lunch and they told Max they were going to eat the worms. Max told them, "Don't eat the worms! My parents told me not to eat worms because they might be on a fishing hook and then you will be caught." Max's friends laughed and said, "That's not true." They started to swim closer to the worms with their mouths open. Just then the water moved a little and they saw the shiny fishing hooks. Max's friends swam away from the worms as fast as they could and swam over to Max. "We should have trusted you, Max. We were almost caught." Max smiled and told them, "I'm glad I can trust my parents to tell me ahead of time what is not safe."

Review the details of the story by asking: What were Max and his friends doing? What happened when they got hungry? What did Max tell his friends? Was Max right? How did Max's parents keep him safe?

ACTIVITY: Jennifer goes to school (page 2) Move to the work area and have the children open *Promise* to page 2. They will like this activity because it tells their story, too. Ask the children to find Jennifer on the page. *She is the girl in the wheelchair.* Let them speculate about why her leg is bandaged. Give them a few moments to find the people in the picture whom Jennifer can trust to make her first day at school a happy one.

- Brother pushing Jennifer
- Crossing guard
- Teacher
- Children who will be classmates
- Food preparation people
- Bus driver
- Principal on steps
- Nurse

Discuss how Jennifer can trust these people to help her. Conclude by making a thank you prayer for all those who helped us today.

STRETCH AND MOVE: Move Like an Animal Tell the children they are going to pretend to be animals. Suggest they use movement but not voices. Ask them the following questions:

- Can you swim like a fish?
- Can you fly like a butterfly?
- Can you stretch like a giraffe?
- Can you walk like an elephant?
- Can you slither like a snake?
- Can you jump like a kangaroo?
- Can you pounce like a tiger?
- Can you walk on soft little feet like a kitten and walk to the Gospel area?

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

GOSPEL RITUAL Use the first song on the *Promise* music CD to prepare the children for the Gospel.

Objective: The children will recognize they can trust Jesus.

GOSPEL STORY TELLING: Jesus says, “Trust God” Gather the children seated in a circle. Ask them to remember who Jennifer was trusting on her first day at her new school. Remind them whom they trusted to get them to this class today. Keep this discussion brief. Then ask if anyone has a worry today. Lead into the fact that Jesus’ friends, even though they were with Jesus every day, had worries, too. In this Sunday’s Gospel reading, they tell Jesus their worry. Listen carefully to find out what it was.

One day Jesus’ friends told him they were worried. “We don’t think we have enough faith,” they said. Jesus made them feel better. He reached into a bush and shook some tiny little seeds into his hand. He said, “If you have faith as big as a little, bitty mustard seed, that is enough. All you have to do is trust me,” Jesus said. “That is enough, because I love you very much.” After that Jesus’ friends felt better.

Review this simple version of Sunday’s Gospel. Ask if they ever worried they weren’t good enough. Perhaps when they are disobedient or hurt someone or do a mean thing. Jesus says God loves us all the time. One way we show Jesus we trust him and have faith in him is through our prayers. Conclude this Gospel storytelling by giving each child a chance to pray for something or someone. Everyone responds, “God hears our prayers.”

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Objective: The children will recognize what it means to trust the people they know and love.

TRUST TREE (pages 3-4) Move to the work area again. Ask the children to name people they trust. Use a chalkboard or newsprint to capture their responses. If they give a specific name, change it to a title like mom, dad, teacher, or priest. When you have a list, have the children look at page 3. There

are four people shapes. Let them choose four of the names you brainstormed and write them on the back of the people shapes. This is a perfect time to have aides available to help the children. They cut out the four squares on page 3, turn them over, and use crayons or pencils to make the people shape on that side look like the name on the back. Then follow the instructions to create a trust tree for each child.

TRUST TREE OPTION Instead of making individual trust trees, the class can make one big tree together. Simply draw a tree on the chalkboard and print the names of people children trust on the branches. Children may then take their issues of *Promise* home and assemble their own trust trees with the help of their families.

CONCLUDING SONG Conclude today’s lesson with song. “Jesus Loves the Little Children” is on the *Promise* CD. The children can sing along. Or teach them the following words to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”

Jesus has the words of life,
words of life, words of life.
Jesus has the words of life.
We will follow him.

Lead the children in this prayer.

Leader: Do you believe that God loves us?

Children: Yes, we believe!

Leader: Do you believe that Jesus hears our prayers?

Children: Yes, we believe!

Leader: Do you believe that just a little faith in Jesus is enough?

Children: Yes, we believe!

Leader: Let us sing our song again.

EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

PEOPLE TRUST ME Have the children think of times that someone trusted them to take care of something (pets, toys) or to make a good choice (get an adult to help get a ball that rolled under a car). Talk about these examples and ask them how being trusted made them feel. Tell the children they are going to draw a picture of a time someone trusted them. Think of an example of your own, such as, “I feel proud that your families trust me to be your teacher, so I am going to draw a picture of me teaching you.” Draw a quick sketch of you teaching children. Invite the children to make their own picture of a time someone trusted them and how it made them feel. Ask the children to share their pictures and stories with each other when they finish.

“I TRUST YOU” BALANCE GAME Ask two children to model this activity for the class. They stand back to back, interlock their arms at the elbow, and try to sit down by leaning against each other’s back. After they are successfully sitting on the floor, have them try to stand up again while keeping their arms locked together. Ask the children how those two volunteers had to trust each other to make it work. Discuss what would happen if one of them let go in the middle of the activity and why no one would want a partner they couldn’t trust. Invite the other children to try this several times with different partners.

Teaching Guide

2 Kings 5.14-17; 2 Timothy 2.8-13; Luke 17.11-19

OVERVIEW

Gospel Theme: I can thank Jesus.

In Sunday's Gospel Jesus heals ten lepers, but only one thanks him. This week the *Promise* stories and activities help children to thank God for the beauty of creation and thank people around them for their loving actions. October 11 is Thanksgiving Day in Canada. Canadians may adapt this lesson to school and parish celebrations of this holiday.

Children will reflect the views and values of the adults around them. This is why pollsters interview 3rd graders about national elections. The children will also imitate the actions and words of adults. You as their teacher have a great opportunity to show politeness and respect to the children you teach. If you yank on a child's sleeve to make him or her sit down, the children will feel free to do the same. If you unflinchingly thank the children for each small kindness they do for you or each other, they will become aware and thankful, too. Maybe the Samaritan leper in this Sunday's Gospel learned politeness from his teacher.

Doctrinal Concept: Christ calls all the faithful to proclaim the Good News everywhere in the world and to hand his message on to successive generations by professing, living, and celebrating the faith in liturgy and prayer (*National Directory for Catechesis* #15). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #586.

Materials: Crayons or markers, scissors, tape, newsprint or chalkboard. Separate pages 1-2 of *Promise* from pages 3-4 before class.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

GATHER AND SING Gather the children in a prayer circle. Teach them this simple song to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

Thank you, God, for loving me.
I'm as loved as I can be.
My heart lifts up in thanks to you
For friends and family, teachers, too.
Thank you, God, for loving me.
I'm as loved as I can be.

Objective: The children will thank God for the gift of creation.

COVER ACTIVITY: Thank you, God, for our world. Stay in the prayer circle and distribute pages 1-2 of *Promise*. Read together the large-type sentence at the top of the cover illustration. Ask a volunteer to describe the illustration. Two children and a dog hiking in the woods. Read aloud together the first two sentences at the bottom of the page. Assign each child a partner and have them find the hidden birds and

flowers together. When all are finished, invite each pair to tell you one of their finds and write the name on the chalkboard or on newsprint. *Birds:* eagle, owl, cardinal, duck, dove. *Flowers:* dandelion, lily, sunflower, rose, tulip. Conclude by thanking God for these gifts.

STORYTELLING: **The Teddy Bear Picnic** Tell the children the following story:

It was Teddy Bear Picnic day! Teacher Bear got up early to make a picnic lunch for her class. She baked brownies and made potato salad. She packed a picnic basket with sandwiches and cookies, and mixed up lemonade in a cooler.

Teacher Bear went to the park and set up a picnic table. Soon a big yellow school bus brought ten very excited bears for a day of fun. Teacher Bear played games with them, gave them prizes, let them play on the jungle gym and waded in the brook. Teacher Bear forgot how early she got up to fix the picnic because the ten little bears had so much fun laughing and playing and eating. Just as they finished the last cookie the bus gave a loud honk. The bears jumped up one by one and ran to the bus. Teacher Bear felt very sad. Not even one little bear thanked her for the picnic. Just as she started to clean up, one bear came back and said, "Thank you, Teacher Bear, for the wonderful picnic."

Ask: In what ways did Teacher Bear show she loved the little bears? How did Teacher Bear feel when no one thanked her? How are her feelings like Jesus' feelings?

ACTIVITY: Turn to page 2. Ask the children to read the rebus story aloud with you. Have them make a sad face when no one thanks Teacher Bear and a happy face when one little bear comes back to thank her. Tell the children to tell the story to their families tonight.

ACTIVITY: **The Ten Bears' Picnic, A Fingerplay** Hold up ten fingers to begin, bend one down as you recite each verse. Have the children use their fingers in the same way as they learn the rhyme.

Ten little bears
sitting on the ground
looking all around.
One went away
with nothing to say.
and then there were nine.

Nine little bears...
and then there were eight.

Eight little bears...
Seven little bears...
Six little bears...
Five little bears...
Four little bears...

Three little bears...
Two little bears...
One little bear
sitting on the ground,
looking all around.
One little bear
had this to say:
“Thank you for a very nice day!”

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

GOSPEL RITUAL Children love ritual. It gives them a chance to involve their senses and their bodies. Make a special place for the Bible or lectionary in your class space. Spread a beautiful piece of cloth for the Bible to rest on. The children will enjoy bringing pretty rocks and flowers to this holy place. Use a song from the *Promise* CD or an *Alleluia* ✨ the children know to begin the ritual. [**Believe 3, page 6**]

GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Jesus heals ten sick people; one says thank you Gather the children in a circle in the story area. Set the scene of Sunday’s Gospel by asking: How do you feel when someone thanks you, for example, for setting the table? How do you feel when someone forgets to say thank you? Tell Sunday’s Gospel story.

Once Jesus saw ten people who were sick with sores that never healed. They said to Jesus, “Help us.” Jesus said, “Go to the Temple.” The ten people went to the Temple, and on their way they found their sores were healed. They were so excited they ran to tell their families and friends. One of the persons came back to Jesus, knelt down, and thanked Jesus. Jesus said, “I made ten people well, but only one came back to thank me.”

Ask: How did the ten sick people feel when their sores were better? Why didn’t they thank Jesus? How did Jesus feel when no one thanked him? How did he feel when one person did say thank you?

STRETCH AND MOVE Tell the children they are going to thank God for the fun things our bodies can do. Ask them to think of something they like to do when they play. *Hop, run, throw a ball.* Give each child a turn to be the leader and name one thing he or she is thankful to be able to do. The rest of the children act it out. For example, you can lead off by saying, “Thank you, God, for swimming.” The children pretend they are swimming. Continue until every child has had a chance to call out an activity.

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Objective: The children will practice how to thank others for loving actions.

ACTIVITY: What will happen next? Gather the children at their work places and distribute pages 3-4 of *Promise*. This folding activity shows ways children help others and others help them. Have them examine, one at a time, the six pictures on page 3. Take time to tell what is happening and what could make the situation better.

Direct the children to turn the page over. Model for them how to follow the cut-and-fold directions. Show them how this will make a difference in the pictures they just looked at. Help the children cut and fold their copies. Discuss together what person in the story will say “Thank you” and why. Distribute envelopes so they can take this activity home and show their families how it works.

CLOSING PRAYER: Thank You Bracelet Make bracelets for the children by typing *Thank You, Jesus* across an 8” by 11” sheet of paper. Make the letters about an inch high and the whole phrase seven inches wide. Duplicate it 7 or 8 times on the page. Cut out the strips and give one to each child to tape around their wrists. Lead them in praying by saying, *Thank you, Jesus, for...* They take turns completing the sentence. After each child contributes, the others raise their arms up so their bracelets show and say, *Thank you, Jesus.*

EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

THANK YOU CARD Have the children make a thank you card for each member of their family. Ask them to write or draw on the card a reason they want to thank that person. For example, children could thank a brother or sister for sharing toys or they could thank a parent for making lunch.

MAKE A THANK YOU BOX Pass out slips of paper. The children can write or draw something or someone for which they thank God. Encourage them to put a new slip in the box once or more during each *Promise* session. Your example will do more than your words in helping the children develop an attitude of gratitude. Decorate a small box with the words, “Thank you, God!” and any illustrations you like.

Teaching Guide

Exodus 17.8-13; 2 Timothy 3.14—4.2; Luke 18.1-8

OVERVIEW

Gospel Theme: I can ask.

In Sunday's Gospel Jesus teaches us that we must continually ask for what we need and not lose heart. *Promise* encourages the children to ask God for what they need. Our loving God will answer our prayers much faster than the uncaring judge in the Gospel answers the widow's request.

We should celebrate the persistence with which young children ask for what they want. It is a quality which will be important to them in later life as they seek for what will make them strong and useful Christians.

Doctrinal Concept: Since it is composed of human beings made in God's image and called to communion with God, human society ought to be primarily ordered to the spiritual dimension of the human persons who constitute it. Respect for the inherent dignity of every human person is the foundation of a just society, and its ultimate end is the development of those persons to their fullest potential (*National Directory for Catechesis* #43.A). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #2607, 2612-13.

Materials: Scissors, crayons or colored pencils, stapler. Separate pages 1-2 of *Promise* from pages 3-4 before class begins.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

GATHER AND SING Gather the children in a prayer circle, standing. Sing "The Whole World's in God's Hands." Have the children add gestures—a big sweeping circle for the world, outstretched cupped hands (as for Holy Communion) for God's hands. Add verses pertinent to the children—our school, St. ___ Parish, our families.

STORY: The Children Who Asked and Asked Have the children sit down in a circle. Tell them the title of this week's story. What do they imagine the children are asking for? Read or tell the following story.

Patty and Lance lived next door to each other. Halloween was only two weeks away. Every day on the way home from school Patty and Lance stopped at Flynn's store to look at the Halloween masks. Each day they nagged their parents. "Can't we buy one of the masks in Flynn's store?" they asked. On Monday they wanted monster masks, but their parents said no. On Tuesday they decided on gorilla masks, on Wednesday clown masks, on Thursday movie-star masks. Each day their parents said, "No, we don't have money for masks. Besides, you want every mask in the store."

When Patty and Lance came home from school on Friday, Lance's mother asked Patty to come over for milk and cookies. "We decided we want Hobbit masks," said Lance.

Lance's mother smiled and said, "Come with me to the basement." There stood Patty's mother at a worktable with all kinds of supplies for making Halloween masks—paper plates, yarn, glitter, glue, cotton, paints. Patty made a clown mask with a purple nose and red-yarn hair full of glitter. Lance made a green and purple monster face with black hair and big ears. "These are better than Flynn's masks," said Patty. "I knew you'd get us masks," said Lance, "if we kept asking." "We decided we had to do something to stop your nagging," said the mothers.

Ask: What did the children ask for? Why didn't their parents buy the masks for them? How did the parents give the children what they really wanted?

Objective: The children will recognize what they need and who answers their needs.

COVER ACTIVITY: Who helps me? Ask the children who helped them so far today. Give them each a chance to contribute. Then tell them they can make up a story about a little boy who got a lot of help getting through his day. Divide the children into six groups. Distribute pages 1-2 of *Promise* and have the children examine the cover illustration. The boy in the lower right is George, a first grader. Divide the children into six groups. Each group gets to tell a part of George's story.

Group 1 George gets ready for school.

Group 2 Someone walks George to school.

Group 3 George has an art class.

Group 4 George falls down on the playground.

Group 5 George goes to the public library after school.

Group 6 Grandpa comes to walk George home.

Each group makes up a part of George's day, telling who helped him and what those people did. Let the children be imaginative. Children in other groups may not interfere with the storytelling of an individual group.

Conclude the story by writing on the chalkboard or on newsprint all the people who helped George throughout his day.

ACTIVITY: What do I need? Move to the work area. Remind the children of all the ways the people whose names or titles are written on the board helped George. Distribute crayons or colored pencils and have the children turn to page 2 of *Promise*. Read the title aloud and give them time to find and color the hidden objects that children need. *Sun, book, bed, heart (love), flowers, home, rain, water or milk, starlight, trees, parents, clothes, apple and carrot, pet dog.* When the children are finished, let them take turns showing one of the objects they discovered and colored and telling why they need that person or thing.

If you do not have time to complete this activity in class, send it home. Parents will enjoy talking about their children's needs with them.

STRETCH AND MOVE Gather in a circle in the open space. Give each child an imaginary ball. Ask them to follow your directions to play with the imaginary ball.

Throw it like a baseball.

Roll it like a bowling ball.

Spin it like a top.

Kick it like a soccer ball.

Bounce it like a basketball.

Hit it like a tennis ball.

Toss it gently to the child on your right.

Throw it high in the air and catch it.

Now tell the children the ball is changing. As they hold it in their hands—

It is heavy.

It is very light.

It is getting smaller and smaller.

It is very big.

It is sticky.

It is slippery.

It is quivering.

Conclude by telling the children to roll their balls over to the Gospel area and gather there with their balls in their laps.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

Objective: The children will understand that God wants them to keep asking for what they need.

GOSPEL STORYTELLING: *The Woman Who Kept Asking*

Gather the children in a storytelling circle in the Gospel area. Hold up *Promise* (page 2), and recall that the page shows things we ask for. Tell this Gospel story.

Once there was a judge who was never fair to people. In the same city there was a woman with children who was very poor. This woman went to the bad judge and asked him to help her. The judge paid no attention to her. The woman went to the bad judge again and again and again. Finally the judge said, "I will help. You are driving me crazy asking me to help you all the time." Jesus said, "Keep asking God for what you need the way this woman did. God is much nicer than this judge."

Ask: What did the woman need? Why did the judge help her? What do you ask God for?

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Objective: The children will create a book of prayers.

GOSPEL ACTIVITY: *My Book of Prayers* Ask the children when they pray—in *Promise* class, at Mass, before meals, bedtime, when they are worried or scared, when they are happy and want to say thank you to God. Tell them that when they pray Jesus' Spirit, who is always with us, helps them find words. The Church also has prayers the children can learn, words with which to talk to God. Today they will make their own prayer books and take them home to pray with their families.

Distribute pages 3-4 of *Promise* and scissors. Show the children how to make the one horizontal cut necessary. Collect the scissors immediately. Ask the children to hold up the part of the page with the words *My Book of Prayers*. Ask them to place their piece on their desks with the words face down and fold it. They then find the piece with the longer prayers, turn it face down, and fold it. Show the children how to insert the two pieces of folded paper inside each other to make a booklet. Read through the page numbers together to make sure the inserting is correct.

Distribute pencils or crayons. Go through the booklet with the children, doing the activity on each page, or have them work independently. *Activities:* page 2, connect the dots; page 3, sign name; pages 4-5, draw people and write a worry; page 7, trace over the dotted words.

CONCLUDING PRAYER Have the children stand in a circle with their prayer books. Have them read the prayers together, or have individual children read a page. End with a song the children all know.

EXTENDING ACTIVITY

OUR COMMON PRAYERS Children like to know the prayers that big people are saying. Use some of those extra minutes that happen in your classroom to turn to one of the following prayers and pray it with the children. Give them plenty of time to ask questions about the words and concepts. [**Treasures, page 29**]



The Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now and at
the hour of our death. Amen.

Teaching Guide

Sirach 35.12-14, 16-18; 2 Timothy 4.6-8, 16-18; Luke 18.9-14

OVERVIEW

Gospel Theme: I am important and so are you.

In Sunday's Gospel two men go to the Temple to pray. One thinks he is great; the other asks for God's help. Jesus insists that people who think they are superior will have to learn that all people have worth. Young children need practice in being friends. They need to learn that sharing, helping and enjoying fun together is how people become friends. *Promise* helps children recognize Jesus' message—all people are important.

Doctrinal Concept: We are called to be leaven in society, applying Christian values to every aspect of our lives. Christians, by virtue of their Baptism, must be the "servant" leaders that Jesus Christ challenged the disciples to be (*National Directory for Catechesis* #43.B). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #588, 2631.

Materials: Scissors, paste, crayons or markers, pencils, ink pad.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

GATHER TOGETHER Today, instead of a song, teach the children a fingerplay. It will set the tone for a class where everyone is important and everyone is alike in being human and loved by God. Have the children sit in a circle and follow you in making the gestures for the fingerplay.

My eyes can see. (*Make eyeglasses with hands.*)

My mouth can talk. (*Move thumb and index finger as if talking.*)

My ears can hear. (*Cup hand and place it behind ear.*)

My legs can walk. (*Make second and third fingers of right hand "walk."*)

My nose can smell. (*Touch nose.*)

My teeth can chew. (*Make chewing motions with mouth.*)

My heart can love. (*Cross arms on chest.*)

I'm just like you! (*Point to child on the right.*)

OPENING PRAYER Have children remain seated in the circle. Pray the following prayer or one of your own making. They respond "Amen."

Loving God, you made each of us special and wonderful. You made us so we could be friends with one another and friends with you. Thank you for your love. We want to learn more about you today.

STORYTELLING: The girl who thought she was queen Stay in the circle. Read or tell the children the following story.

Once there was a girl in the first grade who always wanted to play Queen at recess. "I have pierced ears and you

don't, so I'll be the queen," she said to the other first-grade girls. "We don't care," they answered. "I wear pretty dresses, and you don't, so I'll be the queen," she said. "We don't care," said the other girls. "Who wants to play a game like Queen?" said the other girls. "Let's play tag. It's more fun for everyone."

Ask: Who did the girl who wanted to play Queen think was the most important person in the first grade? How do you know? Who did the rest of the girls think was important?

Objective: The children will recognize that they are each important because God loves them and gives them life.

COVER ACTIVITY: Everyone is important Remind the children of the girl who wanted to play Queen. Why did she like that game? *She thinks she is the most important child and she'll get a lot of attention if she is Queen.* What did the other children want to play? *Tag, because it is fun for everyone.* Have the children look at the *Promise* cover. Ask: Who is important on this playground? Give each child a chance to tell about an important child he or she sees. *Some possibilities, from upper left: children who are inviting a girl to play basketball with them; boy who is obeying the playground rule and going down the slide the right way; girl pushing a younger child in the swings; children turning the rope so the boy can jump; child comforting the boy with the hurt knee; girl with the ponytail who bumped the boy and will say she's sorry; boy and girl who are sharing a cookie.* Conclude by deciding that everyone is important in the picture. Ask if everyone is important in this class. Everyone is important and everyone is special.

STRETCH AND SING Move to an area where the children can stretch out their arms and not touch another child. Lead the children in "Did You Ever See a Lassie?" using large muscle movements so the children get stretched out and exercised.

*Did you ever see a lassie
go this way and that way,
go this way and that way?
Did you every see a lassie
go this way and that?*

Suggested motions:

Touch toes
Swing arms wide
Kick one leg, then the other
Squat and get up fast
Bend to one side, then the other
Touch hands in front, then behind back
Hop or skip
Skip back to the work area.

ALL ABOUT ME Have the children turn to page 2 of *Promise*. Read through the page with them, asking for just one example for each blank. Children may not know their height and weight. Tell them their parents can put in that part at home. Or, you can measure them in the classroom, giving that extra bit of individual attention children cherish.

Distribute crayons or colored pencils and give the children plenty of time to finish the page. Go around the room helping them print or decide what to draw. The final step to the page is putting left and right thumbprints on the bottom right. This is where you could really use a classroom aide. You may wish to post these pages or send them home for the children to share with their families.

Have the children leave the crayons and pencils on their desks and move to the Gospel area.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

Objective: The children will recognize that all people are important to Jesus.

GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Jesus Tells Who Is Great

Tell the children this Gospel story.

Once in Jesus' time two men went to the Temple to pray. One man was an important teacher. This is how he prayed: "Thank you, God, for making me so much better than other people. I keep all your laws. I am so good." The other man was a tax collector, whom no one liked. This is how he prayed: "Be kind to me, God. I have done many wrong things." Jesus said, "God will make people great who think they are not important at all. But people who think they are so great will have to learn that others are just as important."

Ask: Which man in the story will God make great? Which man will have to learn how important others are? Which girl in the Queen story will have to learn others are important?

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

I'M A SPECIAL VIP Return to the work area. Ask the children if they know what a VIP is? *A Very Important Person!* Who might be a VIP? They will have lots of ideas—the Pope, the President, Senators and Representatives, the principal, their parents, sports stars. Ask if any of them are VIPs. They all are, because God made them and loves them. Hold up your copy of *Promise* page 3. Ask children when people get ribbons like this. *When they have done something special.* Tell them we are going to give a blue ribbon to all the children in this group because they do something special every time they act in a loving way. Tell the children the loving ways you have seen them act during this little time you have had together.

Distribute scissors and show the children how to cut on the heavy line that separates the music and the ribbons. There is a little scissors icon there to guide them. They then cut the two ribbons apart and print their name (or draw their face) on the blank ribbon. Have them place the ribbons together at the top of their work area.

Now have the children take the piece of paper with the music and fold it so the music is on the inside and the cover, *My Friends and Me*, is on the outside. The back page has a note for parents. Practice singing the song. It is to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb." The children will notice that the four children who are the notes are the same children as on the cover.

CONCLUDING PRAYER Prepare for the closing prayer by using double-sided tape or folded masking tape to stick the children's ribbons to their clothing. Each child will carry the ribbon that says *My Friend VIP* to the prayer circle. Sing the song through once; on the second time through have one child turn to the child on his or her right at the words *and so are you!* and stick the My Friend ribbon on his or her clothing. Continue that way around the room until everyone has two ribbons. Conclude by saying, "Thank you, God, for friends." The children shout, "Hooray!" [Pray 19, page 26]



EXTENDING ACTIVITY

ALL SAINTS DAY Children love to play dress-up. This is a very good way for them to learn about some of the popular saints. If you have a parish or school library, it most likely has saint books for children. Church goods stores also have simple picture books of saints. Children enjoy learning about Francis of Assisi, Elizabeth of Hungary, Juan Diego, Martin of Tours, and Brigid, as well as about United States and Canadian saints Isaac Jogues and companions, Marguerite d'Youville, Elizabeth Ann Seton, Mother Cabrini, Katharine Drexel, and Marie-Rose Durocher. After you have read about a saint, decide a simple way to represent him or her. For instance: a simple paper crown for Elizabeth of Hungary, a drawing of schools and hospitals for Mother Cabrini, a sword and cape for Martin of Tours. Share your stories and representations with another religious education class.

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Teaching Guide

Wisdom 11.22—12.2; 2 Thessalonians 1.11—2.2; Luke 19.1-10

OVERVIEW

Gospel Theme: Jesus stays with us.

In Sunday's Gospel story Jesus makes friends with a tax collector named Zacchaeus and shows us that he wants to make friends with all people. Zacchaeus, a cheat and a sinner in the eyes of his neighbors, is a human being who can change and grow in Jesus' eyes. Like Zacchaeus, we all need a friend like Jesus, someone who calls us to change and grow.

Young children are egocentric. They can learn behaviors of sharing and caring, but their first concern is necessarily themselves. They need to work at getting along with each other. A teacher needs to note and praise signs of willingness to move from self-centeredness to concern for others, much as Zacchaeus moves in this Sunday's Gospel. Approving of the behavior you want from the children is a wonderful way to motivate their development of such habits. A classroom climate that promotes caring and mutual respect will help the children develop and maintain good relationships with each other.

Doctrinal Concept: Catechesis aims to bring about in the believer an ever-more mature faith in Jesus Christ, a deeper knowledge and love of his person and message, and a firm commitment to follow him. With God's grace, catechesis develops initial faith, nourishes the Christian life, and continually unfolds the mystery of Christ until the believer willingly becomes his disciple (*National Directory for Catechesis* #19.A). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1443.

Materials: Crayons or markers, scissors, paste.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

GATHER AND SING Today's Gospel tells of Jesus' offer of friendship to a man most Jews despised. Use the following song to set the tone for your lesson.

The more we get together, together, together,
the more we get together the happier we'll be.
'Cuz your friends are my friends and my friends are your
friends.

The more we get together the happier we'll be.

For a second verse, sing names of the children in your class instead of the third line of the song. Sing as many verses as you need, until all the children's names are mentioned.

With *child's name*, and *child's name*, and *child's name*, and
child's name,

The more we get together the happier we'll be.

Objective: The children will share experiences of being chosen and playing with friends.

STORYTELLING: Making Friends (cover) Gather the children in a story circle on the floor. Ask them what they like to do with their friends. Ask them to think of a time when they were left out of an activity. How did they feel? Tell the children today's story is about two boys who become friends. Ask them to think about their special friends—why they like them, how they expect to be treated by them, how they act towards them. Tell the children the story begins with a child who feels lonely and left out. Distribute *Promise* to the children. Have them follow the story on the cover as you read aloud.

Discuss the story. Have the children identify which boy was lonely and left out, which boy made friends. Ask how they know the two boys are friends at the end of the story. Have the children return to their work area, and use the illustrations to read or tell the story in pairs.

ACTIVITY: I play with my friends (page 2) Remain in the work area and turn to page 2. Ask the children to read the title and take turns describing what is happening in each photo. Then read aloud the question under one of the photos and ask for volunteers to tell who is a friend they have who is silly, or whom they play with at soccer or swimming or work with at school, or who is a family pet or animal they are close to. Be sure each child has a chance to contribute. Summarize by saying God blesses us with good friends and leading the children in a thank you prayer for them. **[Follow 14, page 21]** ✕

STRETCH AND MOVE Clear a big space in the room or go outdoors. Have the children gather at one end of the space. Call out the activity and have them move forward while performing it, so they end up at the other end of the room or space.

We are playing football and throwing a forward pass.

We are playing basketball and dribbling down the floor.

We are playing hockey and hitting the puck with our sticks.

We are playing hopscotch and hopping on one foot.

We are playing jump rope and skipping over the rope.

We are on first base when someone hits a ball into the outfield.

We are in a band and marching while we play our trumpets.

We are tiptoeing back to our room so no one hears us.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

Objective: The children will understand that Jesus wants to make friends with all people.

GOSPEL STORYTELLING: **Jesus makes friends with Zacchaeus** Ask the children to tell ways they know Jesus helped people. Tell them you are going to tell a story about Jesus making friends. Gather the children in their story circle. Have them listen as you tell them the story of Zacchaeus.

Once there was a man who was lonely because he cheated people, so no one liked him. This man's name was Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus collected taxes from people. Often Zacchaeus collected more money than people owed and kept the extra money for himself. Zacchaeus became very rich, but he wasn't popular with most people.

One day Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming to town. He was curious to see what Jesus looked like. But Zacchaeus was too short to see Jesus because crowds of people were standing in front of him. Zacchaeus climbed a tree, so he could see Jesus.

When Jesus walked under the tree, he looked up, saw Zacchaeus, stopped, and said, "Hurry and climb down, Zacchaeus. I'm coming to your house for a visit." Zacchaeus was so surprised he almost fell out of the tree. He could hardly believe his ears. Jesus wanted to come to his house! Jesus wanted to be his friend! Jesus held up his hands to help Zacchaeus down.

Zacchaeus was so thrilled that Jesus wanted to be his friend that he decided he would never be dishonest again. He told Jesus about his decision. "I will give half of all my money to the poor," Zacchaeus told Jesus. "If I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times as much." Jesus was very pleased with Zacchaeus. He stayed the whole evening with him and his friends.

Ask the children: Why didn't people like Zacchaeus? Why did he climb the tree? Why did Jesus stop? Why was Zacchaeus surprised? Bring out Jesus' love and concern for Zacchaeus.

GOSPEL ACTIVITY: **Who wants to stay with Zacchaeus? (page 3)** Return to the work area and open *Promise* to page 3. Have children retell the story to you using the four illustrations. Read the voice balloons at the bottom of the page aloud. Decide together which voice balloon goes with each illustration. They are color coded. Distribute scissors and paste. Demonstrate how to cut off the four boxes and paste them in the illustrations. When everyone is finished tell the story again, this time reading the copy in the voice balloons.

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Objective: The children will pray the *Our Father*.

PRAYER: Jesus' friends pray together (page 4)

Catholics report that one of their favorite parts of Mass is the *Our Father*. They appreciate the opportunity to say aloud in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist their commitment to living as brothers and sisters in the family of God. This activity provides children their own copy of the *Our Father* to color and hang up in their homes. As children work on this activity, you will have time to circulate among them and ask for questions. Some, especially vocabulary clarifications, may be handled in the group. Others that arise may be more personal and handled in an individual manner.

CONCLUDING PRAYER Ask the children to bring their copies of the *Our Father* to your prayer circle. Read it aloud together once. Then direct them to put their copies down on the floor in front of them, join hands, and pray the prayer again.

EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

FRIENDSHIP SCENARIOS Extend the discussion of making friends by reading the following scenarios and questions to the children one at a time. Ask the children to share ideas on what they would do in these friendship scenarios.

1. Sara was a new student and she wanted to make friends. What should she do? What can the other children in the class say or do to make Sara feel welcome?
2. Miguel's grandma is sick and in the hospital. Miguel missed a week of school and a special field trip when he went to visit her. When he came back to class, he was in a sad mood. What can the children do to help Miguel feel better?
3. Jasmine won a coloring contest that she and all of her friends entered. Her prize was a new bike. What can Jasmine do to make sure her friends don't feel sad that they didn't win the bike? How can Jasmine's friends show they are good sports?

HELLO, MY FRIEND! Have one child sit in the middle of a circle on a chair and cover his/her eyes. Pick another child to go up to the child in the middle and say "Hello, my friend. Can you guess who I am?" The child in the middle makes a guess. If the child in the middle guesses correctly, the child who spoke sits in the middle and covers his/her eyes. The first child picks the next speaker by quietly tapping a child on the shoulder. The children can use their normal voices or make it more fun by using silly voices.

HANDS OF FRIENDSHIP Brainstorm a list of ways children can reach out to other children and offer them a hand of friendship. Have the children work in pairs to trace each other's hands on a piece of paper. Ask them to decorate their hands and write or draw some of the ideas of how to be a good friend to someone who might feel left out. Display these on the wall under the headline *Hands of Friendship* or send the hands home with the children.

Teaching Guide

2 Maccabees 7.1-2, 9-14; 2 Thessalonians 2.16—3.5; Luke 20.27-38

OVERVIEW

Gospel theme: Jesus promises us an eternal home with God.

In Sunday's Gospel Jesus promises people who believe in him they will live forever. *Promise* helps young children recognize that all God's creatures have homes, and God's people have a home with God in heaven as well as on earth with their families.

Children hear adults talking about heaven and have lots of questions about it. Take advantage of these Sundays when we read difficult Gospels at Sunday Eucharist to talk to your *Promise* children about the happiness God desires for each of us. This happiness will only be increased at our deaths.

Doctrinal Concept: Catechesis links human experience to the revealed word of God, helping people ascribe Christian meaning to their own existence. Catechesis helps them relate the Christian message to the most profound questions in life: the existence of God, the destiny of the human person, the origin and end of history, the truth about good and evil, the meaning of suffering and death (*National Directory for Catechesis* #29.A). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #301.

Materials: Crayons or markers, scissors, small paper cups, markers for game, *Promise* CD.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

GATHER AND SING Play "God the Creator" from the *Promise* music CD for the children to sing and do creative movement. If you do not have the CD, sing and do movement to "The Whole World Is in God's Hands."

STORY: Home for Dinner Introduce today's lesson by reading or telling this simple story.

Rabbit and Squirrel were playing in the woods. They saw their friend Bird flying by and asked her to come and play. "I can't right now," chirped Bird. "I need to get home to eat dinner." The animals on the ground looked surprised. Squirrel asked, "Is it dinner time already? I need to get home, too," and she ran up the tree. Rabbit started to hop for home. Just then Duck waddled by and asked, "Where's everyone going? I was coming to play." "We need to go home," Rabbit said. "It's dinner time." Duck looked surprised and quacked, "I'd better go tell Fish. He hates to be late for dinner." Rabbit said, "I think that's a good idea. You live close to him. I'll tell Turtle on my way home. She lives close to me."

Ask the children: Why do you think Duck would be the best animal to tell Fish? *Duck lives in and by the water.* Why does Rabbit tell Worm it's time for dinner? *Rabbit doesn't eat Worm.* If you were an animal, would you like your home to be on the land, in the sky, or in the water? Why?

Objective: The children will recognize that all God's creatures have homes.

ACTIVITY: Where is my home? Gather the children in their work area and distribute *Promise*. Have the children look closely at the cover illustration. Ask them to identify each creature at the bottom of the page. *Squirrel, duck, rabbit, turtle, bird.* Tell the children that when God created the world all creatures got a special home. Have the children find the home that belongs to each creature. *Squirrel, hole in tree; duck, top of water; rabbit, hole in ground; turtle, log in water; bird, nest.* Have the children match animals and homes by tracing a line with their fingers from each animal to its home. Discuss the habits of each animal—what they like to eat, how they care for their young. Give the children crayons or markers to draw lines between each creature and its home.

STRETCH AND MOVE Choose a circle area as "home" and gather the children inside it. Make sure there is something close that can be knocked to represent a door. Choose a child to stand outside the circle. The children in the circle say, "Friend, friend from over the way. I wonder who is coming to play." The child outside the circle knocks on the door and says his/her name. For example, "It's Michael." The children in the circle chant, "Michael, Michael from over the way, what would you like to play today?" Michael chooses an action such as jumping, pretend swimming, or running in place. The children inside the circle copy his actions for several seconds. Then Michael chooses a new child to go outside the circle and the game continues.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

Objective: The children will recognize that God has a special home for us in heaven.

GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Jesus has a home for us Gather the children in a storytelling circle. Invite them to talk about the special places and people that are part of their homes. Help them recognize that the loving people in their families make their homes special places. Have the children give examples of how family members in their homes care for each other, share with each other, help each other, play together, pray together, eat together. [**Pray 20, page 27**] ✕

Tell the children that heaven is home for all people who are Jesus' friends. People who have died on this earth are alive with God and Jesus. When we pray to or pray for these people, we show that we believe God is the God of the living, not the God of the dead. Ask the children to imagine what they hope heaven will be like—who is there, what people do.

Instead of reading the words of this Sunday's Gospel, which are difficult for children to understand, tell how a dad teaches his child about life with God after death.

Once there was a child who loved his grandpa very much. When Zach visited Grandpa in the summer they went fishing in the pond in the park. Every Christmas all the cousins gathered at Grandpa's house for Christmas dinner and presents and time for sitting on Grandpa's lap. One day Zach's dad told him Grandpa was in the hospital. "He is too sick for visitors," Dad said, "but we can send him a card." Zach got out his markers and made Grandpa a card with fish on it. Dad found an envelope and they mailed it at the Post Office. That weekend, Grandpa got sicker. "What will happen if Grandpa dies?" Zach asked his dad. "We will be very sad," Dad said, "but Grandpa will be very happy because he will be with God and with Grandma and all his family who have died." "How do you know that?" Zach asked. "Because Jesus told us we would always belong to him. When we die, we go to heaven and live with God and Jesus forever." Zach said, "But Grandpa won't be here with us." Dad said, "No, Grandpa will be gone, but after a while you will see him again in heaven." Zach felt better. When Grandpa died, Zach and his dad wrote a prayer about heaven. Zach prays the prayer every night before he goes to sleep. This is what he says.

Turn to page 4 of *Promise* and read the prayer aloud, putting the name Grandpa in the blank space. Have the children return to their work space and find the prayer for themselves. Ask if any of them have a person in heaven looking out for them. If they have not experienced a personal loss, suggest they say my guardian angel or Jesus or Mary. Distribute colored pencils and allow time for them to draw in the open space. It is entirely appropriate to send a note home asking parents to complete this page with their child and pray the prayer with them.

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Objective: The children will experience a game in which loving actions form the way to heaven.

ACTIVITY: *How do I get to heaven?* (pages 2-3) Explain to the children that Jesus promises that people who show love for others will have a home with him in heaven. Have children identify ways to show love to family members at home—*helping parents, sharing with brothers and sisters, saying thank-you, praying, putting away toys.* Ask the children to think of unloving actions they sometimes do—*fighting, disobeying, talking back, not listening, not praying.*

Ask the children to identify the illustrations on pages 2-3 that show the loving actions people do who want to share Jesus' home. Have the children identify the pictures that show unloving actions. Read the words near each picture with the children. Explain that these pages are a board for a game called *How do I get to heaven?* Distribute scissors and paper cups. Have the children cut out the squares on the bottom of page 3 and put them in the cup. Assign partners. Have the children find and put their markers on the *Start* city

on their game board. Have them find the *Heaven* circle where Jesus is with the children. Tell them the object of the game is to get both partners' markers to the *Heaven* circle. Have the children trace the path with their fingers. Partners take turns drawing a square from the paper cup and moving the number of places indicated. Partners may move on their own game board or both may use the same board. Make sure children know they move ahead on pictures of loving actions and back on pictures of unloving actions.

CONCLUDING PRAYER Use the page 4 prayer to conclude class. If your children have people they want to name, repeat the prayer as many times as necessary. Or suggest someone from the parish or school who has recently died and whom the children will recognize.

EXTENDING ACTIVITY

EVERYONE HELPS AT HOME This song can be sung as you and the children straighten your room as class ends. Sing it to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush."

Children make scrubbing movements.

This is the way we wash the dishes, wash the dishes, wash the dishes.

This is the way we wash the dishes.

Everyone helps at home (or school).

Continue with as many verses as you can think of.

sweep the floor

pick up clothes

feed the dog

put away toys

gather our scraps

GOD SHARES WITH US POEM Tell the children they are going to learn a poem with actions that they can share with their families.

Children put their arms over their heads in a circle.

God's world is full of things we share.

Children slowly move them back to their sides.

Trees and stars and water and air.

Children put their hands in a praying position.

Thank you, God, for all you share.

Children hug themselves.

We will give it our loving care.

Teaching Guide

Malachi 3.19-20; 2 Thessalonians 3.7-12; Luke 21.5-19

OVERVIEW

Gospel Theme: Jesus helps us with our worries and fears.

Sunday's Gospel is 14 verses of dire predictions about conditions that will herald the second coming of Christ. This passage comes from Luke's apocalyptic chapter 21. These verses, scholars agree, are from the Church of Luke's time and are not the teaching of Jesus during his lifetime. In any case, young children cannot grasp this passage, so the *Promise* editors have simplified it. The core message of Sunday's Gospel isn't that we should be afraid, but that we should trust in God, who made us and loves us. This week's *Promise* lesson aims to instill that message of hope in the children.

Doctrinal Concept: Jesus consistently used the ordinary human experiences of daily life to form his disciples, to point to the end of time, and to show the transcendent dimension of all of life and of God's eternal presence in it. Because the eternal Word assumed human nature, human experience is the locus for the manifestation and realization of salvation in him (*National Directory for Catechesis #29.A*). *Catechism of the Catholic Church #588, 2631*.

Materials: Scissors, paste or clear tape.

SHARING LIFE STORIES

GATHER AND SING Lead the children in the following song, sung to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."


When I worry, God's with me,
 God's with me, God's with me.
 When I worry, God's with me.
 God loves me.

Ask the children who else helps them when they worry and try singing the song with that person's name. For example:

When I worry, Mom's with me,
 Mom's with me, Mom's with me.

Objective: The children will talk about fears and worries.

COVER ACTIVITY: I have worries Gather the children in the story circle. Ask when they have felt afraid or worried. Write these worries on the chalkboard or newsprint as they volunteer them. Keep their answers short. Distribute *Promise* and ask the children to read the child's words in the voice balloon, then describe some of the worries depicted in the illustration. Identify Jesus and read what he is saying. Ask when praying to Jesus has helped their worries. Conclude

 that worries happen to everyone and we all have people to turn to when we worry. **[Believe 6, page 12]**

STORY: Lost at the Mall! This is a dramatic story, and one every child can relate to. Tell it with feeling. Ask the children to listen well, because they will get to retell it to you later.

It was almost Thanksgiving! Grandma and Grandpa were coming to dinner as they always did, but this year Jessica's Aunt Rose and her children were coming, too. Jessica loved to play with her cousins. She could hardly wait.

"We need some decorations for the house," Jessica's mom said. "Do you want to go to the Party Store at the mall with Dad to get some?" "Oh, yes," said Jessica. "I want a big stand-up turkey that can spread his tail, and pictures of pilgrims to put on the windows!"

That afternoon, Dad and Jessica took the bus to the mall. Jessica knew where the party store was, because Mom had bought her birthday cake decorations there. The turkeys were displayed right inside the door to the store. A pilgrim father and mother with three children were next to the turkeys. It didn't take long for Dad and Jessica to buy what they needed. "Let's get an ice cream cone before we go home," Dad said. They started toward the escalator. Jessica saw a bike in a store window. She slowed down just a little to look at it. "Bam!" A boy with an ipod almost ran her down. "Sorry, kid," the boy said. Jessica stepped back against the store window to get out of the way of all the other busy shoppers. She stretched as tall as she could and looked for Dad. Where was he?! All Jessica could see were legs and shoes, and none of them belonged to Dad!

She stretched up again. This time a picture of a big turkey caught Jessica's eye. That is the party store, she thought to herself. Maybe Dad went back there. But when Jessica got to the store, Dad was not there. The lady who had sold them the turkey and the pilgrims recognized Jessica. "Is something wrong?" she asked. "Yes," Jessica said. "My dad is lost." "Don't worry," said the lady, "We will find him." She picked up a telephone and in just a minute a security person arrived. Jessica told her that Dad was lost. "I bet he is looking for you, too," the security officer said. "We can wait here together." The lady brought Jessica a big lemonade in a cup with a straw. "Being worried makes you thirsty," she said.

Jessica still had half her lemonade left, when Dad walked in the door. "I'm so sorry I lost you," Dad said to Jessica. "I did what you and Mom told me. I went back to the last place we were together," Jessica said. "And I tried not to worry." Dad hugged Jessica. Then they went to catch the bus home.

Ask the children to retell the story to you beginning with the trip to the mall. *How did Dad get lost? What did Jessica do? Was she worried? Who helped her with her worries?* Have the children turn to page 2 and retell the story to a partner using the illustrations and voice balloons. Encourage them to tell the story to their families at home tonight.

STRETCHING EXERCISE Talk the children through this stretching exercise step by step. Children stand in a circle in the open space. They step back two steps to make sure there is enough room between children. Ask them to stand with their hands at their sides, at ease. They raise elbows slowly, then stretch arms straight up, with fists. Gradually, they release fists and stretch fingers, reaching for the turkey centerpiece on the highest shelf of the store. Gradually they go up to tiptoes and keep reaching. Don't let toes leave the floor. Slowly reverse the process until the children are again standing gently at rest. If you have time, have the children stretch up to look for Dad. Then move quietly to the Gospel area.

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL

Objective: The children will understand that Jesus is always with us.

GOSPEL STORYTELLING: Jesus says not to worry.

Tell the children that Jesus often met with his friends in the Temple courtyard. The Temple was the center of Jerusalem, just as the Capitol is the center of Washington, D.C. When people met there, they had serious talks, as people do today.

One day Jesus and his friends were sitting in the Temple courtyard, visiting. Jesus' friend Jacob said, "Jesus, sometimes things seem so bad. I hate it when people fight." Mara agreed. "We get worried, Jesus. What can we do?" Jesus said to them, "Many sad things happen in the world. Countries make war with each other. People get sick and die. There are hurricanes and tornadoes. But you must trust in God and trust me. I will always be with you, no matter what happens." Jesus' friends felt better. They were glad they had a talk with Jesus.

Ask: What worries do Jesus' friends have? How does Jesus help them? How does Jesus help your worries?

BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Objective: The children will create a Thanksgiving prayer.

GOSPEL ACTIVITY: Thank you, God Ask the children to tell about occasions their families celebrate—birthdays, anniversaries, baptisms, weddings, Christmas. Tell them the holiday called Thanksgiving is a special day to be thankful. On the first Thanksgiving the Pilgrims and Native Americans gathered together to share a meal to say thank you to God for their good crops, health, their children, and new friends. Ask the children to name things for which their families are thankful. *Possible answers: friendships, food, love, homes, health, children, parents.*

Move to the work area and distribute pages 3-4 of *Promise*, the thank-you turkey activity. If you have pre-cut the activity pieces, be sure each child has the turkey body, the feathers, and the *Thank you, God* circle. Demonstrate how to

paste the circle on the empty circle on the turkey's body. Then read the words on the feathers with the children and give them time to talk about these gifts of God to them. Help them arrange the feathers on the turkey. Go around the room putting dots of paste on the feathers for the children. This is an ideal time to enlist parents or older children as aides. Be sure each child writes his or her name on the back of the turkey. When all are finished, put the turkeys aside until the end of class.

CONCLUDING PRAYER Conclude with a group prayer of thanks. Have the children bring their thank-you turkeys to the prayer circle. Each child says one thing he or she is grateful for; the rest respond, "Thank you, God." End with a thank-you song the children know.

Provide envelopes so the children can take their turkeys home.

EXTENDING ACTIVITIES

A WORRY DAY CHART Ask the children what they do to make themselves feel better when they are worried. *Talk to a parent; hug their favorite stuffed animal, pray.* Make a list of those ideas and write the child's name in parentheses behind the idea given. Put the list somewhere the children can see. Model for them the sentence below and insert your own idea. For example: When I have a worry day, I can sing and I feel okay.

Tell the children to put their own idea in the sentence and practice saying it. Ask a few students to try saying their sentences out loud. Then ask the class to sit in a circle and quietly pat their legs to start a steady beat. Try to keep the steady beat going while each child takes a turn saying "When I have a worry day, I can _____ and I feel okay."

ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR FEELINGS BOAT

Have the children sit in a circle and link their arms. Ask them to sway side to side as a group and pretend they are on a boat. Tell them you will all sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" showing different feelings. Sing it happy the first time; then call out other feelings—afraid, silly, sad, mad. Model expressive faces with them to help them feel comfortable in front of you. Encourage the children to change their faces and voices to match the given feeling. Have them take turns changing the feeling once they have gotten used to the activity.

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